

The Catholic TIMES

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Remember Queenship of Mary during these troubled times

In August, we pay tribute to Our Lady on two special days within a liturgical octave on the Church calendar. The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is observed on Aug. 15 and the Queenship of Mary comes exactly one week later on Aug. 22.

Because the Assumption falls on a Saturday this year, it is not a holy day of obligation. But check your parish Mass schedule for that day. Catholics still should remember the Blessed Mother's glorious assumption into heaven in a special way.

On the following Saturday, the Queenship of Mary marks her coronation as the queen of heaven and earth. Every time the faithful recite the glorious mysteries of the rosary, the fourth and fifth decades are dedicated to her assumption and queenship, respectively.

In 1954, Pope Pius XII released an encyclical titled *Ad Caeli Reginam*, which proclaimed the queenship of Mary and instituted this feast day in her honor. He began by explaining that the Church had always recognized the Mother of God as the Queen of Heaven, but now he was calling attention to this reality. Pius XII originally established May 31 for this feast, but Pope Paul VI moved it to Aug. 22 in 1969 to emphasize the close connection between her assumption and her queenship.

The second paragraph of Pius XII's letter seems particularly profound during these difficult past few months in our fallen world: "Following upon the frightful calamities which before our very eyes have reduced flourishing cities, towns, and villages to ruins, we see to our sorrow that many great moral evils are being spread abroad in what may be described as a violent flood. Occasionally we behold justice giving way; and, on the one hand and the other, the victory of the powers of corruption. The threat of this fearful crisis fills us with a great anguish, and so with confidence we have recourse to Mary Our Queen, making known to her those sentiments of filial reverence which are not ours alone, but which belong to all those who glory in the name of Christian."

In 1950, Pope Pius XII had defined as dogma (unchangeable teaching) the Assumption of Mary into heaven. He goes on in *Ad Caeli Reginam* to cite various saints and popes who referred to Mary as queen. Among them are Sts. Ephrem, Andrew of Crete, Germanus, John Damascene and Ildephonus of Toledo, and Popes Gregory II and Benedict XIV.

St. Alphonsus Ligouri, the great spiritual writer of the 18th century, wrote, "Because the virgin Mary was raised to such a lofty dignity as to be the moth-

EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS

Doug Bean



er of the King of kings, it is deservedly and by every right that the Church has honored her with the title of 'Queen.'"

Pius XII explained with clarity how followers of Christ should strive to seek His Mother's assistance. The following are a few examples from the encyclical. If the world would pay attention and heed these words, divisiveness, racism and every other calamity would cease:

"Let all, therefore, try to approach with greater trust the throne of grace and mercy of our Queen and Mother, and beg for strength in adversity, light in darkness, consolation in sorrow; above all let them strive to free themselves from the slavery of sin and offer an unceasing homage, filled with filial loyalty, to their Queenly Mother. Let her churches be thronged by the faithful, her feast-days honored; may the beads of the Rosary be in the hands of all; may Christians gather, in small numbers and large, to sing her praises in churches, in homes, in hospitals, in prisons. ...

"All, according to their state, should strive to bring alive the wondrous virtues of our heavenly Queen and most loving Mother through constant effort of mind and manner. Thus will it come about that all Christians, in honoring and imitating their sublime Queen and Mother, will realize they are truly brothers, and with all envy and avarice thrust aside, will promote love among classes, respect the rights of the weak, cherish peace. No one should think himself a son of Mary, worthy of being received under her powerful protection, unless, like her, he is just, gentle and pure, and shows a sincere desire for true brotherhood, not harming or injuring but rather helping and comforting others.

"In some countries of the world there are people who are unjustly persecuted for professing their Christian faith and who are deprived of their divine and human rights to freedom; up till now reasonable demands and repeated protests have availed nothing to remove these evils. May the powerful Queen of creation, whose radiant glance banishes storms and tempests and brings back cloudless skies, look upon these her innocent and tormented children with eyes of mercy; may the Virgin, who is able to subdue violence beneath her foot, grant to them that they may soon enjoy the rightful freedom to practice their religion openly, so that, while serving the cause of the Gospel, they may also contribute to the strength and progress of nations by their harmonious coopera-

tion, by the practice of extraordinary virtues which are a glowing example in the midst of bitter trials.

"... We are convinced that this feast will help to preserve, strengthen and prolong that peace among nations which daily is almost destroyed by recurring crises. Is she not a rainbow in the clouds reaching towards God, the pledge of a covenant of peace? ... Whoever, therefore, reverences the Queen of heaven and earth ... let him invoke the most effective of Queens, the Mediatrix of peace; let him respect and preserve peace, which is not wickedness unpunished nor freedom without restraint, but a well-ordered harmony under the rule of the will of God; to its safeguarding and growth the gentle urgings and commands of the Virgin Mary impel us. ... Earnestly desiring that the Queen and Mother of Christendom may hear these our prayers, and by her peace make happy a world shaken by hate, and may, after this exile show unto us all Jesus, Who will be our eternal peace and joy."

We all need to be reminded to turn to the Queen of Heaven on a daily basis to draw strength when we're discouraged or in pain, and to fix our eyes on one day seeing her sitting next to her son, Jesus.

'The Catholic Times' switches to biweekly schedule permanently

The Catholic Times is moving to a year-round bi-weekly schedule starting in September. The newspaper will not be returning to publishing a print edition every week. The issue dates for the rest of 2020 are as follows: Aug. 30, Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, Nov. 22, Dec. 6 and Dec. 22.

Also in September, *The Times* will launch its eConnect edition. News and information from the diocese, messages from Bishop Robert Brennan and more will be emailed to your inbox at no cost. The new eConnect will keep readers up to date between print issues of the newspaper and when important news in the Diocese of Columbus needs to be communicated as soon as possible.

Print subscribers and anyone who reads the paper online will need to sign up to receive eConnect at columbuscatholic.org/econnect. Enter your name and email address to be added to the eConnect list.

As the diocese attempts to extend its mission of evangelization to share the good news the Church has to communicate, please know that we highly value our print subscribers. The newspaper will continue to offer exclusive content to our print readers that includes obituaries, columns, puzzles and other features.



Front Page photo:

BACK TO SCHOOL
Some of the new norms for children at London St. Patrick and other schools this year will include assigned spaces to keep proper physical distancing during various activities. Photo courtesy London St. Patrick School

Catholic TIMES

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Catholic schools to reopen with variety of formats

By Tim Puet
Catholic Times Reporter

All 53 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Columbus are planning to open this month, but because of the continuing impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the way it has affected various locations, every school has its own plan for the resumption of classes and the approach being taken to in-person and distance learning.

“With schools serving 15 counties across central and southern Ohio, it was determined early in our planning process that a single, centralized plan for the fall is not possible,” diocesan school superintendent Adam Dufault said in a letter to parents. “Each school is developing a plan based on local conditions, including enrollment, building size and local health department regulations.”

Diocesan schools outside of Franklin County will open on Monday, Aug. 24, with small groups of students coming in each day of the first week of school so they can learn about new health and safety procedures and so teachers may assess students’ needs. Regular classwork will resume on Monday, Aug. 31. Orientation and additional health and safety training for faculty members will take place during the week of Aug. 17.

Schools in Franklin County will begin the opening process on Monday, Aug. 31, with regular work starting on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Faculty orientation will be during the week of Aug. 24.

Each school’s opening plan is based on a three-level approach giving schools the ability to be ready for and quickly shift between levels, depending on



Desks are configured at Columbus St. Timothy School to provide proper social distance between students.

CT photos by Ken Snow

conditions in their area and government mandates.

Tier 1 means operations are similar to a non-pandemic situation, with buildings fully opened, safety protocols in place and in-person instruction. Tier 2 involves hybrid learning, with a mixture of in-person and remote instruction. Tier 3 is full distance



A classroom at Columbus Bishop Ready High School is set up for students who will be returning for the 2020-21 academic year.

learning, with school buildings closed and all instruction provided in a digital format online or through other methods allowing students to learn at

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 7

School communities are prepared for the new year

Last spring, the principals and teachers at each of the 53 Catholic schools within the Diocese of Columbus rose to the formidable challenge of distance learning with speed, grace and a genuine concern for doing what was best for our students. The children of our schools were well-served and well-cared for through those days of uncertainty and physical separation. During the summer months, those same committed teams have worked tirelessly on developing local plans for the 2020-21 academic year.

With schools in 15 counties across central and southern Ohio, it was determined early in our planning process that a single centralized plan for the Fall is not possible. With the shared goal of reopening schools as close to normal as possible under health guidelines, each school has developed a plan tailored to local conditions, including enrollment, building size and local health department regulations. There are some common elements among all plans including research-based guidelines specifying social distancing of 6 feet, face coverings, enhanced cleaning and sanitation procedures, restrictive visitor policies and new illness protocols. Our plans also included a tiered response plan with the ability to be ready for and to adeptly shift between each level:

Tier 1 – Normal operations, face-to-face instruction with safety protocols.

HAVE FAITH IN EDUCATION

Adam Dufault

Adam J. Dufault is the diocesan Episcopal Moderator for Education and Superintendent of Catholic Schools.



Tier 2 – Hybrid learning, with partial in-person and partial distance instruction.

Tier 3 – Full distance learning, with all instruction provided in a digital format.

We are all deeply concerned about the health and safety of our students and staff, and we are also deeply concerned about the effects of continued separation of our community. Reopening in the fall is not a decision that we take lightly, and we are choosing to reopen in our Tier 1 or Tier 2 approaches, as are most of the other 6,200 Catholic schools in the United States.

The reasons for this are many, but all are rooted in the mission of Catholic education. Our schools differ from all others in that they are crucial ministries of the Church, carrying forward Jesus’ command to “go out and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). At their foundation, our schools are places of evangelization tasked to form disciples for a world that so dearly needs them.

Disciples are formed through encounter and relationship, not in isolation. Just as the Trinity shows

us that God is in relationship – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – so schools must be in relationship with parents, students, and teachers.

We are communities of faith, strengthened by the Communion we share at Mass and the community that we form within our classrooms. In the 1972 document *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the U.S. bishops affirmed this idea, stating, “Community is at the heart of Christian education, not simply as a concept to be taught but as a reality to be lived.”

Realizing the sacredness of each individual person in our school communities, we know that to best meet the educational needs, physical wellness and spiritual formation of our students, we need to open our schools for our children, at least part of the time. So we will, though it is possible that schools across our diocese may open differently, in different tiers or even moving between tiers during the year. Schools have been sharing their detailed plans with families as we monitor the developing COVID-19 situation carefully and work with our state and local government partners. All of our plans closely adhere to the recommendations of the Ohio Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Please continue to keep our educators, students and their families in your prayers as we begin the new school year.

You can help Lead the Way during this global pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is increasing the risk of a severe crisis in areas where many people already do not have enough nutritious food. We are called to respond to the urgent needs of those who face hunger and malnutrition during this crisis, both locally and globally. Together, we can help reduce hunger and food insecurity by uniting in prayer, learning more, and acting in support of families in need.

We are called to love and serve our neighbors. We can do so by putting our faith into action through charitable works to meet the immediate needs of our human family and by addressing the systemic root causes of injustice. When we come together as church in these ways, we can make a big difference.

As communities around the world face an increased risk of hunger because of COVID-19, Catholic Relief Services responds with its Lead the Way campaign (www.crs.org/leadtheway). Join CRS by texting LEAD NOW to 306-44 or learn more at https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/usops-resources/lead_the_way_hunger_toolkit.pdf.

Advocacy is one of the most effective ways to ease human suffering and build a more equitable world. When an unjust policy or system is changed

FAITH IN ACTION

Erin Cordle

Erin Cordle is associate director of the diocesan Office for Social Concerns.



because of our collective advocacy actions, millions of people, families and communities have opportunities to thrive. One focus of this campaign involves working to pass the Global Child Thrive Act. That act would integrate early childhood development into development and emergency humanitarian programs serving vulnerable children and their families, helping them recover from the COVID-19 virus and building their resilience.

We have the power to influence policy and make things happen on a variety of social injustices. Building relationships with members of Congress and their staff is the key to effective advocacy and influencing Congress. Research shows that the voices and actions of constituents like you have the greatest impact on members of Congress and their decisionmaking. To support the Global Child Thrive

Act, consider communicating with your senator and congressional representative. For a detailed guide, go to www.crs.org/sites/default/files/usops-resources/crs_briefing_and_talking_points_global_child_thrive_act_july_2020_v.2_of_2.pdf.

In his encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Pope St. John Paul II reminds us that solidarity “is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good.”

I offer this prayer: *Give us a hunger for justice, God of abundance. You gave us the earth to be our common home. You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land so that all might be nourished. How can we ask you to eliminate hunger when you have already given us the tools to prevent it? Perhaps, Lord, we must ask you for a more just heart, a more generous heart. Open our minds and touch our hearts so that we attend to the root causes of hunger. May we not avert our eyes in the face of natural disasters. You call us to respond to the immediate needs of our brothers and sisters while also working toward just and lasting solutions to hunger.*

Perseverance, faith and open hearts

The account in Matthew’s gospel of the conversation between Jesus and a Canaanite woman asking him to cure her daughter provides insight into the transformational power of a genuine encounter with another. Showing the determination and faith of a mother who was seeking help and the humanity of Jesus, who was growing into a deeper understanding of himself and his mission, the story surprises.

Jesus often engaged with people, such as this woman, who were dismissed as unimportant by others, including his disciples.

They didn’t want her hanging around and following them. She was a nuisance as far as they were concerned. To them, she was “the other,” like the Samaritan woman at the well, marginalized because she was a woman and because she was a Gentile. They encouraged Jesus to send the troublemaker away.

But Jesus wasn’t about sending people away. When crowds followed him, tired as he was, he took time to be with them, sometimes speaking, healing, or sharing food. No, Jesus wasn’t about turning his head when people came to him hurting and in need. He was about seeing, paying attention and listening deeply.

The Canaanite woman was aware of his reputation as a healer – and an approachable one at that. Still, she needed courage to ask for help. She had to get by his disciples, who were intent on protecting him and perhaps themselves from those who could

GRACE IN THE MOMENT

Mary Van Balen



cause problems or divert attention from what they thought was important.

She took the first step, finding and following them. When the time seemed right, she called out, respectfully asking for help, explaining that her daughter was tormented by a demon. After silence, Jesus’ initial response was dismissive: He was sent to the house of Israel, and she didn’t qualify.

Again she honored him and pleaded for help. Jesus said “No.” It wasn’t right to throw what was meant for the children of Israel to the dogs (a derogatory name sometimes used for Gentiles).

Despite his rebuke, she persisted. She had no special claim to his power, other than being an anguished human speaking in behalf of someone unable to plead for herself. And she had faith that Jesus could help. That was enough.

She took a breath. Even dogs, she reminded Jesus, ate scraps from the table of their masters.

Jesus was listening. And when he looked, he saw her. He recognized her dignity as a child of God who held a spark of the divine in her soul. He didn’t look past her or see her as his disciples did – as an

inconvenience.

He heard her pain. Emotionally engaged, he empathized and was moved. And he couldn’t miss the faith she had in him.

Looking through her eyes, he saw something new about himself. (Isn’t this what happens when someone truly, deeply engages with another? They learn about themselves, their world and their place in it.) Jesus wasn’t afraid of seeing something new. He wasn’t afraid to draw his circle even wider.

What he had to give he could give to all, couldn’t he? The One who sent him was limitless love. There was no shortage to go around. For Jesus, there would be no “others.”

I think of John Lewis when I read about this woman. As the late congressman and civil rights activist lived and advised, she “stood up and spoke out” when she saw something that was unjust.

She spoke the truth. Jesus listened and heard with an open heart. And it made all the difference. He healed her daughter and, in doing so, the anguished mother’s heart. She healed him of a blind spot, urging him to grow into who he was.

Pray for such grace and courage.

John Lewis’ life witnessed the power of speaking the truth with love, of being willing to suffer

See VAN BALEN, Page 5

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We are stewards of the talents we inherit

When I was a kid, gardening was among my least favorite things to do. It was hot. There were bugs. The weeds were endless. And there were a thousand things I could think of that would be more interesting to do. But now that I am older, I actually like taking care of a garden. I find it rewarding to tend to the earth, and I enjoy harvesting a bumper crop of fresh vegetables.

Just the other day, I found a volunteer tomato plant sprouting far away from all the others I had planted, so I carefully dug it up by the roots and transplanted it near the others. I didn't have the heart to yank it out as if it were a weed. I wanted to give it a fighting chance.

Recently, I was visiting my parents and my mom wanted to show me what was growing in her garden. She was as surprised as she was proud that the only tomato plant that she planted had grown so large that she needed three cages to hold up its heavy branches. We walked around and she pointed out her collection of annuals and perennials in her flower beds, and I noticed a volunteer petunia hiding beneath the large leaf of another plant. When I asked her about it, she said that she was waiting to transplant it when it got big enough, she didn't have the heart to yank it out, and she wanted to give it a fighting chance. That sounded familiar. I must get

STEWARDSHIP, LIVING OUR FAITH Wendy Piper

Wendy Piper is the Associate Director for the diocesan Office of Development and Planning.



that quality from her.

Before our visit ended, I told my parents of my plans to transplant one of my house plants into a larger pot. I had gotten this particular snake plant 15 or more years ago. For years, it had been dormant, and I had considered tossing it. But it recently started growing again and was now too big for the pot it was in. When I said I didn't have the heart to get rid of it, my dad pointed at my mom and said, "You get that from her."

Years ago, my dad, a self-taught carpenter, built a shed on our property. He cleared and leveled the land, built a foundation, framed the structure, and then built the walls with recycled pieces of an old plywood billboard. Midway through this project, one of his friends dropped by for a visit, looked around at his work area for instructions or drawings and asked, "Where are your plans?" Dad tapped

on his temple and said "It's all in here." He had no plans. It was all in his head. He was winging it. I do the same thing when I start a new quilting project. I must get that from him.

We pick up skills, habits and traits from our parents. Perhaps more intentionally, there are gifts we inherit from our heavenly Father that He wants us to use, develop, cultivate and grow. Not only does God give us plants and gardens to tend to, He also gives us (or at least some of us at some point in our lives) a green thumb to care for those things. He makes things grow; we help them along. We separate the weeds from the wheat, but it isn't our place to throw out the good if it has a fighting chance to grow and bear fruit.

As St. Peter says in 1 Peter 4:10, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." God the Father gives us traits and skills. We get that from Him, and He designed it that way. Some are gifted as gardeners, builders or artists; others may be gifted as teachers, evangelists or leaders. No matter what gifts and talents we can attribute to our parents and our heavenly Father, our purpose is to show gratitude to God for those gifts by being good stewards of them and using them for His glory.

Rediscovering the reality of the Eucharist

Thinking out loud about a return to "Sunday normal," a veteran pastor recently told me that he thought it would take one year for each month of lockdown/quarantine/shelter-at-home for Mass attendance to return to where it was in February 2020. I said I hoped that people's hunger for the Eucharist would bring them back more quickly once they concluded that it was reasonably safe for themselves and others to do so. But whether "Sunday normal" returns this year or next year, the "Sunday normal" of February 2020 isn't something for which we should easily settle. Because "Sunday normal" isn't what it should be. This extended moment of Eucharistic fasting may be a providential moment to do something about that.

Why isn't pre-pandemic "Sunday normal" the norm to which we should aspire? Because too few Catholics take the Sunday Eucharist seriously enough to participate in it weekly. And because too few Catholics understand just what the Eucharist is.

"Never let a good crisis go to waste" is a maxim that applies beyond politics. Applied to the Church, it suggests that this in-between time is a privileged time to re-catechize (or in some cases, catechize) the Church in the United States on the full, amazing, supernatural meaning of the Eucharist. If bishops and pastors turn their homiletic attention to that during the next weeks and months, re-enforcing with e-mailed catechetical materials what they say from the pulpit to those in church and those participating through live-streaming, crisis may be transformed into opportunity, such that the new "Sunday normal" is something better than the old.

A good way to jolt a diocese or a parish into paying attention on this subject is to cite a marvelous passage from a 1955 letter by Flannery O'Connor describing a New York dinner party at which the

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE George Weigel

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aspiring young writer was introduced to the already successful author Mary McCarthy:

"I was once ... taken by some friends to have dinner with Mary McCarthy and her husband, Mr. Broadwater. ... She departed the Church at the age of 15 and is a Big Intellectual. We went at eight and at one, I hadn't opened my mouth once, there being nothing for me in such company to say. ... Well, toward morning the conversation turned to the Eucharist, which I, being the Catholic, was obviously supposed to defend. Mrs. Broadwater said when she was a child and received the Host, she thought of it as the Holy Ghost, He being the 'most portable' person of the Trinity; now she thought of it as a symbol and implied that it was a pretty good one. I then said, in a very shaky voice, 'Well, if it's a symbol, to hell with it.' That was all the defense I was capable of, but I realize now that this is all I will ever be able to say about it, except that it is the center of existence for me; all the rest of life is expendable."

How many Catholics today could make such a dramatic declaration that the Eucharist is what the Lord Jesus said it is: his very body and blood, through which we enter into communion with the Second Person of the Trinity? How many Catholics would be shaken by what an evangelical Protestant once said to a Catholic friend: "If I really believed, like you say you do, that Christ himself is in that

tabernacle, I'd be crawling up the aisle on my hands and knees." How many Catholics would be able to explain to that evangelical brother that, while the Eucharist is indeed what Christ said of it and to believe that is to be awe-struck, the Lord Jesus also invites us at Mass to a personal intimacy with him in which awe is transformed into love?

Modern Catholic theology has done important work on the meaning of symbols, which are not just signs conveying a message ("Stop that car here"). Rather, symbols are more complex realities that, in various ways, embody what they communicate — like a wedding ring or a national flag. The dumbing down of the theology of symbols has, however, led to the unhappy situation in which perhaps a majority of Catholics do not believe that the Eucharist is what the Lord Jesus said he was giving us: himself, fully and unambiguously.

Believing that, Catholics would attend Sunday Mass in droves. Teaching the truth of the Eucharist is thus a task for this moment, turning plague time into a time of renewed faith in the wonder of what we are offered in holy communion.

VAN BALEN, *continued from Page 4*

for it, and of persevering. His training and belief in non-violence as the path toward change didn't waver. In interviews, he said his heart had no room for bitterness or hate.

Pray for the grace and wisdom to engage in conversations with such an open, humble heart. Listening without an agenda that prompts a quick defensive response or turning away is challenging, whatever the situation. But such encounters will help move this country toward healing and becoming a more just society.

Schools alter fundraising during pandemic

By Tim Puet
Catholic Times Reporter

Besides closing diocesan parochial school buildings in mid-March, the coronavirus pandemic also affected many schools' ability to raise money for tuition assistance, scholarships and programming for activities inside and outside the classroom.

"The pandemic came in the spring, at a time when the majority of the diocese's 42 elementary schools and 11 high schools have a fundraising gala," said Tiffney Hatem, who facilitates school development for the diocesan Office of Development and Planning. "Money raised at these events helps many schools keep tuition affordable and balance their budgets. Schools also missed their final fiscal quarter of annual fund philanthropy."

Hatem said some schools canceled their fundraisers altogether, and others had virtual events instead of in-person activities. For example, Columbus Bishop Watterson High School's annual April fundraising dinner became an online event and was moved to May. Watterson development director and chief financial officer Ryan Steinbauer said it raised \$90,000, which is about 90 percent of the usual proceeds from the April dinner.

"So much was going on this spring," Hatem said. "With little or no experience in distance learning, the schools had to pivot for the rest of the year and did it well."

"They kept their focus on students, families and their social and emotional needs. Whether online, through social media, phone calls or in-person visits to pick up and drop off work, they focused on keeping all of the schools' 16,400 students moving forward. It was our goal that no one would fall through the cracks."

Hatem said a consortium formed by development professionals from all 53 diocesan schools played a key role in helping school officials stay in touch with one another and with parents, students and supporters of Catholic education.

"Development teams have long been integral to the communication process with our stakeholders," she said. "Whether through telephone calls, emails, Facebook, Zoom or other methods, we've been able to communicate not only the logistics of educating students outside the usual classroom setting, but the continued successes of the students. Our principals have been on board with finding

alternative ways to communicate and adapting to the social and physical distancing that COVID-19 has forced on everyone."

In response to the unprecedented shutdown of schools and churches, the diocese quickly launched a program titled A Time of Extreme Charity, which enables donors to contribute online to any of the diocese's parishes, schools or agencies, or to the diocese itself. This has been particularly helpful to parishes and schools that do not have an online giving program, 33 of which are listed in a link to A Time of Extreme Charity on the diocesan website.

This platform was introduced in early April. Later that month, the development office rolled out professional educational programming titled SECURE Schools to address development income and build digital communities for schools. SECURE stands for Support, Evaluation, Connection, Utilization of Resources and Engagement.

Hatem said the program offers hands-on assistance with personalized school plans to increase income, promote data cleanup, advance alumni engagement, pivot to virtual events, coach major gift solicitation and evaluate methods of helping promote a sense of community among groups impacted by schools. More than 30 schools are participating in the program.

For the coming school year, the consortium plans to focus on professional development topics such as gift acceptance policies, accounting, virtual events, trends in data, stewardship, development and advancement budgeting, feasibility studies, complex assets and planned giving.

"One of the most valuable ways to steward those who support our Catholic schools is to keep them informed," Hatem said. "So much is happening ... still so many wonderful things mixed in with the uncertainty, illness and worse. I truly believe our alumni, benefactors and volunteers want to know what is going on. They are curious about how

we are handling the pandemic while continuing to fulfill our mission and role as a Catholic school system."

Diocesan schools strive to remain affordable to all families desiring a Catholic education for their children by helping them pay tuition.

One significant source of such aid is the diocesan tuition assistance fund, which in the past 15 years has distributed more than \$11 million to more than 20,000 students. Hatem said that for the 2020-21 school year, the fund is distributing \$714,025 to 2,983 students.

Grants range from \$100 to \$2,500, depending on a student's need, as determined through an impartial process by FACTS Tuition Management, a Lincoln, Nebraska-based company not otherwise affiliated with the diocese.

The amount distributed by the tuition assistance fund has grown from about \$404,000 in 2006-07 to this year's total.

Tuition assistance funding has four major revenue sources: the Legacy of Catholic Learning Endowment, established by Bishop James Griffin in 1989; the Bishop's Annual Appeal; the annual Bishops' Golf Classic in August, which this year raised \$128,000; and endowments administered by The Catholic Foundation.

The fund provides a portion of the cost of a Catholic education for a number of families each year, but in no instance does it come close to paying full tuition.

Hatem said that this year, the total need among all applicants was \$5.32 million. The amount distributed represented only 13.4 percent of that need.

The percentage figure for each of the past 15 years is similar. This makes successful philanthropic efforts at the individual school level imperative.

Besides the diocesan tuition assistance fund, parents have several other financial aid options. All schools in the diocese, as well as several parishes, have funds to help parents in need. Many schools offer family discounts or flexible payment plans, and a number of scholarship programs are sponsored by organizations such as school parent groups and the Knights of Columbus. Details are available from individual schools and parishes.

In addition, the Ohio Department of Education may be able to provide aid through the EdChoice, Jon Peterson Special Needs, and Autism scholarship programs. More information on these scholarships is available online at education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships.

Hatem is a former development director for Columbus Bishop Hartley High School and also worked for The Catholic Foundation.

She was appointed to her current position, created last fall, to provide a closer link between the development office and schools, to activate the development consortium and to address the tuition needs of diocesan schools.

"My daily focus is on making Catholic education affordable for everyone who desires it," she said.

A quarterly newsletter has been established for anyone interested in learning more about the diocese's Catholic schools. If you are interested in receiving the newsletter or more information on diocesan schools, contact THatem@columbuscatholic.org.

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New system prepares schools for classroom, distance learning

By Doug Bean
Catholic Times Editor

Catholic schools are preparing to return to in-person instruction later this month for the start of the 2020-21 academic year, but have positioned themselves to handle whatever happens during the next few months.

If the state of Ohio declares that public educational institutions must return to online learning, as it did in March in response to the coronavirus pandemic, diocesan elementary and high schools have a system in place that will help them make a seamless transition from on-site to virtual classrooms or a combination of the two approaches.

Diocesan elementary schools and two high schools are implementing Digital Academy, a Cleveland-based education management system that allows for flexibility with in-home, in-school or merging both methods

SCHOOLS, continued from Page 3

home.

Dufault said that as of Monday, Aug. 10, all diocesan schools are classified in the first two tiers. Several schools still are working out an opening plan.

“It is possible that schools across our diocese may open differently, within different tiers or even moving between tiers during the year,” he said. “Schools have been sharing their detailed plans with families and will continue to do so as we monitor the developing COVID-19 situation carefully and work with our state and local government partners.

“While we are all deeply concerned about the health and safety of our students and staff, we are also concerned about the effects of continued separation of our community. Reopening in the fall is not a decision that we take lightly.”

The diocesan school reopening plan’s recommendations include a four-week design for rotation of classes and schedules to allow for changes that may result from the level of COVID cases in a given area; several possible ways of class scheduling, which would maintain limits on the number of students in a school building at any given time; staggered arrival and dismissal times; and socially distanced meals, to be eaten in classrooms rather than a large central area.

This past March, schools in the diocese and throughout the state abruptly had to begin full distance learning, ef-

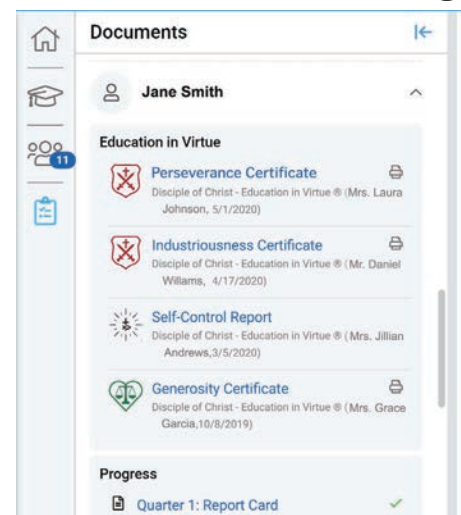


Students at Worthington St. Michael School used the LIVE Classroom feature of Digital Academy last fall as part of a pilot program. Photo courtesy St. Michael School

for student learning.

“Digital Academy sets us up to be successful and, no matter what happens, this system has the flexibility to either do blended or completely

remote (learning) if that’s what you have to do,” said Daphne Irby, associate director of K-12 Teaching and Learning for the Office of Catholic Schools. “And that’s what’s great



A screen shot shows how the program keeps Catholic culture present on a digital forum.

about it.”

Six schools – Worthington St. Michael, Delaware St. Mary, Grove City

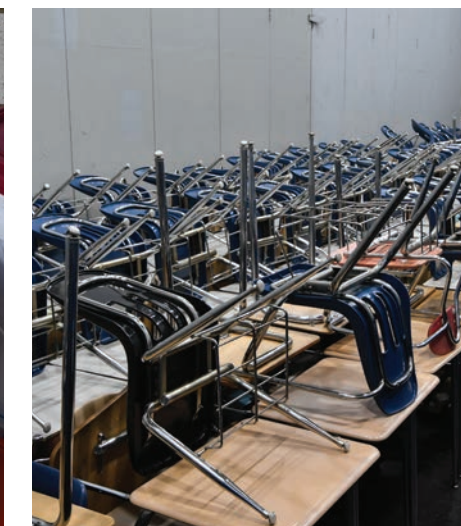
See SYSTEM, Page 8



Hand sanitizers have been installed throughout Bishop Ready High School.



Water fountains are off limits at Bishop Ready and other schools this year.



Desks and chairs are stacked in storage at Bishop Ready. CT photos by Ken Snow

fective Monday, March 16, after Gov. Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health issued an order closing all Ohio schools because of the pandemic. The initial order was for three weeks, later extended to May 1 and then to the end of the school year. This resulted in the cancellation of spring sports, proms and other school activities and meant that high school graduation ceremonies had to take place virtually.

“I’m proud of how well communities came together to support each other in the spring,” Dufault said. “The shutdown period was hard for everybody, but there always has been

a great bond between schools and their families, and they became even closer during this trying period. Our administrators, teachers and families pulled together to maintain their shared mission of providing a strong, faith-based education.”

After the 2019-20 academic year ended, a 14-member committee of teachers, administrators, nurses and representatives of the diocesan Office of Catholic Schools compiled a 33-page document to cover all aspects of safely reopening schools.



At St. Timothy School, principal George Mosholder said students will spend most of their time in their classrooms.

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Two child care centers open successfully for summer sessions

By Doug Bean
Catholic Times Editor

If parents have any trepidation about their children returning to the classroom in the next few weeks, two early childhood centers in the diocese have shown that the transition back to on-site learning can successfully be done.

Approximately 2 ½ months after Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine issued to schools an order in mid-March that eventually extended to the end of the academic year to switch to online instruction as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, Columbus Our Lady of Bethlehem (OLB) and London St. Patrick were able to reopen in June and begin their summer programs.

OLB, located at 4567 Olentangy River Road, followed guidelines established by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Ohio Department of Health while considering best practices to ensure the safety and wellness of all staff and students, OLB marketing



Children at Columbus Our Lady of Bethlehem engage in an activity this summer while maintaining proper physical distance.
Photo courtesy Our Lady of Bethlehem

and development coordinator Lauren Harrington explained.

“In order for this to happen, we reached out to registered families re-

garding their plans for attendance, and we used this information to plan for student groups that ranged from infant through grade six,” she said, and “it’s

gone very well. As with any change, we have had our hiccups, but overall our students and staff have adjusted well to the new routines, and we are happy to be providing a little bit of normalcy for our students and their families during this time.”

When diocesan schools return to face-to-face interaction in the next few weeks, they will be adjusting to a new normal as dictated by concerns about the spread of COVID-19. The new routines for OLB staff and students have included temperature checks before entering the building and throughout the day and masks for all staff and students in grades one to six. Younger students are given the option to wear a mask if parents request one, but it is not mandatory.

OLB adjusted its staff-student ratio for the summer reopening to follow ODE and ODJFS guidelines, which are 1:4 for infants, 1:6 for toddlers and 1:9 for preschool through grade six.

“We have created our student

See CENTERS, Page 9

SYSTEM, continued from Page 7

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Columbus All Saints Academy and Zanesville Bishop Fenwick Elementary School and Rosecrans High School – were part of a pilot program during the past academic year that provided valuable user experience.

St. Michael piloted a seventh-grade elective class on computer science and coding using Digital Academy’s LIVE Classroom feature.

“Piloting the online class in fall 2019 gave us an advantage when we faced COVID because we already had some experience in what is involved in setting up an online class culture,” said Sister John Paul Maher, OP, the school’s principal.

Digital Academy features curriculum, lesson planning and grading components, a student management system, data dashboard capabilities, streamlined enrollment and finance processes, and a live classroom.

Included are class pages where teachers can post announcements, documents, videos and instructions on a digital community page to students and parents and can see whether students have viewed the content; online lessons and discussion for students; livestream classes with multiple interactive capabilities; centralized communication that allows for email and text messaging to students and par-

ents; forms for medical information, tuition payments and cafeteria management; and curriculum mapping, lesson planning and grade books for teachers.

The Digital Academy test in the past academic year proved to be particularly fortuitous when the COVID-19 outbreak forced the shutdown of schools across the nation. More than two years ago, the Office of Catholic Schools had decided to begin evaluating new school information systems and considered several options.

“As a result, the piloting of a platform that incorporates online learning and LIVE classrooms was already in the works as we faced the challenges of a school closure,” Sister John Paul said. “We especially appreciate the learning module format that allows teachers to see how each individual student is progressing, down to the seconds of how much they viewed a video.

“It also has been a cost saver and more environmentally friendly to eliminate photocopying of worksheets since documents can be digitally handed out, written on and graded for each student online.”

Parents and students have their own accounts and are provided access to assignments and progress reports to view what has been completed and

what needs to be done.

“The feedback we got from the pilot school is, once the parents were on and using the system, they were very, very, very happy with it,” Irby said.

A key component of Digital Academy is a built-in component to integrate Catholic culture through the Disciples of Christ and Education in Virtue programs for character formation.

“What has been most important to us is that Digital Academy found a way to incorporate our Catholic culture by bringing our Education in Virtue approach online,” Sister John Paul said. “Educating in Virtue and sending home certificates rewarding the virtuous actions of students has continued through DA, with an added ability for parents to be able to view this positive feedback on their phones.

“Knowing the time spent online is also intended to be relational and in keeping with the dignity of the human person, Digital Academy builds in support for communicating in a manner consistent with safe environments and Christian virtue.”

Elementary administrators and teachers have spent part of the summer receiving instruction on how to use and implement Digital Academy in the classroom. Nearly all elementary schools in the diocese, as well as Bishop Rosecrans and New Phila-

delphia Tuscarawas Central Catholic high schools will use the program. The other diocesan high schools will utilize various online systems.

Irby said training will continue until the start of classes on Digital Academy, which has hired additional personnel to work specifically with the Diocese of Columbus. S3 Technologies, which is a tech consulting group, has provided professional development and supported some of the schools that need more guidance.

“Some features like the online classroom module we need available immediately for our school reopening, and the teachers are learning how to use those features now,” Irby said. “And then there are other nice-to-have kind of things that can wait until later in the year.”

The sudden pivot to online learning in March gave schools a chance to evaluate student needs at home. Chromebooks were made available to most students, and “some of our administrators went out of their way to find hotspots for students who might not have had internet access,” Irby said.

“It was a challenge in the spring, but now some of the internet companies are offering things that are going to make it easier for us in the fall.”

CENTERS, *continued from Page 8*

groups to follow the reduced staff-student ratios issued by Gov. DeWine, ODE and ODJFS,” Harrington said. “In adapting to the new state staff-student ratios, students get more one-on-one learning time, which benefits the students. We have also arranged classrooms in new and creative ways to encourage both safe distancing and student learning.”

Among the other changes at OLB are new drop-off and pick-up procedures and more frequent hand washing and sanitizing.

“Our students and families have adjusted quickly,” Harrington said. “Our 3-year-old preschool group is the first to make sure their peers are following these new procedures, too. Overall, we have received positive reactions from both parents and students. Parents have been respectful and grateful for OLB’s safety protocols.”

The possibility of illness always exists in schools, but COVID-19 has placed a new emphasis on cleaning and sanitizing for preschool and child care programs.

“We have increased the frequency in which we disinfect high-touch surfaces, classroom furniture and students’ toys and manipulatives,” Harrington said. “Staff and students are also asked to wash their hands thoroughly every time they change spaces (from the playground to their classroom, for example).”

“While we previously encouraged students as young as 2 ½ years old to serve their own snack foods (with assistance) to promote independence and motor skills, we have temporarily changed procedure so that teachers are the only ones serving snacks to students to reduce the potential for cross contact.”

Harrington said OLB will resume a traditional schedule for the 2020-21 school year that includes in-person classes.

“Class sizes will be smaller than normal to adhere to the adjusted teacher-student ratios that are required by the state,” she said. “Modifications may also be made within classrooms in accordance with the state, diocese and licensing agencies guidelines.”

London St. Patrick’s preschool and school-age care program reopened on June 10 after ensuring all state and diocesan protocols were met. Polly Forde-Johnston, the preschool director, said the school had reached out to the Madison County Public Health Department to submit a reopening plan and ask for its advice. After acting on several suggestions from the health department and receiving approval, the diocesan schools office gave the all-clear for children to return.

“I think what helped was, our preschool is in a separate building (a former convent) from the elementary school, and we were not going to use any of the school facilities,” Forde-Johnston said.

Enrollment in the summer preschool, school-age and latchkey groups was reduced from 27 to 30 in past years to about 10 to make sure operations went smoothly.

“I thought it was good practice for our staff,” Forde-Johnston said, “because this is how the school is going to look like (in the fall). By then, we’ll know all the protocols we’ve been doing and it will be like second nature.”

Parents adapted to the new procedures, she said. “I think they were glad that we could provide them the service through the summer. They had to go back to work, and many of them had been relying on grandparents to watch their kids’ children.”

The summer program adopted a “Not All Heroes Wear Capes” theme to show the children how others in the community were adapting to the new norms, which include wearing masks and taking other precautions. “We had the fire department come by in their masks, the sheriff’s department and construction workers,” Forde-Johnston said.

St. Patrick’s summer program ended this past week. Its day care opens Aug. 24, two weeks before the preschool on Sept. 9, to get those children accustomed to the routines. There are 28 children from ages 3 to 5 enrolled in the day care and preschool. During a normal year, that number would be between 36 and 40.

In the preschool’s four classrooms, there will be between six and nine students in each, depending on the size of the room.

“Our classrooms look different,” Forde-Johnston explained. “We took out all of our carpets because we can’t sanitize every day. We have assigned each child a spot on the table, and they’re distanced apart. They still have their toys, which we switch out every day, cleaned of course, but they play with a specific set of toys, and we put them in buckets.”

“The plan is to make it as normal as possible for the kids, still doing our circle time, calendar and all the routines the same. We’re trying to avoid situations where they sit on the floor because that’s when easily get physically close to each other. Most of them know that they have to find a spot on the floor, an X, and that’s where they sit.”

But there will no longer be sharing of supplies, and the children will be asked to bring their own water bottle every day instead of using a water



Children in London St. Patrick School’s summer program sit in assigned spots as part of the new norms that schools will follow this year.

Photo courtesy London St. Patrick School

fountain, which has been turned off. Each classroom will be assigned a designated bathroom.

Playgrounds will be in use, but the kids will take turns. In the past, every class tried to go out at 11 a.m. each day to play together, “but this year we can’t,” Forde-Johnston said. “We’ll just have to take turns, and we’ll all just spread out when we’re outside.”

Lunch and snack times also will be different. Children will have the option to pack food or purchase school meals, but eating will be restricted to the classrooms. In the past, the day care and preschool went to the elementary school cafeteria for lunch. “But I believe we will still do birthdays,” Forde-Johnston said. “We just don’t want to take that away from the kids. The parents just can’t come in and celebrate with us.”

Latchkey students from the elementary school will remain in that building after classes end for the day, and the teachers from the aftercare program will go there rather than having the students come to the preschool, to avoid cross-contamination within the two environments.

Teachers in the preschool and day care will follow a daily ritual that includes washing hands upon arrival, temperature check and logging the temperature before clocking in. They will wear masks while in the building,

“We might be using face shields in some certain parts of the day when we’re doing instruction, especially when we’re doing sounds,” Forde-Johnston said. “We already have been doing this some this summer, and they’ll continue on in the fall. For kids with speech impediments, it’s just frustrating for them if

they can’t see our mouths when we’re talking. We’re also looking into see-through masks.

“Everybody struggles with it, but they know it’s for their own good.”

Children will not be required to wear a mask unless the county is considered to be on red alert, which is determined by the number of COVID-19 cases. If that should happen, the day care would stay open and the children would be encouraged to wear masks.

“Nobody enters the building but us. The parents are outside,” Forde-Johnston said. “When I did my reopening, I told the health department we were not just following the mandate, but we were doing recommended best practices, and I think that helped because it showed we were going above and beyond. But that’s what we’ve always done here.”

OLB and St. Patrick have shared their reopening experiences with other preschool directors throughout the diocese to help make their start of the school year a little smoother.

“Our last virtual meeting with the directors ... I was answering questions like, ‘What do you do when it comes to this? What do you do when it comes to that?’” Forde-Johnston said.

“We have offered as much guidance as we can to other directors who have reached out, but guidelines can change daily. It is unknown how long the pandemic will be around, but we will be around for each other. We are all in this together, continuing to find solutions that keep our buildings open and students in them learning and growing in faith. That is the very nature of a Catholic school community.” OLB’s Harrington said.

Summer camp attracts youths despite pandemic

Middle- and high-school students encounter Christ through activities, prayer, devotions at Damascus Mission Campus

By Tim Puet
Catholic Times Reporter

In a year when the coronavirus halted many traditional activities, Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC) successfully continued its mission of enabling young people to encounter Jesus Christ through combining high adventure activities with a program of Mass, prayer, devotions, discussion and encounters with Jesus that's deeply rooted in Catholic teaching.

Restrictions resulting from the virus meant the camp wasn't operating at full capacity, but even so, it hosted about 2,500 middle- and high-school students from mid-June to mid-August in weekly programs at the 471-acre Damascus Catholic Mission Campus near Centerburg in rural Knox County.

Another 250 young people took part at their homes in a virtual camp that was an outgrowth of a video series which the Damascus staff produced after 17 retreats scheduled by parishes and school groups had to be canceled during the two months when the pandemic first hit.

Each week of camp begins with a

Mass on Sunday afternoon and ends with a program on Friday afternoon at which campers are invited before the start of Mass to describe what the week has meant to them. More than 40 of the approximately 340 young people attending camp during the last week of July responded to the invitation on Friday, July 31 and enthusiastically proclaimed that the experience had strengthened their faith.

A typical testimony came from Jacqueline Kuehl, an eighth-grader from Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church. "I was here last year and had a great experience, but this year I wanted more," she said. "One evening during Eucharistic Adoration while my eyes were closed and I was praying, I heard a voice saying I should open my eyes and turn to the right. I did, and saw fish jumping in the water of the camp lake and cows grazing on the farmland next door.

"Everyone else was praying, but somehow I knew I was hearing the voice of Jesus. He said to me, 'Look at my creation and see how beautiful it is and how much I love them. You are my creation, and I love you even more.'"

A girl who identified herself as Emma, from Powell St. Joan of Arc Church, spoke of how accepting the challenge of some of the camp's high-adventure activities made her feel much braver by the end of the week. She concluded by saying, "I want to share Jesus' word with every-



Father Paul Dressler, OFM Cap. of Washington, D.C., greets Annabelle Duross (red mask) of Columbus St. Andrew Church and her cousin, Marie Schueneman of St. Paul on the Lake Parish in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, at Catholic Youth Summer Camp.

one at church and home, all my sports teams and friends, so they all can feel the love I felt this week."

Several other students gave similar testimonies about the combined impact of the camp's physical and spiritual activities. The most enthusiastic response from the campers was for Gabby Stevens, who said she will be entering seventh grade at Columbus Immaculate Conception School in the fall and is not a Catholic.

"Jesus kept calling me during camp and saying he wants me to join him," she said. "Especially during Adoration as he was walking around the camp lodge (in the form of the Eucharist displayed in a monstrance), I felt so drawn to him. At that point, I made up my mind that I definitely want to be a Catholic." That declaration was

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Young people mingle with religious and others head off to participate in activities at the Damascus Catholic Mission Campus near Centerburg in rural Knox County.



Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati elevates the Eucharist during Mass at Catholic Youth Summer Camp.
CT photos by Ken Snow

Student 'transformed' during week at camp

By Ellie Hanson

Entering my freshman year of high school and, before that, my first stay at Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC), I felt lost without a group of true friends, anxious about my future, broken from past experiences that called for forgiveness of others and myself and troubled by a lack of confidence as a person, let alone as a disciple of Jesus.

But Jesus, being who He is, met me where I was and transformed me. Throughout my week at CYSC, I experienced Jesus and the life that I was called to live. He was evident in the high-adventure, faith-inspiring activities that the camp provides, its amazing, Jesus-loving community and the renewing and life-giving power of daily Mass, talks, Adoration and prayer ministry offered there.

During camp, I was becoming more confident and joyful. God reminded me that I was His daughter; I was loved, worthy and enough. He called me into a freedom and abundance in

life that I didn't know was possible. He told my heart not to keep the good gifts and transformation that He had given me, but to pour it out as a witness to others, calling them into life with Him.

Because of that first week and subsequent stays at CYSC, I have fallen in love more deeply with God and have developed a boldness and hunger to grow in my faith. Consequently, my high school experience has been different than that of most of my classmates because I am living a life set apart for Jesus.

I would rather lead a youth ministry event than go to a weekend party, or attend a praise and worship service rather than a Friday night football game because, in the end, I know Jesus is all that my heart desires and all that matters. I am willing to live a life that is a witness to the glory of God and to call as many people to His Heart as I can.

As an incoming high school senior and having spent my last week at CYSC, I have been reflecting on



Ellie Hanson (right) is interviewed at Catholic Youth Summer Camp by Rachel Hare. Both are students at Columbus Bishop Watterson High School. Photo courtesy Ellie Hanson

how the Lord has worked through the many campers who flock there from across the world and how they are transformed by Him. CYSC is a place of deep and authentic love of Jesus, and it has transformed my faith life.

At CYSC, I put into practice and cultivated my faith, and it provided me with the tools to continue to grow closer to Jesus. The camp's en-

vironment that is so on fire for Jesus inspired me to go out into my community, to truly step into boldness and to love others as Jesus would. And although this school year will look different than usual, I know that the Lord will provide in abundance.

Ellie Hanson is a senior at Columbus Bishop Watterson High School.

SUMMER CAMP, continued from Page 10

followed by a chant of "Yes, yes, yes" from the audience. Stevens concluded by saying, "God told me he's present in the Eucharist, and I know he's always there."

Besides hosting students in grades six to 12, the camp trained 180 young adult lay missionaries this summer who helped conduct CYSC programs. About 50 missionaries will return in the fall to take part in on-site and online programming, conduct retreats and after-school Bible studies, and perform community outreach, working through youth ministries at parishes and schools throughout Ohio, mostly in the Diocese of Columbus.

Victoria D'Angelo is one of those missionaries. Originally from Findlay, she was involved in campus ministry as an Ohio State University student and was invited to join the CYSC staff five years ago by a friend. She has been a full-time missionary for two years and this year will serve as Damascus outreach manager.

"I was a little apprehensive about coming here the first time, but I thought I'd give it a try," she said. "It was harder than I expected, but I learned that year how much middle- and high-school students need to learn about the Catholic Church. The next



Left to right, Emma Rozanski, 12, and Thomas Hart, 13, of Powell St. Joan of Arc Church and Addie Wechter, 15, of Jackson Holy Trinity Church give their personal testimonies at Catholic Youth Summer Camp. CT photos by Ken Snow

summer, I still was hesitant, but the Lord closed other doors to me and I returned here.

"That summer changed my life. It brought me a powerful realization of what it means to be a Catholic, and I was so transformed that I just wanted to pour out my life for Jesus. I came to a fuller understanding of the importance of faith formation in the mid-

dle-school and high-school years. I realized that you can prevent bad things from happening to so many young people at this time, and that by reaching the young people, you can convert their families," said D'Angelo, who has been married for three months to A.J. D'Angelo, Damascus operations director.

Three months ago, there was doubt

that the camp could hold on-site summer operations because of the pandemic. Restrictions ordered by the state meant that about 2,500 young people were unable to take part in the retreats during the spring, and the 50 missionaries living at the Damascus

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Archbishop Dennis Schnurr distributes Holy Communion to Avery Thielman of Hilliard St. Brendan Church during a Mass at Catholic Youth Summer Camp. CT photos by Ken Snow

Summer camp lesson: Sainthood is doable

By Abby Smith

Have you ever read the life of a saint and thought, “It would be impossible for me to live out holiness in that way”?

Most Catholics probably have, and I am no exception. I used to think holiness and sainthood were ridiculous ideas, formed by people who had never faced the brokenness of the world or just had super-easy lives. I wondered if they knew how hard it was for normal people to live like Jesus.

Similar thoughts ran through my mind as a high school camper when it came to the missionaries working at Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC). I had never seen the faith lived out in such a radical, joyful and all-encompassing way, and it confused me. I thought maybe they had gotten the abundance of “holiness” graces that God forgot to give to me.

Now, four years and five summers into my journey as a Damascus/CYSC missionary, I’ve learned the secret to their success:

Jesus must be at the center of everything. Always.

It doesn’t seem like a foreign concept, and maybe it’s not, but as it turns out, the application of the catechism we memorized in grade school is much harder than you’d expect – almost as if it was intended to cost us something.

My first summer on staff, I quickly learned that the measure of our holiness lies much less in doing all things perfectly and much more in surrendering ourselves completely. Jesus asks a simple thing of us, that we would let Him guide us in each moment toward becoming like Him. This is the path of a saint; it’s the path we walk each day as CYSC missionaries.

Much could be said about the day-to-day function of our camp. Every morning, I watch as hundreds of young campers start their day in prayer. They are taught and equipped to turn to God and to have a relationship with Him that is personal and primary.

During each activity round and at beach time, I watch as young people are given opportunities to realize their greatness, to do something bold, scary or uncomfortable for the sake of discovery and unraveling – the discovery of who they are made to be, and the power that lives inside them because of Jesus, and the unraveling of the ties that bind them to the world, the weight that years of searching has placed on their shoulders.

Because of the great freedom that the days yield, every evening I watch these campers boldly and unapologetically give themselves to the One who has given them everything. They

SUMMER CAMP, continued from Page 11

campus found themselves facing an uncertain future.

A media studio built in cooperation with St. Gabriel Radio had just been completed at the site, so the camp staff decided to reach out through the new facility to families forced by COVID-19 to stay home. From mid-March to mid-May, Damascus presented a series of three programs livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube and designed to bring the CYSC experience into homes.

These included a daily focus on Scripture in the morning, a Holy Hour every weekday afternoon, and a three-times-a-week event titled *Damascus Night LIVE*, which included skits, music, games, teaching and prayer.

Aaron Richards, one of Damascus’ two executive directors, said the programs were viewed by more than 150,000 individuals and families. “This opened our eyes to the potential impact of digital programming,” he said. “Many people told us their lives were changed and their families were brought closer together through our presentation of the Gospel and our daily prayer labs and the joy they could see through *Damascus Night LIVE*.

“With that in mind, we’ve continued our video outreach through our virtual summer camp. This fall, we plan to partner with parishes and faith communities to provide faith formation through a full four-year program titled *Damascus ALIVE*, which we’re in the process of putting together. It will be able to serve as a complement or even an alternative option to the traditional parish school of religion.”

Richards said the camp staff was set to continue its daily video program if the state had prevented summer camping activities from taking place, but the Ohio Department of Health on June 1 allowed youth day camps and residential camps to reopen as long as all safety standards were met. That meant CYSC could conduct most of its planned programming.

The first week of camp, set for June 7-12, was rescheduled to allow camp staff to prepare for on-site programming. The remaining programs went on as scheduled, with the final session concluding on Friday, Aug. 14.

Richards said about 4,300 students originally had registered for camp, with about 60 percent canceling their reservations because of the pandemic. “We permitted people to cancel without consequences before we knew residential camps would be allowed,” Richards said. “That was a real challenge, and we’re grateful that so many people chose to stay the course, while we understand the concerns of those who canceled.”



Father John Ignatius of the Servants of Jesus Christ in Denver appeals to young male campers to consider a religious vocation.



Sister Lety Guadalupe of the Apostolic Sisters of St. John in Princeville, Illinois, asks young women campers to think about religious life.



Canoeing is one of the high adventure activities that young people participate in at Catholic Youth Summer Camp.



A group of girls takes a break on their final day at Catholic Youth Summer Camp.
CT photos by Ken Snow



Bailey Kerins, 13, writes on her leg while playing tic-tac-toe with Grace Rizzo, 13. Both are members of Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church.



Zach Thomas of Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church goes for the dunk over James Maholm of Columbus St. Patrick Church on the basketball court.



Gabby Stevens, 12, tells fellow campers that she wants to become a Catholic after her week at CYSC. She is a student at Columbus Immaculate Conception School.

SAINTHOOD, continued from Page 12

know now what His life feels like; they have tasted and seen and are hungry for more.

Yes, much could be said about the day-to-day function of our camp and my role as a missionary. But the most important, I believe, is this:

Every day, I am new. Every day, I learn something from the campers we serve, and every day, I am called to greater heights of holiness because of the way that I see our campers step in. Every day, I am reminded of why I began in the first place, and that is to give my life away in pursuit of sainthood – the sainthood that is so tangible to me now because

I see it happening in the lives around me.

“What’s it like to be a CYSC missionary?” they ask.

It is holy. Set apart. It is sacrifice and hard work. It is endless joy and overwhelming peace. It is becoming like a child and allowing myself to learn from their experience.

It is realizing that sainthood is right in front of me if I am willing to run toward it.

Abby Smith is a missionary at Catholic Youth Summer Camp from Mount Vernon and on the staff at Damascus Catholic Mission Campus, located near Centerburg in Knox County.

SUMMER CAMP, continued from Page 12

Distancing restrictions meant that masks were mandatory and that most CYSC activities took place in groups with a maximum of 10 people. “With 340 campers, that meant we had to have 34 things going at once, so we had plenty of activities to keep the staff busy,” Richards said.

The only times when larger gatherings were organized were meals, the closing Mass and a campwide “Club” program from 6:30 to 9:30 nightly that had a structure similar to that of *Damascus Night LIVE*, with skits, faith-sharing dramas, music, worship, games, other activities, teaching and preaching.

20th Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year A)

Allow God's mercy to work within you

Isaiah 56:1,6-7
Psalm 67:2-3,5,6,8
Romans 11:13-15,29-32
Matthew 15:21-28

God reveals to us in many ways that His will is for the salvation of the whole human race, all the nations. The Scriptures, when properly understood, are always a call to the nations and an appeal to each of us to enter into God's own way of thinking. We are to praise God on principle, saying, "O God, let all the nations praise you!"

This plan of salvation envisions all peoples and nations ministering to God, loving the name of the Lord, becoming His servants and participating in the way of life that keeps the Sabbath free from profanation and holds to God's covenant.

So many misread the Scriptures by missing the fact that God's vision is, from start to finish, a vision of mercy. It does not take away suffering, but rather, offers meaning to suffering. It is a plan that is inclusive. When there seems to be an exclusion, a deeper look will always reveal that God is inviting a unique individual or a "peculiar people" to discover the greatness God has planted into each one for the sake of all. Even when God appears to be showing favoritism, it is never to the exclusion of others. It is a step along the way, part of the "divine pedagogy" for His children who have yet to receive the whole picture.

Between God and the human condition, there is a need for a direct point of contact. In today's Gospel, there is an apparent separation that corresponds to the "expected" divisions that were present in the land of Israel at the time of Jesus. The persistence of the Canaanite woman shows how God works gradually to open the minds and hearts of those who are "His own" to the broader vision. No-

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Timothy Hayes

Father Timothy M. Hayes is pastor of Chillicothe St. Mary and St. Peter; and Waverly, St. Mary, Queen of the Missions.



tice the movement: Jesus and His disciples first "fail" in "hearing the cry" that is addressed to Jesus, even though it clearly acknowledges who He is: ("Lord, Son of David") and asks for something God alone can give ("have pity on me").

Human beings must come to understand the difference between reacting and responding. Where we tend to give in to our first movement, reacting to whatever we encounter with our biases and prejudices, the expectations that have accumulated through the sum total of our life experiences, the Lord invites us to grow. Jesus' response to the woman and to His disciples serves to bring to light what was before not realized: His public ministry is but the beginning of the implementation of the Kingdom of God. He was sent to "the lost sheep of the House of Israel." But that is not where His ministry ends. Rather, this ministry, which is to be carried forward by His disciples, by the Church in every age, will continue to stretch the boundaries. All the nations have already begun to praise the Lord by the woman's acknowledgment of who Jesus is and of the connection that is already present when the Kingdom is brought to birth among God's own children.

How are we to continue to allow the kingdom to take root among us? We must begin where we are and must be ready to stretch when we are called to do so. We must not seek to limit the extent of God's mercy.

Let us accept the challenge offered to us and examine our personal approach to our faith. Who is included?

21st Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year A)

Isaiah 22:19-23
Psalm 138:1-2,2-3,6,8
Romans 11:33-36
Matthew 16:13-20

God's love is eternal. He will not forsake us, for He made us, we are the work of His hands. Cooperation with grace is required. We must choose to accept and profess the truth. With Peter, we say to Jesus, "You are the Christ." Our purpose is to draw others

Live for eternity now rather than later

to Jesus Christ. We discover how to accomplish this task through cooperation with the Holy Spirit. We have the responsibility and the authority to invite others to faith and to grow in our own knowledge of truth.

Many people worry about the end of their lives, especially during these days of uncertainty. Will there be a test? Will we pass the test? Will we get to go to heaven and see our loved ones again? The primary test is the daily

THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

8/17-8/22

MONDAY

Ezekiel 24:15-24
 Deuteronomy 32:18-21 (Ps)
 Matthew 19:16-22

TUESDAY

Ezekiel 28:1-10
 Deuteronomy 32:26-28,
 30,35c-36b (Ps)
 Matthew 19:23-30

WEDNESDAY

Ezekiel 34:1-11
 Psalm 23:1-6
 Matthew 20:1-16

THURSDAY

Ezekiel 36:23-28
 Psalm 51:12-15,18-19
 Matthew 22:1-14

FRIDAY

Ezekiel 37:1-14
 Psalm 107:2-9
 Matthew 22:34-40

SATURDAY

Ezekiel 43:1-7ab
 Psalm 85:9ab,10-14
 Matthew 23:1-12

8/24-8/29

MONDAY

Revelation 21:9b-14
 Psalm 145:10-13ab,17-18
 John 1:45-51

TUESDAY

2 Thessalonians 2:
 1-3a,14-17
 Psalm 96:10-13
 Matthew 22:23-26

WEDNESDAY

2 Thessalonians 3:
 6-10,16-18
 Psalm 128:1-2,4-5
 Matthew 23:27-32

THURSDAY

1 Corinthians 1:1-9
 Psalm 145:2-7
 Matthew 24:42-51

FRIDAY

1 Corinthians 1:17-25
 Psalm 33:1-2,4-5,10-11
 Matthew 25:1-13

SATURDAY

1 Corinthians 1:26-31
 Psalm 33:12-13,
 18-19,20-21
 Mark 6:17-29

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION
MASS SCHEDULE: WEEKS OF AUGUST 16 & 23, 2020

SUNDAY MASS

10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

10:30 a.m. Mass from Portsmouth St. Mary Church on St. Gabriel Radio (FM 88.3), Portsmouth.

Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus and 10:30 a.m. on WHIZ-TV, Channel 18, Zanesville. Mass from St. Francis de Sales Seminary, Milwaukee, at 10 a.m. on WWHO-TV. Check local cable system for cable channel listing.

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight

Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).

Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 250, or DirecTV Channel 305).

Mass from Massillon St. Mary Church at 10:30 a.m. on WILB radio (AM 1060, FM 94.5 and 89.5), Canton, heard in Tuscarawas, Holmes, and Coshocton counties.

DAILY MASS

8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above; and on i-Lifetv (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City, Washington C.H.; Channel 125,

Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; Channel 207, Zanesville).

8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

Videos of Masses are available at any time on the internet at these parish websites: Mattingly Settlement St. Mary (www.stannstmary.org); Columbus St. Patrick (www.stpatrickcolumbus.org); Delaware St. Mary (www.delawarestmary.org); Westerville St. Paul (www.stpaulcatholicchurch.org) and Sunbury St. John Neumann (www.saintjohnsunbury.org).

We pray Weeks IV and I, Seasonal Proper, Liturgy of the Hours.

Who is left out? Are we caught up in "the blame game?" Do we accept our responsibility to those in need?

Whose cry do we fail to hear? What will it take to make our Church truly a house of prayer for all people?

grind of life itself. When we reach the end of our earthly lives and encounter the living God, we will be able to do only what we have prepared ourselves to do. It is not possible that we can do only what we want to do for all of our lives, giving in to our whims and to the temptations that surround us and then, by some miraculous intervention, be free enough to say our "Yes" to the kingdom in the final moment when it really counts. We are called to be spir-

itually aware at every moment of our lives and to put our lives in service of God and His people.

Like the athletes our age so admires, we are to prepare ourselves to face the foe and to do the combat required on the field by practice and attention to the fundamentals in season and out of season. God wants us to be in a living

Local news and events

Annual Italian Festival canceled

The 41st annual Columbus Italian Festival at Columbus St. John the Baptist Church, scheduled for Friday, Oct. 9 to Sunday, Oct. 11, has been canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Also canceled was A Taste of Italy on Monday, Oct. 5.

“The safety of our neighbors, guests, volunteers, staff, participants, sponsors, vendors and everyone involved is our greatest priority. The demands of social distancing, insuring the utmost safe and quality event, and financial responsibility dictate this decision,” said a statement by Deacon Frank Iannarino, parish administrator, and festival chairman Adam Montemarano.

Anniversary Mass postponed

The 200th anniversary Mass for Danville St. Luke Church, which Bishop Robert Brennan was to have celebrated on Saturday, Aug. 15, the Feast of the Assumption, has been postponed. No new date has been set.

Good Shepherd Catechesis training rescheduled

Training for teachers of Level II of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, which had been scheduled to begin this month at Columbus St. Ladislav Church, 277 Reeb Ave., has been

postponed. It is now scheduled to open on Saturday, Oct. 24 and continue on one Saturday a month through June 2022 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

To register, go to www.columbus-catholic.org/cgs to find a flyer for the program, fill out the information and send the completed flyer with a \$100 nonrefundable deposit to St. Ladislav Church by Sunday, Sept. 20. Total cost for the program is \$535 for diocesan catechists and \$575 for non-diocesan catechists.

Level II is for children ages 6 to 9. Training for teachers of Level I, for children ages 3 to 6, is a 12-day, two-week program and will take place in 2021 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, June 21 to Saturday, June 26 and Monday, July 26 to Saturday, July 31 at Columbus St. Cecilia Church, 434 Norton Road.

To register, find the flyer at www.columbuscatholic.org, fill out the information and send a completed flyer with a \$100 nonrefundable deposit to St. Cecilia Church. Cost for the program is \$485 for diocesan catechists and \$535 for non-diocesan catechists.

Training for teachers of Level III, for children older than 9, is tentatively set for the summers of 2022 and 2023.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Montessori-based spiritual formation program for children.

SCHOOLS, continued from Page 7

All school reopening plans described in the document include research-based guidelines specifying social distancing of 6 feet, required face coverings, enhanced cleaning and sanitation procedures and new illness protocols, as specified by the Ohio Department of Education’s Reset and Restart education planning guide.

The document recommends dis-

tance learning times ranging from 20 to 60 minutes daily for pre-kindergarten students to 2 to 4 ½ hours a day for students in grades nine to 12.

Dufault said he doesn’t know how many videoconferences and other online meetings he has attended since mid-March, “but I’m sure it’s well into the several hundreds.” These included daily meetings with all principals while school was still in ses-

SCRIPTURE, continued from Page 14

relationship with Him now, not just in heaven. What we choose to do in time will be reflected in our encounter with eternity when we receive our personal call to the kingdom.

God is involved in our world. He created us with free will. He does allow us to create troubles for ourselves and for others. But He has a purpose for each one of us. If we fulfill our purpose, we are made “like a peg in a sure spot, to be a place of honor for our family.” If we face the truth of our own responsibility

and do our best to meet it, then God can do great things in us. God always will do the great things He has promised; but we may find ourselves left out in the cold if we fail to meet the test in day-to-day life. We are blessed and assured of God’s own power in the face of the evils and burdens of our time.

The Church calls us to relate to the Creator of the universe now in such a way as to prepare to live with Him in eternity. The Church was established by Jesus Himself on the faith of Peter

CATHOLIC WORD SEARCH

THE ASSUMPTION

www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

I	Y	T	A	K	E	N	U	P	Q	P	L	D	P	I
O	V	Z	Z	T	S	U	G	U	A	U	U	O	U	X
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AUGUST
BODY AND SOUL
DOGMA
DORMITION
ETERNAL LIFE

GLORY
HEAVEN
MARY
MYSTERY
NEW EVE

OBLIGATION
PIUS XII
SOLEMNITY
TAKEN UP
UNCORRUPTED

sion and weekly meetings since then, plus additional meetings with smaller groups, such as elementary and secondary school principals and those inside and outside Franklin County, as well as with education officials from the state and other Ohio dioceses.

“We learned a lot about technology and online education in the last few months,” Dufault said. “Many of these lessons will continue to be

pertinent. Through trial and error and frequency, we’ve found how to do video conferences in a productive and meaningful way to provide more support to the schools.”

Several Catholic dioceses throughout Ohio and the nation announced closings or mergers of schools this

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 16

and the Apostles, who were the first to come to understand what He was offering. As the Church today, we share the capacity to pray always, to hear God’s Word in every assembly, to receive the Bread of Life, and to share our faith with all who are willing to give us a hearing.

As members of the Church, we have a great responsibility for the world. We are to live in the world as it is, acknowledging that belong to God. We are to live by God’s commandments

in order to show His Wisdom. We are to share freely what we have received through faith. When we discover who we are and live up to our responsibilities, we truly live a good life and are made ready for eternity.

May we respond in freedom to live for God and in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ, Whom we acknowledge to be the Son of the living God.

“To Him be glory, forever and ever. Amen.”

PRAY FOR OUR DEAD



ALTIERI, Yolanda "Ida" (Maugeri), 93, July 27
St. Joseph Church, Dover

ANGUS, Charles E., 76, Aug. 2
Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church, Columbus

CLIPPARD, Mark R., 55, Aug. 3
St. Anthony Church, Columbus

COLOPY, Dorothy (Mickley), 88, July 23
St. Luke Church, Danville

CUA, John R., 63, July 26
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

DEVERY, Elizabeth J., 83, July 17
St. Paul Church, Westerville

DIGIACOMO, Dominic Jr., 91, July 22
St. Paul Church, Westerville

DOERSAM, Betty A., 89, July 14
St. Mary, Mother of God Church, Columbus

DRAGHI, Raymond A., 93, Aug. 6
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus

DUEMMEL, Robert A., 87, July 23
St. Pius X Church, Reynoldsburg

ELDRIDGE, Edwina M. "Peach," 76, July 30
St. Michael Church, Worthington

EVANS, H. Robert, Aug. 1
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

FIEGL, Mary J. (Wind), 76, July 31
St. Joseph Church, Dover

FRIES, Anna C. (Kosorotoff), 91, July 26
St. Agatha Church, Columbus

GLAUDER, Mary L., 91, Aug. 6
Christ the King Church, Columbus

GRAYTOCK, Marie M. (Borosky), 88, Aug. 3
St. Mary Church, Marion

HANLIN, Charles W., 90, July 27
St. Pius X Church, Reynoldsburg

KEELER, Dale E., 85, Aug. 4
St. Leonard Church, Heath

LATHAM, Janice (Lawrence), 91, Aug. 1
Sacred Heart Church, Coshocton

LININGER, Patricia A. (Ortman), 90, July 24
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

LOPEZ AJUALIP, Geremias, 19, July 26
St. Joseph Church, Dover

MUDGETT, Dorothy J. (Hermes), 86, July 24
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Marysville

ORSINI, Patricia D. (Bierberg), 76, formerly of Columbus, July 23
St. Anastasia Church, St. Petersburg, Fla.

OWENS, Robert, 87, July 26
St. Mary, Mother of God Church, Columbus

PALLAY, Rachel A., 53, Aug. 6
St. Catharine Church, Columbus

PARHAM, Juandell, 84, July 22
Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church, Columbus

PATTERSON, Patricia L., 58, July 10
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

PETROWSKY, Anthony, 72, July 20
St. John Neumann Church, Sunbury

POWERS, Matthew, 58, Aug. 2
St. John Neumann Church, Sunbury

PUSATERI, Anthony S., 93, July 30
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

PYATT, Ralph T., 90, July 17
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

RENAT, Nicholas A., 75, July 21
St. Mark Church, Lancaster

SANESE, Theodora "Dora" (Marasco), 89, July 30
St. Timothy Church, Columbus

SCHUMICK, Doug, 64, formerly of Columbus, July 28
St. Vincent Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

SHEEHAN, Connor J. "Guido," 26, July 26
St. Peter Church, Columbus

SPEAKMAN, Rita A., 94, July 10
Holy Spirit Church, Columbus

STUHLREHER, Antoinette "Toni" (Greene), 83, formerly of Columbus, July 29
St. Pius X Church, Indianapolis

SULCER, Rita (Weaver), 100, Aug. 2
St. Joseph Church, Dover

VANO, Myrtle A., 99, July 31
St. Edward Church, Granville

WILLIAMS, Madeleine (Dunne), 94, June 16
St. Peter Church, Columbus

WRIGHT, Frances A. (Callahan), 73, Aug. 5
St. Joseph Church, Circleville

Sister Rose Marie Canty, CSC

Funeral Mass for Sister Rose Marie Canty, CSC, 94, who died Tuesday, July 21, was celebrated Wednesday, July 22 in the Church of Our Lady of Loretto, Notre Dame, Indiana, followed by burial at Our Lady of Peace Cemetery in Notre Dame.

She was born on Aug. 7, 1925 in Midland, Maryland to the late Owen and Margaret (Creamer) Kanty.

She was a 1943 graduate of St. Patrick's Academy in Washington and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration from Dunbarton College in Washington. She entered the congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross on July 29, 1943 and made her first profession of vows on Feb. 2, 1946, taking the name Sister Marie Pierre.

In the Diocese of Columbus, she served as treasurer of Catholic Social Services. She also taught at schools in New York, North Carolina, Virginia and Washington, D.C.; served her congregation as Eastern Region treasurer and councilor; was vice president for finance at St. Mary's College in Notre Dame and treasurer of Dunbarton College; and served on the boards of trustees for Dunbarton College and Cardinal Cushing College in Boston.

From 1990 to 2006, she was with the Quixote Center, a justice and peace ministry in College Park, Maryland. She entered St. Angela Hall in Kensington, Maryland in 2006 and retired to St. Mary's Convent in Notre Dame in 2014.

Patricia Plagenz

Funeral Mass for Patricia Plagenz, who died Sunday, July 26, was celebrated Saturday, Aug. 1 at Columbus St. Agatha Church.

She was born on April 1, 1932 to Paul and Patricia Kasak. She grew up in Lemont, Illinois, and earned a Bachelor's degree from the College of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois.

She was a mathematics teacher at Columbus Bishop Watterson High School and a member of her parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, Richard. Survivors include sons, Paul (Lynn), Richard (Cyndi) and Andy (Flo); daughters, Kate (Dave) Chandler, Anne (Kevin) Wooley and Jane (Tim) Patrick; brothers, Dick (Barb) and Steve (Debbie); sister, Mary Ellen (Bob) Kasak-Saxler; and 13 grandchildren.

SCHOOLS, continued from Page 15

summer because of the virus and declining enrollment, but all Columbus diocesan schools remain open. "We are very proud of this," Dufault said. "Our most recent enrollment summary indicates an increase in enrollment compared to last year.

"Our schools remain strong, vital and important in all the communities they serve. Teachers and principals at

every school did an amazing job, putting in many hours of extra work.

"We don't know what all of the challenges will be for the coming year, but we've done our best to prepare for anything that may happen," Dufault said. "Our primary goal is to keep teachers and students healthy and safe as we prepare to continue to move for-

ward.

"What we've gone through since March is a reminder of the treasure we possess in Catholic education and the great things we do. My wish for the coming months is that we continue to pray for each other, support each other and keep working together to deal with whatever problems may arise."

PRAYER TO THE VIRGIN

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of heaven, blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in necessity. Oh, star of the sea, help me and show me herein, you are my Heaven and Earth. I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in this necessity. There are none who can withstand your powers. Oh, show me herein you are my Mother. Oh, Mary conceived without sin, pray for us, who have recourse to thee. (Repeat three times) Oh, Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hand. (Repeat three times) Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads that I can obtain my goals. You gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me, and in all instances in my life, you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. NAP

To have an obituary printed in The Catholic Times, send it to: tpuet@columbuscatholic.org

Year with St. Monica reveals her patience, perseverance

By MaryBeth Eberhard

This year, I resolved to take a walk with a saint. The idea came from a coffee shop conversation with a dear friend. Each year, I will befriend one saint, and we will journey together through the ins and outs of my year with my dear husband, eight children, two dogs, two cats, home schooling, writing and teaching.

But whom should I choose for my first new friend? I thought St. Therese would be great, or maybe Mother Teresa. We adopted one of our daughters from the Missionaries of Charity, the congregation founded by Mother Teresa, so surely that would make sense. I love to sing, so St. Cecilia and I had something in common.

But these possibilities all felt like trying on a costume that wasn't the right fit. A friend told me the secret was to pray into this and let the Holy Spirit guide you.

As I prayed, I felt drawn to St. Monica. "Oh no," I thought. "I am the mother of five boys whose adventures keep me plenty busy. I know the struggle grows greater the older they get, and a couple of them might be leaving soon." But God kept speaking. From an old book, to a gift of a saint medal from my husband, nudges became pushes, and one night I felt St. Monica place her cloak over my shoulders. I resigned to walk with her.

"Resigned" sounds ungrateful, doesn't it? But it is the truth, for I knew bits and pieces of St. Monica's life, and I knew that walking with her would require me to follow a path of trial and tribulation. I knew increased courage and fortitude would stem from this journey, and yet I did not feel up to the task.

Along this journey with St. Monica, I have immersed myself in her life, reading *St. Monica and*

WALKING WITH THE SAINTS

St. Monica's feast day is Aug. 27. She is the patron of married women, difficult marriages, disappointing children, victims of adultery or unfaithfulness, victims of (verbal) abuse and the conversion of relatives.

the Power of Persistent Prayer by Mike Aquilina and Mark W. Sullivan, and *The Restless Flame: A Novel about St. Augustine*, which is a historical fiction account of Augustine's youth. That book led me to his *Confessions*, in which he writes of his mother with honor and love. I have written letters and shared conversations with St. Monica in long walks and on my knees in supplication. It has been a year since I began walking with St. Monica, and I have been strengthened by my new friend.

St. Monica was a strong, devout woman of faith whose intimate relationship with Our Lord led her to raise her children as Christians alongside her pagan and often unfaithful husband. (He later converted because of Monica's disciplined example.) St. Monica was known to be in church twice a day for prayers.

It's interesting to me that as self-disciplined in prayer and as outspoken as St. Monica was regarding her Christian identity and relationship with Jesus, her son Augustine still struggled with sin and doubt. His actions caused St. Monica great suffering and anguish, and yet she persevered.

St. Augustine is quoted as saying, "My mother spoke of Christ to my father by her feminine and childlike virtues and, after having borne his violence without a murmur or complaint, gained him at the close of his life to Christ." This was her mission and, once achieved, she continued on. This inspires me to live a life of example worthy of who I say I am and to place my focus first on my husband and

then upon my children. St. Monica had her priorities in order.

My children know the Lord, and the desire of my heart is for them to enter into a relationship with Him. That is the transition from youth to adult, in my mind. As parents, we can plant the seeds of faith as Monica did so frequently, but our children must embrace the faith on their own for their relationship to be authentic and intimate.

St. Monica shows us patience and perseverance. She was also an advocate for her son. Knowing him as only a mother can, she followed him, spoke truth to his heart and reached out to others to speak louder when her voice seemed to be unheard. Her persistence led a bishop, St. Ambrose, to assure her that "it was not possible that the son of so many tears should perish." At this point, Monica felt great peace and knew her son would know the Lord. St. Monica died at age 55. She was blessed to see her son's conversion before her death.

My year with my new friend is not finished. We have a couple more months to sojourn together. We will walk together as my oldest leaves for a challenging missionary year that will shape and form him and give so much to so many. We have walked through a pandemic and grown family prayer traditions and virtue. We have raised our voices in song and praised the Lord from whom all blessings flow, as Monica used to love the traditional chants from St. Ambrose.

Walking with a saint for a year is a highly recommended spiritual exercise. St. Monica chose me, and her faith in me has urged me onward through many challenging moments. I pray that we all take the time to know these friends, the saints, as the depth of their faith cannot go unnoticed and truly lifts up the human heart.

A hand up, not a handout

We are all living very differently than we did a few months ago. The coronavirus, as microscopic as it is, has seriously impacted the entire world. Lives have been lost and life will never be the same. It never ceases to amaze us that life is so fragile and finite, and we are not in control. All of us can agree that life is precious. While some disagree on when life begins, and even sometimes when life should end, we love one another and recognize that the same life is breathed into us by our God, no matter who we are. Thankfully, that God endlessly loves each of us completely, no matter our sinfulness. I am sure I always will take God's mercy and forgiveness over the life-changing annoyances of a virus. That forgiveness changes our lives in ways that supersede and transcend any type of human worry or science.

Whether our lives have been upended or not, I know that I need constant reminders of what is really important and what my priorities must be. God always has a plan. I am a part of that plan, and I never know in advance what it is. God's ways are not necessarily our ways. It is more difficult these days, but we must embrace God's will and His plan. It is not always easy, comfortable, or even pretty, but it is eternity for us. No matter how difficult

EVERYDAY CATHOLIC
Rick Jeric



things get for me, it takes about two seconds to realize how blessed I am and how many more millions of people around the world are in far greater distress and difficulty than I ever will be. Yes, it is tough and challenging, but as Jesus said during His agony in the garden, knowing the death He would suffer, "Not my will be done, Father, but yours."

We cannot seem to be able to use our hands these days. Just another curse of the dreaded virus. Shaking hands has been replaced by a nod, a bow, a fist or elbow bump, or another sort of acknowledgment. Maybe some of these practices will become permanent. No sign of peace at Mass. Even attending Mass and receiving Jesus in the Eucharist is a tenuous premium. Aside from this type of "handout," so many of our brothers and sisters are suffering physically, emotionally, and with unemployment. They all need help, and they can choose to receive handouts. That word always has carried

a negative stigma. No one wants to live on simple handouts, nor do they want to go through life with their hands outstretched, just waiting for someone to put something in them. But we are all selfless, loving Catholic Christians, right?

Any handout should be considered a "hand up." It is so easy for us to judge others, and we may be correct sometimes. But to what end? We help when we are asked. We want to help. Especially if we are extraordinarily blessed, we try to help. God loves a cheerful giver – one who is not suspicious, not judgmental, and loves for the sake of furthering God's kingdom here on earth. So our goal is to treat our loving handouts as "hand ups." I need to constantly remind myself of the words of Jesus: "Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me." It is all laid out for us very plainly and simply. How do I want to be judged? How do I want to be treated? Where do I want to be for eternity? I know my answer, but I am also a sinner. I raise my hands in praise of God's mercy and forgiveness, I look for opportunities to serve others with handouts, and I pray that all these actions are perceived, accepted and put into practice as "hand ups."

Newly baptized convert wants to become 'crusader for Christ'

Story and photos by Ken Snow

Robert Vallaei, who was baptized at Columbus St. Thomas the Apostle Church on July 12, grew up in a multi-religious family in which everyone prayed for different things. They all loved and respected one another, but they struggled financially, and life was difficult.

As the youngest of five children, Vallaei felt isolated and alone. He didn't excel in school, and when he tried to enter a university at age 28, he found more doors were closed to him than were opened. He asked the God of every religion he could think of for help. But for a long time, nothing happened. At age 37, he was accepted and began studying mechanical engineering, but he found it hard to attend classes and work full time. His disenchantment with life increased.

"There were a whole bunch of things going on around my life," Vallaei said. "Nothing good, really. And I had the feeling that maybe there was some sort of curse or something on me. I was just not successful in things."

While Vallaei was still living with his family, his mother told him, "You've been cursed, the same as all our family members." She often went to palm readers and other "spiritualists" to make the curse go away, but it never worked.

Vallaei found himself increasingly drawn to the "dark side," thinking about devils and evil because he thought that God, if He existed, wasn't opening doors for him.

But he also sensed that there must be something spiritual out there, something more that science could not explain.

Things continued that way until he met his wife, Angie, 20 years ago. Her family was Catholic. They talked to Vallaei about their faith, but didn't push it on him. He and Angie were still young, and although she would go to Mass once in a while, neither of them felt drawn to attend regularly.

"Angie and I were both working at the time," Vallaei said. "We were living in a rat race, trying to make a living and pay the bills. If we had a little time, we would try to take a short vacation, but that was about it."

"It was tough to get a job, and I might work for five or six years, and then suddenly, that business would close down. So I'd move to another job and work for five or six years, then that business would shut down.



Robert Vallaei (center) gives thanks after being baptized by Father Michael Gentry, pastor at Columbus St. Thomas the Apostle Church, as godparents Rick and Lisa Laufer (right) watch.

Everything was gone. You lost your income. You got no unemployment. Nothing. Making a living was very hard."

Sometimes Robert and Angie would be invited to a wedding or other celebration in a Catholic church, and occasionally they attended Mass. During these times, Vallaei's attitude began to change. "It seemed very peaceful," he said. "They talked about the goodness of people and peace of mind and helping each other. So I thought, 'This is really something to consider.'

"Then," Vallaei said, "I went back to church a few times for different reasons. I guess it was coming into me – the spirit. I liked the Mass and what they said about peace and heaven."

"What I usually heard about religion is either you receive punishment in hell or you receive punishment before you go to hell. Everything seemed to be about punishment."

"When my wife and I moved from Toronto to Columbus a couple of years ago, I started looking for a church. I said, 'Maybe I'll start going to church and maybe it will change our lives.' So I looked around and my wife said, 'Let's check the Catholic churches.' And I said, 'I definitely am going to look into the Catholic Church because it is the original church, from the very old time.' This is because I like the original in everything."

"Then I discovered St. Thomas the



Robert Vallaei expresses his emotions after his baptism.

Apostle and went there, and I was touched that the people really welcomed me. So I went back to Angie and said, 'Hey, maybe we should go to St. Thomas and see how it is.'

"We started going and slowly got

involved there. Both of us began to volunteer. I even started doing maintenance work at the church: helping in

CONVERT, *Continued from Page 18*

cleaning and in community gatherings there. And something started growing inside me. The pastor, Father Mike Gentry, was very nice. He would say, 'You just keep coming. You will get it!'

"So I began to think, 'I didn't get anything out of the devil, so maybe I should give this my best and see what happens.'

"From one week here and one week there, it's become every week! I started looking forward to going. I would say on Sundays, 'Hey, Angie, get up! It's Sunday and we have to go to Mass.'

"One day, Father Mike asked, 'Have you been baptized?' I answered, 'Father, honestly, I don't know. I might not have been, based on what I know of my family's multi-religious practices when I was growing up.'

"And Father said, 'The best thing for now is not to take any Communion until we figure this out. If we find out that you were not baptized, we'll take care of it.'

"I said, 'Does it make any difference whether I was baptized?' And he said, 'It does make a difference. You will learn. It will wash away your sins, and you will be filled with the Holy Spirit.'"

Vallaei told the priest what his mother had said about the family being cursed and about the dark side of his life.

Father Gentry said, "It's true that evil exists, and the devil exists, but no person has the power to bring forth that kind of curse against anybody else."

"And," Vallaei said, "this gave me hope. It was this point of hope that I needed to stick to God, that I needed to be committed, that I needed to keep coming and that would show me it's going to get better and better."

"I began to reflect on this and realized that Father was telling me that if I followed these actions, the devil would have less control over my life."

Some parishioners invited Vallaei to an ongoing Bible study. "I started going and really liked it," he said. "This was even before Father Mike talked to me. It was probably when I was halfway through Bible study that he said, 'Well, just continue your studies and I'll teach you the rest of it,' meaning the catechism of the faith."

"Perhaps the one thing I learned above all others while learning about the Catholic Church was that there is always forgiveness if you repent."

"All that is asked of you is to pray and ask for forgiveness, and God will forgive you. And this was the most important thing for me."

"I started thinking about why people go to confession, and Father explained to me that when you go to a priest to confess your sins, you are absolved of them because the priest is the direct representative of Jesus Christ."

"In accepting and understanding what confession is really about, I felt an even greater relief and a peace I had never known before."

"I think the desire to become Catholic came into my life slowly but steadily," Vallaei said. "I knew I wanted to connect with something spiritually, but it was really during those times when I started going to church more often and more regularly – in fact, every Sunday, every celebration we did in the church, each of those was one step forward."

"People noticed that I was a caring person, that I was someone they could lean on if they felt a bit



Father Michael Gentry anoints Robert Vallaei with the oil of catechumens while surrounded by other members of Columbus St. Thomas the Apostle Church who also received the Sacrament of Confirmation last month.

down. Some even felt comfortable enough to tell me their life stories. And from this I realized that goodness was still in me, and that maybe I was being too harsh on myself by holding onto self-doubt.

"It surprised me at first, but as I continued to attend church regularly, I began to believe that maybe I'm not such a bad person after all, and maybe I can turn my life into one of service."

"Now that I have become baptized and confirmed and am a full sacramental member of the Catholic Church, my desire is to continue my Bible study to the next level and from there become one of the teachers of the faith."

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"I feel God is leading me to evangelize for his Son, if only in some small way, to help others who are like I once was: lost and struggling to find real meaning in their lives."

"I truly believe that Jesus Christ is the son of the only God in this universe: God the Father, who created everything and everyone. And I believe it is the Holy Spirit, the third part of the Trinity, which pours out from the Father and fills us with his glory, if we are ready and let it become manifest in our lives. It exists, and I felt it when I got baptized."

"I am fairly confident that there was a reason for us to leave Toronto for Columbus, which has so many Catholic churches, and then go to (St. Thomas) the smallest and oldest in one of the poorest neighborhoods, and to a church which needs so much maintenance. And I met Father Mike, who was so calm, who listened to me and was so welcoming. From day one, he always found the time to answer my questions. I believe the Holy Spirit was leading me to this place, this church, this community, this priest, and really to meet face-to-face my Savior Jesus Christ."

"From here on, this was my promise to God: 'If you guide me through this journey and let me become worthy, I will do whatever I can do to glorify you and evangelize.'

"I'm willing to talk not just to Catholics, but to those who have lost their faith the way I once did. Those are the people I would like to approach and say, 'You should not be afraid. Take a leap of faith and walk through it. It might work and it might not, but it worked for me.'

"I would actually like to work with the youth. They are the hard ones. I'm working on a presentation that will be alive for young people, to make that connection with them."

"I believe I am the right person to show them that the sacramental life we experience as Catholics is so very real and alive and how it lifts one up in our daily lives and is connected to everything."

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