

# The Catholic TIMES

The Diocese of Columbus' News Source

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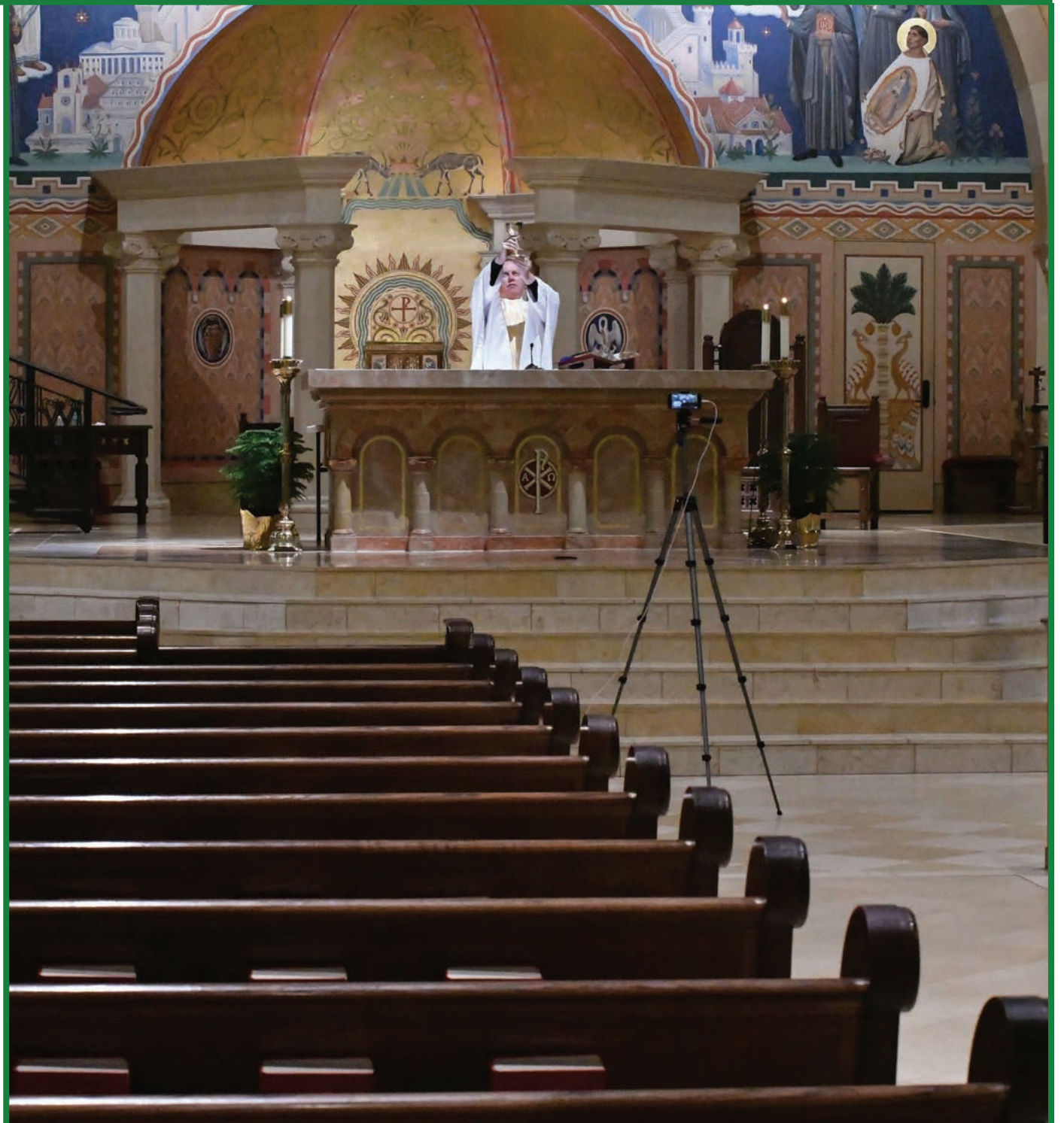
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**PARISHES MAKE MASS A VIRTUAL REALITY  
DURING THESE EXTRAORDINARY TIMES**



Editor's reflections by Doug Bean

## Forced to give up? Let's lift up our concerns to the Lord

The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted lives in ways that seemed unimaginable a few weeks ago. Getting through this crisis is going to take prayer, patience, penance and perseverance.

And, most important, plenty of making sacrifices.

Bishop Robert Brennan made the difficult decision last week to shutter all churches at least through Easter to help mitigate the spread of the serious COVID-19 virus. That means Catholics must sacrifice being present daily and on Sunday at their parishes to receive the Eucharist during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

As a result, many parishioners throughout the diocese took advantage this past week of a growing number of online streaming and televised Masses offered for viewing in lieu of physical attendance. Read our story on Page 4 for more details.

The Church recommends that Catholics make a spiritual Communion when they're unable to receive the Body of Christ. A spiritual communion prayer can be found on the diocesan website and

many other places online and in prayer books.

Nothing can replace the physical act of receiving the body of Christ or having access to the other sacraments, including confession, but that's where the sacrifice comes in. The sacraments provide medicine for the soul, and so everyone must strive to stay in a state of grace during this crisis.

Pray for patience as we are told to practice social distancing and self-quarantines. We all want a quick fix to a complex problem. We've become accustomed as a society to immediate solutions, but sometimes we must persevere. Consider St. Patrick, who endured years of captivity before escaping; St. Therese of Lisieux, who suffered through illness; or St. Monica, who waited and wept for her son, St. Augustine, to return to the faith.

Graces will come out of this ordeal. Hopefully, one of those graces might be strengthening of families, who have more opportunities to pray, learn and grow closer.

Because schools are shut down, homes have become the classroom for many children. That might seem intimidating to some families, but Catholic home education has been around for many years.

The beauty of having children at home is the ability to pray together throughout the day, study the Catholic faith, learn together and bond.

MaryBeth Eberhard, an experienced homeschooling mother, advises parents to "consider this time with your children as a gift. Chances are the relationship you have with them can be made stronger by this time together. God always gives us reasons to praise, and I am excited to see stronger families and deeper sibling relationships brought about by this time together.

"These times are fluid and ever changing. Take time to listen to your children. This time is historical as well. Have them journal, make scrapbooks, study other historical plagues, pandemics. Curiosity will lead to further learning."

Parents need to realize that they can't replicate the school classroom. It's important to create your own environment, learn and read together, use technology when appropriate, follow the teacher's schedule and take time to relax.

As Bishop Brennan has emphasized, we're all in this together. Let's lift each other up in prayer and give everything to Our Lord.

### Local news roundup

## Catholic Foundation launches emergency response fund

The Catholic Foundation, in partnership with the Diocese of Columbus, has established an emergency response fund that will provide immediate and flexible assistance to parishes in the diocese that are receiving financial requests from parishioners because of the spread of the coronavirus.

This fund will help with the purchase of food for pantries sponsored by the diocese.

The fund was started with \$250,000 from the foundation and is accepting donations, all of which

will go toward helping parishes and individuals.

For more information, visit <https://grants.catholic-foundation.org/catholicemergencyresponse>. If you have any questions, call (614) 443-8893.

The Catholic Foundation's mission is to inspire giving and assist donors to provide for the long-term needs of the 23-county Diocese of Columbus. It fulfills its mission by seeking donors to establish endowment funds designed to support current and future needs and by distributing earnings according to diocesan priorities

and donor intent.

It is one of the nation's oldest and largest Catholic foundations and has distributed nearly \$150 million since 1985. For additional information, visit [www.catholic-foundation.org](http://www.catholic-foundation.org)

### Magnificat provides app free through May

The publishers of the monthly devotional Magnificat are offering complimentary access to its iOS and Android apps in addition to online access throughout May.

To register for free access in En-

glish, visit [www.magnificat.com/free](http://www.magnificat.com/free). For free access in Spanish, visit and register at [www.magnificat.com/gratis](http://www.magnificat.com/gratis).

Complimentary access also is available to MagnifiKid. Visit [www.magnifikid.com/free](http://www.magnifikid.com/free) to view and download each weekly booklet of the colorful Sunday missalette for children ages six through 12. As children are missing formal religious instruction and unable to attend Mass, MagnifiKid can serve as a special guide, accompanying them through each week as they prepare to attend Mass or watch it at home.



Front Page photo:  
**VIRTUAL MASSES IN DIOCESE**  
Father Jonathan Wilson, pastor of Westerville St. Paul Church, elevates the host at the Consecration during a livestreamed video Mass on Thursday, March 19. CT photo by Ken Snow

## Catholic TIMES

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# Jesus is always in our midst in spite of turmoil, bishop says



*The following is Bishop Robert Brennan's homily at the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, March 22 at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral. During the coronavirus*

*crisis, the bishop's Masses from the cathedral are being broadcast at 10:30 a.m. Sunday and 12:05 a.m. Monday through Friday on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio, AM 820 in Columbus. The bishop is praying constantly for the health and safety of the people of the diocese in this difficult time.*

"Yesterday morning, I had the chance to take part in a virtual Confirmation retreat offered by Damascus Catholic Youth Summer Camp. I was impressed. I was impressed by the content and the prayer. But isn't it great to see such creativity in staying connected in prayer and reflection – to go deeper in the spiritual life, even in this time of desolation.

"I am hearing about all kinds of virtual outreach, ranging from telephone check-ins to streaming to Facebook and Zoom events with prayer and Bible study. And thanks to all of you who stay connected through St. Gabriel Radio. Last week's Spirit Week was a great chance to be together in a spirit of

joy and hope.

"You see, the key message is that Jesus is walking in our midst, always in our midst. We get a sense of that in the Gospel today. Put aside the miracle of giving sight for a moment and just focus in on Jesus passing through the town. There he is in the midst of everyone and everything.

"We get a sense of a hubbub of activity – people gathering for the Sabbath – not working, but in little group conversations -- individuals moving about from group to group, preparing presumably for Sabbath prayer, or coming from it.

"This is the context in which Jesus encounters the man born blind. He makes his way through the crowds. He meets the man in his need. In Jesus, the hand of God is extended, giving this man sight and thus changing his life.

"Yes, Jesus walks in our midst today. He is always with us and he gives us the joy of his presence. He is with us when we gather, when we celebrate, when we live the ups and downs of life. He feeds us through the Sacraments so that we might be attuned to his presence.

"But it is so important to realize he is with us now. He is in our midst even when we are separated through a serious health threat. He walks among us. God steps into our suffering and extends his healing hand to each of us in our need.

"That need takes different forms. There is clearly the sense of loss that we feel on a Sunday not being able to attend Mass and receive Our Lord in Holy Communion. Many of us experi-

ence a range of feelings, from a sense of being confined or stir-crazy to a sense of terrible isolation and loneliness. Many feel tremendous anxiety for financial and practical reasons.

"It may be that we are getting on each other's nerves in such continual small quarters. We worry for our health care workers stretched to extraordinary limits and, yes, there are those among us who are ill, perhaps seriously so. The Lord is here.

"With the man who now sees, we ask Jesus to help us to know him – 'Who is he, sir, that I may believe?' – and then to make that great profession, 'I do believe,' bowing down before Jesus. Jesus, open our eyes and help us to see.

"There is an eerie silence all around. The world has stopped. I remember after Hurricane Sandy hit Long Island, one of the pastors said, 'This community is strong. When someone experiences this kind of flooding and loss, we band together to help that person. But not the whole town is under water. We are all in the same situation.'

"Well, imagine that multiplied exponentially. We are all in the same boat. Our towns have stopped. Our nation has stopped. The world has stopped. Even a week or so ago as this was all ramping up, the present moment seemed unimaginable. I never, never imagined I would be in a position of closing down the opportunity to attend Sunday Mass and even restrict access to our churches. I am so tremendously sad about this, as are you.

"Together, we are being called to

a new moment of moral responsibility. For better or for worse, this coronavirus reminds us that we are all interconnected. None of us lives unaffected by what happens to others. But while that reality of being interconnected spreads the virus, it also reminds us of our responsibility for one another.

"The sacrifices that are asked of us, the massive changes to our lifestyle, the urging to remain home – those not only protect our own personal health, but more importantly, they are an exercise in that moral responsibility that each of us has to care for the well-being of those around us and of all.

"Speaking of that sense of interconnectedness, perhaps the sense of deprivation and loss awakens our sense of solidarity with those hidden from our view who suffer deprivation every day, and under far more painful and dangerous circumstances. I think of refugees in the Middle East, many of them brother and sister Christians who were violently driven from their homes and find refuge in tent cities and camps.

"This is not to minimize the very legitimate fears and concerns that many who listen today experience. But rather, perhaps, emerging from this, we might be a little more attentive to the cries and sufferings of our brothers and sisters around the world.

"Here in our midst, I am proud to see the work of so many in our parishes and Catholic Social Services to continue to meet the needs of the poor.

"From the back door of the cathedral, to soup kitchens and agencies

See **HOMILY**, Page 9

## Pope announces extraordinary 'urbi et orbi' blessing on March 27

### Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY -- In response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said he will give an extraordinary blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) at 1 p.m. ET on Friday, March 27.

The formal blessing -- usually given only immediately after a new pope's election and on Christmas and Easter -- carries with it a plenary indulgence for all who follow by television, internet or radio, are sorry

for their sins, recite a few prescribed prayers and promise to go to confession and to receive the Eucharist as soon as possible.

After reciting the Angelus prayer on March 22 from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis announced his plans for the special blessing, which, he said, would be given in an "empty" St. Peter's Square because all of Italy is on lockdown to prevent further spread of the virus.

With the public joining him only by television, internet or radio, "we

will listen to the word of God, raise our prayer (and) adore the Blessed Sacrament," he said. "At the end, I will give the benediction 'urbi et orbi,' to which will be connected the possibility of receiving a plenary indulgence."

An indulgence is an ancient practice of prayer and penance for the remission of the temporal punishment a person is due for sins that have been forgiven. In Catholic teaching, a person can draw on the merits of Jesus and the saints to claim the indulgence for themselves or offer it on behalf of

someone who has died.

"To the pandemic of the virus we want to respond with the universality of prayer, compassion and tenderness," he said. "Let's stay united. Let us make those who are alone and tested feel our closeness," as well as doctors, nurses, other healthcare workers and volunteers.

Pope Francis also expressed concern for "authorities who have to take strong measures for our good" and the police and soldiers maintaining public order and enforcing the lockdown.

# Churches closed, but parishes still reach out via technology

By Tim Puet  
Catholic Times Reporter

There's an unnatural stillness at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church these days.

The parking lots are empty. Classrooms where 771 students in kindergarten through eighth grade usually are being educated are silent. No one is enjoying the playground at recess as the first days of spring begin to chase the chill of winter. None of the 71 parish groups that gather daily, weekly or monthly to learn about the faith and to put it into action are meeting.

And, most significantly, the parish's pastor, Father Jonathan Wilson, is celebrating daily and Sunday Mass in an empty church, with an unseen congregation watching through video streaming.

It's the same at every other parish in the Diocese of Columbus and most, if not all, dioceses nationwide because of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The deadly pathogen has halted sports events and all other large public gatherings, limited restaurants to carry-out service, closed thousands of businesses and caused governments of Ohio and several other states to issue stay-at-home orders – in general, bringing most everyday activities to a standstill in the United States and worldwide.

The bishops of Ohio on March 12 suspended the obligation for the state's Catholics to attend Mass on the last three Sundays of March. Four days later, the bishops announced a suspension of all public Masses in the state through Easter Sunday, April 12, including the Catholic Church's three most significant days – the Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.

"There's a deep sense of sadness that I'm unable to be with my parishioners in person but gratitude that I can be with them through social media," Father Wilson said.

The parish, the largest in the diocese with about 4,500 families, is connecting with parishioners digitally through email and Facebook by livestreaming its 8:30 a.m. weekday and 9 a.m. Sunday Masses. Its Stations of the Cross for Friday, March 20 were on Facebook. Father Wilson said the



Father Jonathan Wilson stands in front of the empty baptismal font at Westerville St. Paul Church. All baptismal fonts in Ohio Catholic churches have been drained because of the church closings resulting from the coronavirus.  
CT photo by Ken Snow



Father David Sizemore, pastor of Newark St. Francis de Sales Church, celebrates a livestreamed Mass for his parish on Sunday, March 22, at Mattingly Settlement St. Mary Church, which has been streaming Masses since late 2016.  
Photo courtesy St. Mary Church

parish also is making increasing use of Flocknote, an email system used by a number of parishes, to keep its members informed.

At least three diocesan parishes – Hilliard St. Brendan, Columbus St. Timothy and Newark St. Francis de Sales – began streaming Masses this past Sunday, March 22 on one or multiple platforms.

Father David Sizemore, pastor at St. Francis de Sales, celebrated a video Mass at Mattingly Settlement St. Mary Church rather than at his own parish because St. Mary has been presenting Masses online for some time and has equipment in place. He will continue to do this for the time being but hopes to begin streaming from his own church soon.

Father Sizemore said his parish is conducting essential leadership and staff meetings through the Zoom conference call system. It also is using Flocknote to keep parishioners posted on developments and YouTube videos to bring encouraging words to parishioners during this unprecedented period.

It is livestreaming Eucharistic Adoration from 6 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays and has set up a "buddy" system in which parishioners call homebound residents to check on their health and ask if they need medicine or groceries.

Similar efforts are going on across the diocese as parishes use technology to connect with their members.

Parishes that are streaming Masses on their websites, YouTube or Facebook include St. Paul, St. Francis de Sales, St. Brendan, St. Timothy, Mount Vernon St. Vincent de Paul, Columbus St. Catharine of Siena, Columbus St. Patrick, Columbus St. Timothy, Delaware St. Mary, Mattingly Settlement St. Mary, New Albany Church of the Resurrection, New Philadelphia Sacred Heart, Pickerington St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Scioto Catholic consortium.

St. Gabriel Catholic Radio at 820 AM in Columbus has added Masses celebrated by Bishop Robert Brennan from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral at 12:05 p.m. Monday through Friday to its schedule, which already included a live broadcast of the cathedral's 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass each week. The station also is broadcasting the Stations of the Cross from the cathedral at 7 p.m. Friday. St. Gabriel's southern Ohio affiliate, at 88.3 FM in Portsmouth, broadcasts the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass from Portsmouth St. Mary Church.

Bill Messerly, executive director of St. Gabriel Radio, estimated that more than 3,000 people listened to the bishop's Mass this past Sunday, March 22. He said that's about five times the usual number of listeners.

A list of several of the parishes hosting streaming videos of Masses, with links to parish websites, may be found at [www.columbuscatholic.org/radio-tv-online-masses](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/radio-tv-online-masses).

Steve Smeltzer of the Mattingly Settlement parish, which has

# Faith, hope and love amid the coronavirus

When we are put to the test, what will be our response? It is clear our world is being tested in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Life as we know it has been altered significantly.

The situation is unfolding rapidly. Each day, increasing numbers of infections, new restrictions of movement, dramatic swings in financial markets, and closings of all kinds dominate the headlines. Even the Catholic Bishops of Ohio labored over the heartbreaking decision to suspend public Masses and liturgies at least through Holy Week and Easter in efforts to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

What I think is so insidious about the nature of COVID-19 is it cannot be seen with the unaided eye. It's not a disaster with violent visuals such as a tornado, flood, earthquake, or hurricane. There are neither guns nor bombs, just casualties, and not only casualties, collateral damage to the economy and our way of life. Its indiscriminate nature threatens the most vulnerable, especially the elderly.

COVID-19 attacks our everyday in-person social interactions. In the age of social networking, we now observe "social distancing" in an effort to reduce the transmission of the virus. It strikes at the heart of what it means to live in community, to be a good neighbor, a caregiver, and a friend. It breeds fear and anxiety. We are being tested. Prepared or not, here we are.

What happens going forward depends on our actions today. Personally, I realize the great need to draw on the rich deposit of our Catholic faith.

The coronavirus continues to impact our lives more each day. In the time between my drafting this column and *The Catholic Times* publishing, situations will have changed again. There are so many questions and uncertainty. We are forced to place our trust in the medical community and our politicians. It does seem that, for once, we have been very proactive as a local community, state, and nation, rather than the usual reaction. So what are the must-haves, and what can we do without? Life, of course, is precious and the single most important thing. We are all rightfully doing everything we can to protect the lives of everyone, focusing first on those who are most susceptible. We may not like it, but we are learning to live as students without classrooms and using technology exclusively. Big events that bring millions of dollars to our local economy, like the Arnold Classic, have been mostly cancelled. The travel industry is already devastated. And the stock market roller coaster is like nothing we have ever seen. The world of high school, college and professional sports has been completely shaken. We had already seen soccer matches in Italy played in empty stadiums. March Madness has been cancelled, which is tough to imagine. All major league sports were looking at playing games in front of empty seats, but now all are on hold. They

## FAITH IN ACTION

Jerry Freewalt

*Jerry Freewalt is director of the diocesan Office for Social Concerns.*



For me, the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving have a whole new meaning in light of what is going on. I believe we all need these disciplines, these actions, to work through the present crisis. The virtues also can aid us along the way: the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude (or courage) but especially the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.

**FAITH** – "Pray as if everything depends on God, work as if everything depends on you." This quote, attributed to St. Ignatius of Loyola, resonates with me in light of our current situation. As we draw closer to God in prayer even through Mass via Catholic media like St. Gabriel Radio, we receive the spiritual food that sustains us. We also can live out our faith by simply picking up the phone and calling an isolated family member or friend. Spending quality time talking and praying together can go a long way. Families can grow together using the Lenten Journey for Families found on our diocesan website.

**HOPE** – "But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance." (Rm. 8:25) It may be

dark now, but a sunny day is coming. There is hope. We must confront adversity with the Joy of the Gospel. During this time of tribulation, isolation, and suffering, Jesus continues to accompany us. What is hopeful to me is learning about the simple acts of solidarity Catholics are performing to bring hope to the elderly, poor, and others living on the margins. They find ways to do this safely and creatively.

**LOVE** -- "So faith, hope, love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13) God calls on us to have charitable hearts, even in the most challenging of circumstances. I really love Bishop Brennan's term of "extreme charity" in observing social distancing, keeping a safe distance out of love for our neighbor. It's also encouraging to witness extreme charity lived out through leaders in government, healthcare, parishes, charitable ministries as well as everyday Catholics who have risen to the occasion by reaching out to protect us, comfort the sick, and extend a helping hand, even if the hand has a glove on it to keep everyone safe. Perhaps you can support one of our Catholic charities or a local nonprofit through dedicated prayer, safe volunteering, and generous financial support.

How will the pages of history recount how we responded when put to the test? Let it show we acted out of faith, hope, and love. For updates on how you can get help or give help, please visit the Diocese of Columbus website at [www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org).

## Life without the Eucharist

### EVERYDAY CATHOLIC

Rick Jeric



have all postponed their seasons indefinitely. The Ohio High School Athletic Association has cancelled state tournaments. So many young athletes will be denied their chance to complete a great season, and even compete for a championship. It is especially sad if they are seniors. Even Japan postponed the Olympics this summer. Life can certainly go on without these large, public gatherings. We must continue to be wise and proactive. So what can we not do without?

There are certain things we must have. Definitely one another, our spouses and families. We must have food, water, medical care and communication. God bless all the people who continue to be sure that we have all of these. To us, as Catholic Christians, we cannot do without the Eucharist. That word not only means giving thanks, but it is everything to us. Our spiritual lives, and our lives in general are nothing

without receiving Jesus in that living bread. It is the one form of sustenance that gets us to eternal life in heaven. What can we do now, as we no longer have access to the Eucharist? We had already taken precautionary measures like exchanging a smile and a nod at the sign of peace at Mass in place of a handshake. The Bishops of Ohio have cancelled all public Masses through Easter Sunday. It is frightening if this goes on much longer. We can certainly understand and appreciate a mandate like this, as it will save lives. We can all participate in a televised Mass via our technology. But nothing can replace the Eucharist itself. What else can we do? Our first responsibility is to be sure that we continue to gather as a family and participate as fully as ever in the Mass. Maybe this gives us an opportunity to be sure there is a place in our home with at least a crucifix and a Bible. Remember, whenever and wherever we gather, Jesus Christ is present. Even though we may not be able to receive Him in the Eucharist, we can still receive His true presence in one another as we gather, in His Word in the Gospel, and in His priest as he consecrates the bread and wine. Let us re-commit to one another in our faith, and in the real presence of Jesus Christ as we gather to pray. And, as always, we continue to pray for all those who are ill with coronavirus.

## Church's stance on organ donation; Endorsing candidates

**Q**What is the Catholic Church's position on donating body parts for medical science? (Northampton, Pennsylvania)

**A**Let's divide the answer into two parts: Post-mortem transplants and those from living donors. Gifts from a donor who has clearly died -- either to a living recipient or to scientific research -- is the easier part.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity" (No. 2296). The church does teach that the remains, after organ donation or medical research, should be treated with reverence and should be entombed or buried.

As to gifts from living donors -- bone marrow, say, or a lung -- this is morally permissible so long as it is not life-threatening to the donor and does not deprive the donor of an essential bodily function and provided that the anticipated benefit to the recipient is proportionate to the harm done to the donor.

In his 1995 encyclical "The Gospel of Life," St. John Paul II called organ donation an example of "everyday heroism," and in 2014, Pope Francis told the Transplantation Committee for the Council of Europe that organ donation is "a testimony of love for our neighbor."

**Q**Why are Catholic churches muzzled while Protestant churches freely exercise political speech through endorsements, hosting candidates, etc.?

### QUESTION & ANSWER

Father Kenneth Doyle

*Catholic News Service*

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Drive, Albany NY 12203.



This does not seem equitable. (Hilliard, Ohio)

**A**The laws are the same for all churches. The ban on political campaign activity by charities and churches has been in effect for more than half a century.

It was created in 1954 when Congress approved an amendment proposed by Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson that prohibited tax-exempt entities (technically 501(c)(3) organizations, which includes charities and churches) from engaging in any political campaign activity. (In 2000, in a case called *Branch Ministries v. Rossotti*, the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the legality of that ban.)

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops periodically reminds churches and church leaders of the implications of that ban. In a website article called "Do's and Don'ts Guidelines During Election Season," the USCCB lists among activities to avoid: "Do not endorse or oppose candidates, political parties or

groups of candidates, or take any action that could reasonably be construed as endorsement or opposition." The bishops' conference also warns parishes that they should not "invite only selected candidates to address your church-sponsored group."

While churches are prohibited from endorsing candidates, this does not prevent them from speaking out on moral issues, even if these happen to be interwoven with political topics -- issues like human life, care for the poor, religious freedom and migration.

At times, I have seen certain religious leaders try to differentiate, claiming that in endorsing a particular candidate, they were simply expressing a personal preference and not speaking as a church representative. But that, in my mind, is dangerous turf and could well be "reasonably construed" as institutional endorsement.

What our letter writer mentions does in fact happen, and I believe that it may be due -- in part, at least -- to the fact that Protestant and evangelical churches sometimes lack the central oversight that guides Catholic parishes.

I also believe that a distancing from political endorsements is preferred by over 50 percent of Catholics -- and that has been documented in a 2014 study by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. And, interestingly, Canon 287 of the church's Code of Canon Law says that clerics "are always to foster the peace and harmony based on justice" but "are not to have an active part in political parties."

## 'Wittenberg' in synodal slow motion

As Yale's Carlos Eire masterfully demonstrated in *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650*, there was no one "Protestant Reformation" but rather several religious movements, often in disagreement with each other, that shattered western Christendom in the 16th century. Still, Martin Luther's protest at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, has long been taken as the starting gun for "the Reformation," and various Protestant denominations celebrate "Reformation Day" on the Sunday closest to October 31. So "Wittenberg" can serve as a synonym for other efforts to distance Christian communities from the authority of Rome and the papacy.

Which suggests that what's afoot in German Catholicism today is "Wittenberg" in synodal slow motion.

In this instance, there is no nailing of contested propositions to church doors. Rather, the gears of a vast, well-funded ecclesiastical bureaucracy are grinding away toward outcomes that seem baked into the process from its inception: a German revision (meaning abandonment) of the discipline of clerical celibacy; some form of installed, or ordained, role for women in German Catholicism; a German substitute for the Catholic ethic of human love; a German "democratization" of Church governance -- in short, the dreams of the Catholic Revolution That Never Was, realized at last from Cologne to Berlin and from Hamburg to Munich. This is the "synodal path" on which the Church in

### THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

George Weigel is the Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.



Germany has launched itself.

The anti-Roman and anti-papal subtext to all this has typically been disguised or flatly denied by Cardinal Reinhard Marx and other German Catholic bishops. But the Central Committee of German Catholics -- the lay Politburo (to use a more accurate and related title) that is co-managing the "synodal path" with the German bishops' conference -- recently let the cat out of the bag. Gobsmeaked that bucketloads of German money at the 2019 Amazonian synod did not produce the desired results, the *Zentralkomitee* responded to Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on Amazonia by deploring the absence of a papal endorsement of married priests and women deacons. And it did so in baldly Wittenbergian terms: "We very much regret that Pope Francis did not take a step forward in his (exhortation). Rather, it strengthens the existing positions of the Roman Church both in terms of access to the priesthood and

the participation of women in ministries ..."

"... the existing positions of the Roman Church ... " Well, well. That formula at least has the merit of candor, if not theological heft. But please note what is going on here. The "Roman Church," it seems, is but one among any number of local Churches. Which implies that the Bishop of Rome, its head, is but one among the bishops who form the episcopal college. And that flatly contradicts both Scripture (see Matthew 16:13-19) and the authoritative tradition of the Church as expressed in the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.

There has been considerable commentary suggesting that the German Church is in a de facto state of schism, a term I've used myself. But I'm now wondering whether that's quite right, and whether the more appropriate description for what's going on along this German synodal path is *apostasy*: an arrogant determination to break with settled Catholic doctrine in the name of a contemporary intelligence superior to what Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation called "Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture." That, it seems to me, is what's implied by the formula used in the Central Committee's smackdown of Pope Francis.

In light of this, those who believe that the Catholic Church does "paradigm shifts" might want

## Renewing Our Profound Longing: Spiritual Communion

By Michelle Lemiesz, M.Div.

Director, Office for Divine Worship

When I read the announcement from the Chancery that all liturgical celebrations are being suspended up to Easter due to the Coronavirus pandemic, my heart stood still. It was almost a surreal moment, and it seemed at that moment everything was upside-down. In true charity, it is the right thing to do, but that did not change the empty feeling that I suddenly felt. At that moment, the severity of the pandemic washed over me, and I truly felt fear. For me, the Ohio Bishop's statement was a transformative moment, and I realized that it is so easy to take something for granted, especially when it has always been a part of your life...until it no longer is. Now, you realize how much it truly means to you.

While this may seem strange, I hope every Catholic in the state of Ohio felt similar. The Vatican II document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* states that the Eucharist is "the source and the summit of our life" for everything we are as Church "culminates in that one act of worship", and from it we receive God's grace and abundant blessings for the work we are called to do. In so many ways, the Mass is the touchstone of our faith, as it expresses our deepest desires and draws us into "the compelling love of Christ" which culminates in the reception of His Precious Body and Blood in the Eucharist

(SC10). If we do not feel a loss, than woe are we.

I would like to think that God is allowing us to use this moment in time as an opportunity. In many ways, it is perfect that we are in the season of Lent, a time meant to engender reflection and conversion of heart. How often have we ever spent time pondering what the Mass and the reception of Holy Communion mean to us as individuals and as a community of faith?

Perhaps, God is inviting us to use our "physical distance" from the Eucharist to lead us into a deeper, more profound longing for communion with him. What if this is a watershed moment for us as Church; an opportunity to take this climate of chaos and uncertainty to renew our identity and faith? Is this a moment of grace enabling us to meditate upon our own proclivity toward being lukewarm about our faith and attitude about the Mass? Each of us must answer these questions for ourselves, but we must do so with complete honesty if we really want to grow in holiness.

In a recent address, Pope Francis spoke about the ancient practice of seeking spiritual communion, when we are unable to receive sacramental communion at Mass. He encouraged the faithful to rediscover this ancient prayer that has been prayed by many great saints of the Church, and to use it as a way to engender a holy and profound longing for intimacy with the Lord. The prayer of spiritual communion expresses our soul's longing to receive the

Lord in the Eucharist, and it expresses, our genuine desire to be united with him. The words are almost a lament, an urgent petition. St. Thomas Aquinas described spiritual communion as "an ardent

desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him."

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.*

*And, I love you above all things.*

*It is my heart's desire to receive you into my soul.*

*Since I cannot receive you at this time sacramentally, please come spiritually into my heart, and unite me wholly to you.*

*I pray that I may never be permitted to be separated from you.*

*Amen*

The prayer of Spiritual Communion reminds us that the Lord continues to call us to him even when we cannot come to him in the usual ways. It is a prayer of the Church that expresses the human soul's ardent desire to find solace and strength from the One who has given up everything to seek and save us. And, during times such as these, it is an oasis in the desert, a respite from everything swirling around us. May we use this exile as a means to rekindle our love of the Eucharist and our profound need and desire for union with the Lord.

## 40 Days for Life: Socially distant but closer to God

By Beth Vanderkooi

Executive Director, Greater Columbus Right to Life

Each Lent, Greater Columbus Right to Life invites the community to join our team of year-round sidewalk counselors to join us for the 40 Days for Life Campaign. We strongly believe that this campaign of prayer and fasting has been one of the primary reasons we have seen abortions in central Ohio fall by almost 50 percent.

Well, this past week I did something I did not ever expect to do; I sent an email to our volunteers releasing them from any external or internal obligation to pray with us on the sidewalk. These are extraordinary and unanticipated times, to be sure, and things have moved quite rapidly. In fact, as I was finishing this column, Gov. Mike DeWine shared a "Stay at Home" order that began Monday, March 23 at 11:59 p.m.

My concern now, as it was then, is that we need to listen to the advice coming from public health and faith leaders when it comes to keeping ourselves and the community safe. At the same time, most women choosing abortion do it because of financial reasons and a lack of support, and we do not want to abandon them in their hour of need. While many have humbly discerned that they should still go to pray in person, we are asking that everyone remember that it is not our work, but the work of God, that brings every woman we encounter to choose life. We are, at best, missionaries of and witnesses to His work. With that in mind, we are inviting each of you to join us in our Virtual

Vigil, an effort to document 3,706 hours of prayer, one for each baby aborted in central Ohio, by Easter. You can learn more about that and sign up for your vigil hour at [gctrl.org/pray](http://gctrl.org/pray).

In addition, know that we are continuing to work with the central Ohio pro-life community to make sure that we continue to serve those mothers who need us most. Last week, a core group of pro-life leaders met (virtually) to talk about how we are meeting not only the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of pregnant women, but also how we are ensuring that in these unusual times our leaders and our volunteers continue to be kept safe and sane. Those who are engaged in a pro-life vocation will tell you that it can be spiritually demanding and draining. So please pray for us as a community that we can continue to face what may come. These calls will continue, and if you lead a pro-life organization and would like to join us, please let me know ([beth@gctrl.org](mailto:beth@gctrl.org)).

None of us is backing down from helping those who are vulnerable to abortion as we enter these uncertain times. For example, Pregnancy Decision Health Centers (PDHC) and the Women's Care Center both continue to be open regular hours, although some of their processes may shift. They are seeing women while observing both social distancing guidelines and CDC guidelines for healthcare providers (both have nurse managers and medical oversight). Both are transitioning to online programs for parenting programs and are looking to continue providing material aid to women. Mommies Matter is continuing to help provide emotional and community support while transi-

tioning to online enrichment programs and moving to "virtual" baby sprinkles. Bethesda Post Abortion Healing has suspended in-person sessions, but will be going to one-on-one virtual sessions while expanding social media outreach, recognizing that trauma can be exacerbated for many people right now. Bottoms Up, which provides infant diapers and wipes and a limited number of adult products, is now working with 40 partner agencies to distribute both diapers and wipes to those in need—something which has been exacerbated by current outages. They are working with their partners to ensure safe delivery. Those who are in need right now are encouraged to call Jo at 740-808-6131 and she will help. Of course, our Diocesan Office for Social Concerns is doing a tremendous amount of work to coordinate agencies and social services at every level. We will continue to build out our resource and prayer page ([gctrl.org/prayer](http://gctrl.org/prayer)) to share more of what these great organizations (and more) are doing.

I want to close with the acknowledgement that many people feel a little lost right now. Routines, social supports, income and even Mass have been altered or suspended. That creates a lot of voids in our lives. How we fill those voids in the days and weeks to come is going to be very important. There is an emptying of self that can allow us to grow in faith, courage, and hope, but there is also a very real risk that isolation and fear enter into those voids. We talk about the spiritual conse-

## How the hymns of my youth became the rhythm of my life

My relationship with Jesus has always been a constant, even from my early years. I remember as a little girl dressing up as a nun. I'd stuff my first Holy Communion missal into my purse or backpack and read it in my free time. A few years later, at the sweet age of 8, I traded that in for the hymnal. I still have that hymnal on my nightstand – such was its impact on my life.

St. Augustine is often quoted as saying, “Singing to the Lord is praying twice.” For me, it is the focus of my prayer life. Often the melody of a psalm or the words from a hymn are my first response to joy or need. Of my time spent in church as a youth, this is one of the greatest gifts bestowed upon me.

I grew up in a tumultuous and broken family, spending much time at our church, which was built in the center of our neighborhood. I would walk there from my house. At church, meetings would happen all around me, from parish council to PSR to Pre-Cana. I studied in the parish kitchen or sat in a church pew and did my homework with Jesus. A little grown-up girl at the age of 8, I pretended that everything was normal at home and asked if it would be OK if I did my schoolwork here. Our wise priest, who knew his flock, paved the way, and a plate of doughnuts and a bowl with apples were usually left on the kitchen table. He will never know how huge this act of kindness was.

The choir director noticed my constant humming and singing and asked if I wanted to join the group. Wrapped in arms of love by these prayerful people – who one day would all sing at my wedding – I attended weekly practices and became a cantor. (One member built a step stool for me so I could reach the microphone!) I attended every Mass, every prayer service, many funerals – always singing. I would walk home after practice, sometimes in the dark, and sing at the top of my lungs with my heart open to the Lord. As I started

### MARYBETH EBERHARD

*MaryBeth Eberhard writes about marriage, life experiences of a large family and special needs. She attends Sunbury St. John Neumann Church.*



home, I would begin with *Glory and Praise to Our God*, and when I passed the house with the cavernous ditch in the yard, out came “Be with me Lord when I am in trouble,” as my little feet walked faster. “Bless the Lord oh my soul” followed my supplication with praise. As weird as it sounds, I had songs for all the pivotal moments in my youth.

When things were scary and unknown: “Shepherd me, oh God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life. God is my shepherd so nothing I shall want. I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love. I walk by the quiet waters of peace.”

Watching my friends discern college and figure out what they were going to study: *Abba Father* was a core favorite. “Abba, Abba Father, you are the potter, we are the clay, the work of your hands. Mold us and fashion us into the image of Jesus, your son.”

Loud, dangerous or scary times at home: Psalm 91 – “Be with me Lord when I am in trouble. Be with me Lord, I pray.” I knew every word, and the melody calmed my fears.

The death of a loved one: “I know that my redeemer lives. The one who calls me home. I long to see God face to face, to see with my own eyes.” Such comfort these songs brought me.

I smile with nostalgia at youthful moments as well, when these songs poured from my heart with all the drama a 13- to 17-year-old girl's heart could hold.

The high school betrayal of those whom I thought were friends: Psalm 22 – “My God, my

God, oh why have you abandoned me?” I would sing that psalm and cry out the words. I would throw a stuffed animal, flop on my bed and bang it out on my keyboard.

The ache of a first heartbreak (I was the nerd who sobbed into her stuffed animal): “I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have called you, and you are mine.” Now granted, I totally misplaced the theology of this, but I think it actually was healthy because it showed me how much the Lord loved me and how constant He is.

Flash forward 30 years. I am a joyfully married mother of eight children who have grown up with these songs as the backbone of their childhood. Many nights have I sat at the top of the stairs praying with them. My repertoire has changed these days.

Seeing the need for humility and servant hearts in my children: *The Servant Song* – “Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you? Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant, too.”

God's steadfast love: “The king of love, my shepherd is, whose goodness fails me never. I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine forever.”

Bedtime: *Hail Mary, Gentle Woman* is a family favorite and is known in my book to have special calming graces after daddy piggyback rides with younger kids and dad jokes shared in the older boys' rooms. An eyebrow raised, a knowing smile, and the songs begin.

Some might grumble as they get a little older, but I hear them hum the *Lourdes Ave* as they nestle into bed. Even my older son whose bedroom is now in the basement will sometimes sit on the staircase with me when he comes home and finds us in the middle of bedtime and hum along.

These are the cadences of our family's heart. The melody that drives our days. I am so grateful for the gift of music to aid me in my prayer life as a youth and my vocation as a mother. St Cecilia, pray for us. St Augustine, thank you. Jesus, I trust in you.

## Women need help putting painful abortion memories behind them

I'm not very humble. As a result, I usually think people are talking about me.

In my mind, they may be talking in a complimentary way, but, mostly, I imagine them talking about me in a more castigating way. Either way, I always think they notice me and are either snickering or sniping at me in their own little better-than-me circle.

Of course, none of that is true.

After all, who notices or cares if I dribbled spaghetti sauce on my favorite shirt, or that I mispronounced aluminum, or that my zipper's unzipped? What's more, even though I can remember every single social gaffe or interpersonal faux pas that I have made in my entire life, there's no reason for me to believe that anybody has as indelible a memory as mine.

Still, I live in fear.

I fear that someone will bring up the time I threw up all over the bathroom at school in fourth grade. Or the time I made my mom cry when I was 16. Or when I shot out Mrs. Williams' garage window with my BB gun. God help me.

There's nothing new about the notion that we

### TIM WELSH

*Tim Welsh is executive director of the Bethesda Healing Ministry for post-abortionive women and men.*



have a more vivid memory of bad things than good. Researchers say negative emotions like fear and sadness trigger increased activity in a part of the brain linked to memories. These emotionally charged memories are preserved in greater detail than happy or more neutral memories. For instance, remember 9/11? Remember where you were? On the other hand, do you remember what you got for Christmas last year?

To be saddled with these run-of-the-mill bad memories and to be bridled with the angst embedded in these unpleasant self-imageries is nothing compared to the wretched strife imposed upon those suffering souls who are reconciling a past

abortion experience.

The abortion experience, from a physical perspective, is distressing. Early in the legalization of abortion, there were no clinic regulations that would ensure even the most modest of hygiene and women were not even given any information about the procedure. There were no accommodations for treatment after an abortion. If a woman developed bleeding, for instance, she would likely be told to go to the emergency room if she called the abortionists office. All side effects were handed off and the abortionists took no responsibility.

Many facilities herded women through the process in order to maximize profit and not provide quality care for the women.

Recalling their abortion experience, many women say that they knew it was wrong at the time but felt that they had no other choice or felt coerced into the abortion corner by others. Culture told them it would make everything OK. It would help them get their lives back on track. They were exercising their right as a woman.



**TECHNOLOGY**, continued from Page 4

been streaming its Masses online since 2016, reported about 29,000 combined views of its Saturday afternoon Mass on Facebook, YouTube and the parish website, compared with about 5,000 for a regular week. A view means watching at least a few seconds of a video offering.

Aaron Christy of Seton Parish said his parish lives-streamed all four of its weekend Masses at their regular times – 5 p.m. Saturday and 8, 9:30 and 11 a.m. Sunday. The four had a combined 5,600 live views. This figure does not include additional views that may have occurred after the livestreaming ended.

Christy said the average view time was about 15 minutes, with email responses coming from people all over the nation and even one from London, England. He said viewers



A laptop computer is ready to show a televised Mass from Mattingly Settlement St. Mary Church. The small Muskingum County church streams Masses on its website, Facebook and YouTube.

*Photo courtesy St. Mary Church*

watched most often through their smartphones, followed by desktop computers, according to numbers he compiled from the streaming sites.

“The biggest thing I learned since



The parking lot at Westerville St. Paul Church is empty because the church, school and surrounding buildings are closed as a result of the coronavirus.

*CT photo by Ken Snow*

the bishops ordered the closing of the churches was how much people want to be a part of their parishes,” Father Wilson said from the Westerville St. Paul rectory. “I received an overwhelming number of positive comments from people who appreciated our efforts to keep them connected with the parish spiritually and digitally. I’d encourage every parish to seek out ways to digitally communicate with members.”

He said that there were about 5,600 live views of the Sunday, March 22 Mass from St. Paul Church, with

about 2,000 people watching for at least 15 minutes and, through sharing, reached many others who saw it advertised on their Facebook page and interacted with it, even briefly. Others are likely to have watched the Mass later.

“It is a work of evangelization. We are more visible than ever in reaching more people,” he said. “This is something ironic and interesting. Our digital presence has increased dramatically. Temporarily closing our churches is an opportunity to reach more people than ever.”

**HOMILY**, continued from Page 2

such as the Guadalupe Center and St. Stephen’s to the individual parish and St. Vincent de Paul outreaches, to The Catholic Foundation and individuals who are adding to their financial support of this work even more generously, the mission of the Church’s care for the poor continues and even intensifies.

“We find ourselves adapting to different practices exercising care for the health and safety of all, but the commitment is as strong as ever. Thanks to all of you for that. You are heroic. Indeed, Jesus is walking among us.

“Please continue to stay connected in prayer and encouragement through your parish and through the diocese. Watch the websites; listen to St. Gabriel Radio. The Holy Father has given us guidance for Holy Week and regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

“I know many try to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation in these days of Lent. Obviously, we have had to cancel many penance services and restrict access to the Church. Taking seriously the mandate ‘Stay at home’ will impede access to the sacrament. I refer you to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, number 1452:

“When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called ‘perfect’ (contrition of charity). Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible.”

“Perhaps today, even now, (or at the end of Mass), you might take some moments of quiet. Examine your conscience. Then focus, really focus

on your love for God. Tell God how much you love Him. Think of the infinite love God has for you and express your sorrow at having offending the Lord who loves you so much.

“Mean it from the bottom of your heart. Offer an act of contrition and resolve as best as you can – one, ‘To sin no more,’ and two, and then resolve ‘I will go to confession as soon as it is possible.’ Then trust in the mercy of God.

“I promise, we will be there to meet you along the way when this is behind us.

“So, experiencing that sense of loss and sadness as we pray our spiritual communion today, and with a genuine longing for our return from this spiritual exile, we turn to the Lord. Even in our deepest concerns about what may

come next, we remember he is in our midst as shepherd, guide and friend.

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose; he leads me; he refreshes my soul. ... Even though I walk in the dark valley, I fear no evil, for you at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage.”

“And he is stronger than our greatest fears. This gives us hope and makes us instruments of hope to the world. The letter to the Hebrews reminds us, ‘You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.’

“Isn’t that interesting – ‘You ARE light.’ Let’s be light in the Lord for one another.”

# In anxious times, Blessed Margaret offers inspiration

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

Unknown to many Catholics in the diocese, a statue carved out of wood sits tucked away in the back corner of a church in downtown Columbus.

The small shrine is dedicated to a holy woman whose feast day seldom shows up on a church calendar. The lack of attention befits her humble life.

But in these difficult and stressful times, this amazing individual might provide inspiration to help the faithful navigate uncharted waters in a world that's paralyzed by a pandemic.

Her name is Blessed Margaret of Castello. And the shrine can be found at St. Patrick Church, which is under the care of the Dominican friars.

April 12, Easter Sunday, will be the 700th anniversary of her death. Her feast day is celebrated one day later, on April 13.

Blessed Margaret, the daughter of a wealthy Italian family who was born a hunchback, blind and lame



A shrine dedicated to Blessed Margaret of Castello at Columbus St. Patrick Church includes a relic of her heart. *CT photo by Ken Snow*

and eventually abandoned by her parents, was beatified more than 400 years ago in 1609. That begs the question: Why hasn't she been made a saint?

After all these years, there finally could be some movement in the case for sainthood of this frail but holy

Dominican laywoman.

Two Dominicans in Rome in charge of promoting her cause are making a push to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

"She's been a 'blessed' for a very long time," said Father Stephen Alcott, OP, pastor at St. Patrick Church, where devotion to Blessed Margaret began in the 1930s and then a shrine was established in the late 1950s. "They've been waiting for a miracle, and I think they have an historical miracle that they can use."

Father Alcott recently contributed a report to the postulators of her cause in Rome to summarize devotion to her in the United States.

To take the final step for Blessed Margaret to become a saint, the Church must have an approved miracle that is considered to be truly wondrous, incapable of a natural explanation, solely and verifiably entrusted to the saint's intercession, and accurately documented with appropriate medical records and multiple attestations.

As far as a timeline for when she might be canonized, nothing is cer-

tain. "But it seems they'll be able to use a historical miracle that already has been documented that would be necessary for her," Father Alcott said. "I know of (more recent) reported miracles, but it's always really difficult to document one to the satisfaction of the Holy See in Rome."

Many cures since her death are attributed to her intercession, but those strict verification standards inhibit their cures' inclusion in the cause for sainthood.

In recent times, Father Alcott recounted that a man in the Philippines with a knee injury was inexplicably healed. A little girl in Kentucky with meningitis was thought to be dying, and her father was called home from Europe to see her for a final time, but she was completely healed with no residual effects. Both the man and the girl's families prayed for Blessed Margaret's intercession.

As the world copes with the coronavirus, praying for Blessed Margaret's intercession could serve

See **BLESSED MARGARET**, Page 12

## Imploring Blessed Margaret of Castello's intercession with nine-day novena

### First Day

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, in embracing your life just as it was, you gave us an example of resignation to the will of God. In so accepting God's will, you knew that you would grow in virtue, glorify God, save your own soul and help the souls of your neighbors. Obtain for me the grace to recognize the will of God in all that may happen to me in my life and so resign myself to it. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

*Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.*

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

### Second Day

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, in reflecting so deeply upon the sufferings and death of our Crucified Lord, you learned courage and gained the grace to

bear your own afflictions. Obtain for me the grace and courage that I so urgently need so as to be able to bear my infirmities and endure my afflictions in union with our suffering Savior. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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### Third Day

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, your love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament was intense and enduring. It was here in intimacy with the Divine Presence that you found the spiritual strength to accept sufferings, to be cheerful, patient, and kindly towards others. Obtain for me the grace that I may draw from this same source, as from an inexhaustible font, the strength whereby I may be kind and

understanding of everyone despite whatever pain or discomfort may come my way. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:


*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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### Fourth Day

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, you unceasingly turned to God in prayer with confidence and trust in His fatherly love. It was only through continual prayer that you were enabled to accept your misfortunes, to be serene, patient and at peace. Obtain for me the grace to persevere in my prayer, confident that God



**Nine Day Novena  
In Honor of  
Bl. Margaret  
of Castello  
1287-1320**

**April 5-13**

*For my father and  
my mother have left me;  
but the Lord  
has taken me up.  
Ps. 26:10*

A nine-day novena to Blessed Margaret of Castello begins April 5.

*Courtesy St. Patrick Church*

will give me the help to carry whatever cross comes into my life. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of*

See **NOVENA**, Page 11

**NOVENA, continued from Page 10**

our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

**Fifth Day**

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, in imitation of the Child Jesus, who was subject to Mary and Joseph, you obeyed your father and mother, overlooking their unnatural harshness. Obtain for me that same attitude of obedience toward all those who have legitimate authority over me, most especially toward the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

**Sixth Day**

Oh Blessed Margaret of Castello, your miseries taught you better than any teacher the weakness and frailty of human nature. Obtain for me the grace to recognize my human limitations and to acknowledge my utter dependence upon God. Acquire for me that abandonment which leaves me completely at the mercy of God to do with me whatsoever He wills. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father after each day's prayer.

**Seventh Day**

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, you could have so easily become discouraged and bitter; but, instead, you fixed your eyes on the suffering Christ and there you learned from Him the redemptive value of suffering: how to offer your pains and aches, in reparation for sin and for the salvation of souls. Obtain for me the grace to learn how to endure my sufferings with patience. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

**Eighth Day**

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, how it must have hurt when your parents abandoned you! Yet you learned from this that all earthly love and affection, even for those who are closest, must be sanctified. And so, despite everything, you continued to love your parents, but now you loved them in God. Obtain for me the grace that I might see all my human loves and affections in their proper perspective...in God and for God. Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father after each day's prayer.

**Ninth Day**

O Blessed Margaret of Castello, through your suffering and misfortune,

you became sensitive to the sufferings of others. Your heart reached out to everyone in trouble: the sick, the hungry, the dying, prisoners. Obtain for me the grace to recognize Jesus in everyone with whom I come into contact, especially in the poor, the wretched, the unwanted! Obtain for me also the special favor which I now ask through your intercession with God.

Let us pray:

*O God, by whose will the blessed virgin, Margaret, was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone; be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never ending light. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, glorify your servant blessed Margaret, by granting the favor we so ardently desire. This we ask in humble submission to God's will, for His honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

Say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

**PRAYER**

O my God, I thank you for having given Blessed Margaret of Castello to the world as an example of the degree of holiness that can be attained by anyone who truly loves you, regardless of physical abnormalities. In today's perverted culture, Margaret would have, most likely, never been born; death through abortion being preferable to life, especially life in an ugly, distorted, twisted body. But your ways are not the world's ways...and so it was your will that Margaret would be born into the world with just such a malformed body. It is your way that uses our weakness to give testimony to your power. Margaret was born blind, so as to see you more clearly; a cripple, so as to lean on you completely; dwarfed in physical posture, so as to become a giant in the spiritual order; hunched-backed, so as to more perfectly resemble the twisted, crucified body of your Son. Margaret's whole life was an enactment of the words expressed by Paul: So I shall be happy to make my weaknesses my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me and that is why I am content with my weaknesses, and with insults, hardships, persecutions and the agonies I go through for Christ's sake. For it is when I am weak that I am strong. (2 Cor. 12:10).

I beseech you, O God, to grant, through the intercession of Blessed Margaret of Castello, that all the handicapped...and who among us is not?...all the rejected, all the UNWANTED of this world may make their weaknesses their own special boast so that your power may stay over them now and forever. Amen. Blessed Margaret of Castello, pray for us!

(3 Our Fathers and 3 Hail Marys)



Devices to help hearing-impaired individuals are available at Columbus St. Patrick Church. Photo courtesy St. Patrick Church

## St. Patrick Church's sound system helps hearing impaired

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

Blessed Margaret of Castello was born with many physical disabilities, and so it seems fitting that Columbus St. Patrick Church, which has a shrine devoted to her, provides special accommodations for hearing-impaired members of the congregation.

What's known as a hearing loop was installed in 2017 as part of a new sound system in the 167-year-old church to aid those who use hearing devices. Signage near the parish doors indicates the availability of the service.

"People who have used it, including some with cochlear implants, have said it has made a world of difference," said Father Stephen Alcott, OP, pastor at St. Patrick Church.

"One woman said that, for the first time, not only could she hear the Mass, she could hear the wine being poured into the chalice."

Anyone with a telecoil hearing aid can use the t-coil setting to connect to the sound system without utilizing an external device.

"Hearing aids have a lot of different settings, and sometimes an audiologist has to set it to the telecoil as one of the main options," Father Alcott said.

The parish also offers external hearing devices "about the size of a deck of cards" that can be worn around the neck. "You can just plug a set of headphones or earbuds into that, and any one-eighth-inch audio plug will work," Father Alcott explained.

See HEARING, Page 12

**BLESSED MARGARET**, *continued from Page 10*

as a spiritual remedy for feelings of anxiety and for those who are ill.

“She’s a great saint for people who have disabilities,” Father Alcott said. “She was blind, she was a dwarf, she had a severely curved spine, one leg was longer than the other.

“But she got through it and was very cheerful. She couldn’t understand why people would pity her.”

In spite of constant pain from her numerous afflictions, Blessed Margaret lived a life of prayer and service and saw suffering as a privilege for Jesus. She attended Mass daily and prayed to Jesus, Mary and St. Dominic. The Dominican also visited prisoners, helped the sick and comforted the dying.

She died at age 33 in Italy, where her incorrupt body lies today in the Church of St. Domenico at Cittadella after it was exhumed during an excavation in 1558. During her funeral procession after her death, a young girl was reported to be miraculously cured of an ailment.

Today, Blessed Margaret is known as an inspiration for the pro-life movement, those who suffer with eye and muscle diseases, anyone inclined toward discouragement and self-pity,

and the unwanted and abandoned.

The rise of the pro-life movement in the 1970s created renewed interest in Blessed Margaret as a champion for children in the womb. Several short documentaries and books chronicle her extraordinary life.

“She’s a great saint for people who are handicapped and, of course, the unborn,” Father Alcott said. “She was kept hidden for much of her childhood by her parents, and many people’s disabilities are kind of hidden and out of the public light. And so, I think she’d be a great saint for all those reasons and also for people living in anticipation.”

The church in Italy where her remains are on display is a pilgrimage site, as is the shrine at St. Patrick, which was renovated in 2003 during the parish’s sesquicentennial to include her relics, a reconditioned tapestry depicting events in her life and a cross made from charred ceiling beams from the church’s fire of 1935.

One family came to St. Patrick to pray to Blessed Margaret for their unborn child who had a serious genetic defect that normally meant the baby would survive only a few hours after

birth.

“They prayed for God’s will for the baby to be healed and, if not, so they’d be able to accept it. The child was born alive but passed away that same day, but I think it gave them the grace to accept that.”

St. Patrick also is the home base for the Blessed Margaret Guild, which has more than 1,200 members who are part of a mailing list.

The Guild serves many purposes, including the promotion of her canonization, raising money for programs to benefit the poor and underprivileged, social justice, respect for life, and carrying out the principles and ideals of Blessed Margaret in her work as a Dominican laywoman.

On Wednesdays at St. Patrick Church after the 11:45 a.m. Mass, novena and canonization prayers to Blessed Margaret are recited and a relic of her heart about a quarter-inch in diameter is venerated. After veneration, the relic is returned to the shrine in the back of the church for public viewing and prayer.

In addition, Guild members are remembered in a special Mass celebrated each month by the Dominican friars, who also pray for the intentions of the Guild as part of their Divine

Office during evening Vespers.

A yearly novena begins April 5 and ends April 13, her feast day. The Guild receives 200 or more requests for prayers during the novena.

“She’s got some real fans,” Father Alcott said.

The parish keeps her spirit alive through various local ministries, including Little Margaret’s Charity, which raises funds through a fifth Sunday second collection for parishioners in need and several pro-life and charitable organizations in the diocese.

The parish’s Confraternity of Christian Doctrine program supports Blessed Margaret’s Children, providing for a teacher to give one-on-one instruction to students who are developmentally disabled or with other disabilities.

“That’s an effort to incorporate children who have needs like Margaret did,” Father Alcott said.

For more information on the Blessed Margaret Guild or to request the novena, visit [www.littlemargaret.org](http://www.littlemargaret.org). The website includes information about her life, books and CDs, medals, prayers, statues and more in an online store.



A sign at Columbus St. Patrick Church indicates that the sound system accommodates parishioners with hearing devices.

Photo courtesy St. Patrick Church

**HEARING**, *continued from Page 11*

There are other options that use Bluetooth connections and a smartphone.

The church’s sound system extends to St. Thomas Aquinas Hall in the adjacent parish center, where parents can still listen to Mass while attending to small children. The system also facilitates live-streaming of Masses and events at St. Patrick.

St. Patrick’s Women’s Club paid for most of the sound system, and a grant from The Catholic Foundation was used for the hearing loop.

“We don’t even have to do anything when we flip on the sound system,” Father Alcott said. “We’re very happy with it, and it wasn’t that expensive. “We’ve not had any trouble with it maintenance-wise.”

**WEIGEL**, *continued from Page 6*

to reconsider. For what’s happening along the German synodal path is a true paradigm shift: a shift toward the notion of the Catholic Church as a federation of local Churches, each of which legitimately espouses its own doctrine, moral teaching, and pastoral practice. That, however, is not Catholicism. It is Anglicanism. And anyone who knows anything about world Christian demographics knows that local-option Anglicanism hasn’t turned out very well.

It is astonishing that, confronted by unmistakable empirical evidence that liberal Protestantism has collapsed

around the world, German Catholic leaders, ordained and lay, seem determined to create a nominally Catholic form of liberal Protestantism through a slow-motion “Wittenberg.” But perhaps this sad business is not all that surprising. Almost 20 years ago, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger told me that “organized Catholicism in Germany is a task force for old ideas.” At the time, we both understood him to mean the tried-and-failed ideas of the 1970s. It now looks, however, as if those “old ideas” have a 16th-century pedigree.

**40 DAYS**, *continued from Page 7*

quences of pride a lot, but fear and isolation are also very real weapons in spiritual warfare, because they convince us that we are alone, unloved, and unable to live the lives God has called us to live. So now, I implore you to really think about how you are filling these voids - what you consume (especially in terms of media) and what you put out there (especially in social media). Always keep in mind the Hope of the Gospel and God’s promise that He will not abandon us in our hours of greatest need.

I recently saw someone remark, “I was not planning on giving up so much for Lent this year.” To that, Amen. Me either. It is my prayer that from this we will each find an opportunity to get back to the basics and really yearn for a closer relationship to God. I am a convert, and I sometimes remember how awesome (in the true sense of the word) it was to go up for that very first Eucharist. Perhaps we can each recapture that reverence and love by using this time of social distancing to grow closer to God.

## We Are Friends helps Hocking County residents with life's struggles

By Tim Puet  
Catholic Times Reporter

Deacon Don Robers of Logan St. John Church has spent much of his life providing help for the needy and for people trying to free themselves from drug addiction in Hocking County. About a year and half ago, he brought representatives from professional organizations, law enforcement and the courts together to coordinate their efforts on behalf of the struggling.

“(County Municipal) Judge (Fred) Moses said most of these people need a friend,” Deacon Robers said. “I said ‘OK, we are friends.’” And just like that, the organization had a name.

Marian Gall, parish secretary at St. John Church, said that in the last 18 months or so, We Are Friends has helped about 75 people in several ways. These include giving them information about community resources, helping them go to grocery stores and medical appointments, and providing new or replacement furniture.

“One of the people we’ve assisted most recently is a military veteran with back issues who is living in an old trailer and had been sleeping on an Army cot,” Deacon Robers said. “We got him a new bed and set of bed furnishings, and he says he hasn’t slept so well in 30 years. Another of our cases from the last month or two involved a woman who left an abusive situation with her children and found a place to live. We stocked the house and gave the family Christmas presents.”

Deacon Robers said the first people helped by the program were two women recovering from drug addiction. “One of them had several setbacks, but now is getting treatment,” the deacon said. “The second had lost custody of her child, but has stayed clean and regained custody. One of our members found a house for the two of them, bought it and is reselling it to the woman at an affordable price.”

Deacon Robers said We Are Friends has a core membership of about 15 people, including Judge Moses and county Common Pleas Judge John Wallace. Both judges have drug courts and have sent several people to the organization for help with immediate needs and for refer-

als to appropriate agencies as they attempt to recover from addiction.

Those agencies include the Hocking Hills Inspire Shelter, Hopewell Health Centers, Integrated Services for Behavioral Health, and Goodwill Industries, as well as the parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Society.

We Are Friends has transformed the parish’s carport into a garage to store furniture and items for the people it serves. “We’ve probably filled and emptied that garage a dozen times,” said Deacon Robers, who has been a deacon for 15 years and also is chaplain at the Pickaway Correctional Institution. “Logan is a small town where everyone knows each other, so it didn’t take long for all the organizations in town to find out about us and begin sending us people.

“A local furniture store has been of great help by allowing us to purchase new mattresses, box springs and bed frames,” he said. “This has been a tremendous asset and our largest and basically our only expense to date.

“Our first idea was to try to provide a drug treatment facility for the area, but we soon realized it was beyond our abilities and that the old Hocking Correctional Facility in Nelsonville is being converted for this purpose,” Deacon Robers said. “We still help those recovering from addiction, but we evolved into providing furniture for the homeless and the needy.”

Besides providing furniture, We Are Friends gives several books to people suffering from addiction and their families. These include pocket-size prayer books, donated by Judge Wallace, as well as larger books titled *Addictive Thinking and Saving Jake: When Addiction Hits Home*.

The pocket-size prayer book has 32 pages, is titled *Prayers and Reflections* and is available from Guest House, 1601 Joslyn Road, Lake Orion MI 48360. Guest house treats Catholic men and women religious with alcohol or drug problems.

“Don has helped me distribute 300 to 500 of these books,” said the judge, who also is a member of St. John Church. “I would like other churches here and parishes elsewhere in the diocese to look at them because I feel they can be extremely helpful. I do whatever I can to support Don’s ministry because he has been very effective in leading the



Pictured with a trailer ready to be loaded with household goods for people served by the We Are Friends organization of Logan St. John Church are (from left): Fred Vaughan, Dan Robers and Deacon Don Robers.

Photo courtesy St. John Church

community’s response to addiction.”

One of the success stories of We Are Friends is Kristen Arnett, who is going through recovery, had been living in a homeless shelter with her two children, and now lives in an apartment provided by the drug court and furnished by We Are Friends.

“From furniture to toothbrushes and toothpaste – everything that I would need to live, they supplied for me and my children,” she said. We Are Friends also encouraged Arnett to speak to service clubs and other local support groups about her recovery. Through those organizations, she has made many connections that give her emotional support. She believes that without We Are Friends, it would have been much harder to remain drug-free.

“I would have felt more alone,” she said. “Now I have people behind me who are helping me get out of the hole I dug myself into. If they hadn’t helped me, I would not have seen a lot of light in life and a lot of the light in the people in life.”

Deacon Robers said We Are Friends always is in need of donations of furniture and household items, which volunteers will pick up. Clothing and large items the group can’t handle may be donated to Goodwill on behalf of We Are Friends, and the organization will receive a voucher it can use to purchase

various necessities. Large items also may be taken to the Logan community thrift store, which will sell them and give a percentage of the sale price back to We Are Friends.

Most of the money raised for We Are Friends has come from individual donations. The organization also was awarded a \$2,500 grant by The Catholic Foundation and has applied for a grant from the South Central Power Co. Donations may be made to We Are Friends by writing a check to the organization and mailing it to St. John Church, Attention: Marian, 351 N. Market St., Logan OH 43138. Deacon Robers said the organization also has established a donor advised fund with The Catholic Foundation. Checks payable to the foundation for the fund should include “We Are Friends” in the memo line and sent to The Catholic Foundation, 257 E. Broad St., Columbus OH 43215.

“Getting We Are Friends started is the most satisfying thing I’ve ever done,” Deacon Robers said. “I didn’t realize how huge the need was in our community for this type of organization. One of our strengths as a small town is the way we know and are concerned about one another, and because we are caring people, We Are Friends has been able to live up to its name.”

## Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year A

## The Good God is the only God

Ezekiel 37:12-14  
Ps. 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6,  
7-8  
Romans 8:8-11  
John 11:1-45

## Father Timothy Hayes



Father Timothy M. Hayes is pastor of Columbus St. Timothy Church.

“O My People!”  
A loving mother or father can use some expressions that tell you something is up. “O My People!” is something akin to your name being spoken in just that tone. You know what I am talking about. When I heard my name called, “Timothy Michael!” I knew I was in for it.

God, in exasperation, cries out: “O My people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O My people!”

He continues, telling *how* and *why* He will do what He has said. *How* is simple: “I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land.”

Why has two prongs: “Thus you shall know that I am the LORD” and “I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.” The desire of God’s heart is for us to hear His word, to believe and to experience His power to give us our own heart’s deepest desire. “O My People!” He cries out to us. He will put His Spirit into us and bring us to life. He has promised to raise us up. And He will do it!

In raising Lazarus, Jesus reveals that He IS life. Not only does Jesus have divine power, but He exercises that power for us in an intimacy that is utterly unexpected. He goes to Lazarus because He loves him. “The one you love is sick.” Deeply moved by the sorrow of his friends Martha and Mary, “Jesus wept.” This great miracle enlivens faith in His disciples.

When people doubt the existence of God – at least of the Good God we profess to believe in – suffering and death are the primary example of the evil that tells against God’s existence. We see this even now in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic; many without faith, and some with a distorted faith, speak harshly of God during this time of crisis. The God of Life will see us through.

Christians testify that God is All-

Good, seeing suffering and death as real, but not as ultimate experiences. They are given a new meaning by Jesus Christ. The Only-Begotten Son of God took on the whole of our human experience, living our earthly life, and then carrying our human nature beyond earthly life into eternity. His suffering and death carry us into the realm of mystery. In faith, we grasp this. Hope leads us to a realization that it will answer our longing for health and life. Love shows us the way to embrace it and cling to it beyond the struggles.

The Christian response to the dilemma is not at all an explanation that satisfies our desire for an answer. We are forced to admit that we are in the face of an insoluble mystery. Suffering and death are real. The Good God is the only God, and He too is real – even more real than the suffering and death.

If you have ever been present to someone who is gravely ill or someone who has died, you know that this is a human limit. But you also begin to recognize that it is a special time of grace. In weakness, we discover strength. At the moment of death, we see the fulfillment of a lifetime of faith. *Hail Mary, full of grace ... Holy Mary, ... pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

I recall with awe the first time I was present at the very moment of death. The man looked at me, looked right through me, then, breathed his last. His wife and I experienced that privileged moment together. I also prayed that moment with my paternal grandfather, along with my Dad and other family members. Once, a family was reading children’s letters to God out loud; their father died to the sound of human laughter. Death makes sense of a full life, opening the way to eternity. Death becomes Christ’s means to share with us the Joy of His life in God.

## THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY  
Daniel 13:1-9,  
15-17, 19-30, 33-62  
Psalm 23:1-6  
John 8:1-11

TUESDAY  
Numbers 21:4-9  
Psalm 102:2-3, 16-21  
John 8:21-30

WEDNESDAY  
Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95  
Daniel 3:52-56 (Ps)  
John 8:31-42

THURSDAY  
Genesis 17:3-9  
Psalm 105:4-9  
John 8:51-59

FRIDAY  
Jeremiah 20:10-13  
Psalm 18:2-7  
John 10:31-42

SATURDAY  
Ezekiel 37:21-28  
Jeremiah 31:10-13 (Ps)  
John 11:45-56

## DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE: WEEK OF MARCH 29, 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](http://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 WLB 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](http://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](http://www.stannstmary.org)); Columbus St. Patrick ([www.stpatrickcolumbus.org](http://www.stpatrickcolumbus.org)); Delaware St. Mary ([www.delawarestmary.org](http://www.delawarestmary.org)); and Sunbury St. John Neumann ([www.saintjohnsunbury.org](http://www.saintjohnsunbury.org)).

We pray Week I, Seasonal Proper, Liturgy of the Hours.

7AM



**FR. JOHN RICCARDO**  
Christ is the Answer



**MATTHEW KELLY**  
Dynamic Catholic

NEW  
MORNING  
LINEUP

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8AM



**FR. ADAM STREITENBERGER**  
Conversations on Discipleship



**SR. MIRIAM JAMES HEIDLAND, MICHELLE BENZINGER, HEATHER KHYM**  
Abiding Together



**FR. NATHAN CROMLY**  
Dare Great Things

ST. GABRIEL  
**CATHOLIC RADIO**



**AM 820**  
CENTRAL OHIO

**FM 88.3**  
SOUTHERN OHIO

# Service agencies meet need spurred by virus shutdowns

By Tim Puet  
Catholic Times Reporter

Representatives of several diocesan social services agencies are reporting dramatic increases in requests for assistance as a result of the disruption caused by the coronavirus.

Marilyn Mehaffie, president and chief executive officer of St. Stephen's Community House in Columbus' Linden neighborhood, said Monday in a conference call among several agency leaders that the number of families requesting food from its food and nutrition center has increased 46 percent in the past week. The pantry is open noon to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 3 to 6 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday and is now open to all Franklin County residents. It previously was limited to people living in eight ZIP codes.

She said St. Stephen's child-care center is closed as a result of a state order shutting down all large child-care facilities. Its staff members are working remotely and checking on families. St. Stephen's after-school programs in Columbus City Schools have been halted because all schools are closed. The LifeCare Alliance dining center at the site also is closed.

The center still is transporting senior citizens with critical medical needs and making food deliveries. Case management is taking place remotely. The center continues to accept referrals to meet basic needs and is making utility and rent payments for people who need such help.

Mehaffie said that as more people lose their jobs at least temporarily because of the massive business closings resulting from the pandemic and the state's "stay-at-home" order, she is anticipating cash flow issues for the center. She plans to apply to The Catholic Foundation for help from its new emergency response fund.

Father David Schalk, pastor of Columbus Christ the King Church, said the pantry at the Bishop Griffin Resource Center adjacent to the church served 10 percent to 20 percent more people than usual on Wednesday and Friday, March 18 and 20. "Half of those folks were new clients," he said. He didn't have totals for Saturday, March 21. Saturday was just added as a third open day for the pantry.

Rachel Lustig, president and chief executive officer of Catholic Social Services, said pantries at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Center on

Columbus' west side and the St. Francis Center in Portsmouth have made the adjustments needed to serve many more people.

The agency in the past week set up a remote infrastructure to allow staff members to work from home. She said all of its programs for seniors and families were functioning. Its transportation program for seniors and qualified military veterans in Licking County has been streamlined, limiting itself to trips for necessary services such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

Marilyn McKenzie, director of the St. Francis Center in Portsmouth, told The Catholic Times in a separate interview that the center's pantry, previously open twice a month, now is open three hours a day, four days a week. She said it distributed 388 boxes of food to 100 families during the four days it was open last week. That's about equal to the amount it normally distributes in a month.

Ashley Riegel of the St. Francis Center in McArthur, which is not connected to the center of the same name in Portsmouth, told the Times she has not seen much of an increase in requests for help but anticipates that will change. The center serves Vinton County, one of Ohio's poorest areas. "Life here for many is an everyday struggle already, and the virus outbreak is one more challenge," she said.

"Our biggest concern at Catholic Social Services is that we have not seen the full impact of the virus on people," Lustig said during the

conference call. "The effects of people losing their jobs and not having any money to pay rent or utilities are only beginning to be felt. I expect economic needs and the need for some of our services to greatly increase. It will strain our resources and those of many other agencies, for we're all on shoestring budgets."

"We're holding our breath at this point," said Lisa Keita, director of the Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs. "We haven't seen an increase in requests for help, but we know they're going to rise because so many places where people work are being shut down."

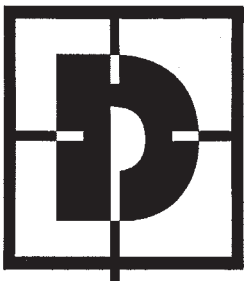
Keita also is director of the McArthur center. She said its food distribution program, which had been visiting several communities, has been halted, with distribution now taking place at the center from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday and Thursday. Home delivery will continue for those unable to get to the center.

Loren Brown, president and CEO of The Catholic Foundation, said its new emergency response fund, which began with \$250,000 from the foundation, has grown to \$550,000 in about a week. He said that at the request of Bishop Robert Brennan, the fund will focus on helping food pantries and enabling pastors to have emergency cash on hand for individuals and families in need.

"We don't think every parish or pastor will be requesting money, but we want to have a meaningful amount for them," he said. "We expect more contributions in the next 30 days and hope to get to at least \$1 million."

Brown also said the foundation is expediting its responsive grant process for this year. This will make more than \$1 million in unrestricted and restricted grants that normally would be issued in September available immediately.

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# PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

**CURRAN, Thomas A., 80, March 8**  
St. Brendan Church, Hilliard

**DONAUGH, Walter G., 93, March 14**  
St. Stephen Church, Columbus

**DOTY, Anita, 91, March 16**  
St. Joseph, Circleville

**HAYES, Nicholas, 61, March 18**  
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus

**JONES, Kathleen A. (Weldon), 72, March 18**  
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

**PASKIEVITCH, Joseph R., 83, March 16**  
St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, Pickerington

**RAPHAEL, Patricia (Spencer), 89, March 14**  
Immaculate Conception Church, Columbus

**SCHEESER, Robert H., 86, March 20**  
St. Anthony Church, Columbus

**WINTERS, Dorothy E. (Ford), 104, March 19**  
Immaculate Conception Church, Columbus

## Roger "Lee" Ayotte

Because of the coronavirus outbreak, a celebration of life service will take place later at Sunbury St. John Neumann Church for Roger "Lee" Ayotte, 85, who died Friday, March 13.

He was born on Dec. 1, 1934 in Alpena, Michigan, to the late Ovid and Harriet Ayotte, was a 1953 graduate of Alpena Catholic Central High School and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1957 from the University of Notre Dame, where he played on the basketball team for three years.

He served in the U.S. Army for three years after college, then taught at Ascension Academy in Alexandria, Virginia, before moving his family to Columbus, where he spent 38 years in the insurance industry. He retired as president of Insurance Intermediaries, a wholly owned subsidiary of Nationwide, in 1999.

He led the campaign to build a new school at Columbus St. Vincent Family Center and was a member of the

board of trustees of the former Diocesan Child Guidance Center and the St. John Neumann Parish Council. Bishop James Griffin presented him with a diocesan service award.

He served as PTA president for Columbus Eastmoor elementary, middle and high schools from 1965-1981 and was a member of the Columbus Public Schools parent advisory committee.

He served for many years as athletic director of Columbus St. Catharine School, coaching its Catholic Youth Organization boys basketball team to five city championships. In the summers, he coached in the

He also was a member of the Notre Dame Monogram Club and was elected to the Alpena Sports Hall of Fame in 1988.

Survivors include his wife, Betty (Ickes); son, Richard; daughters, Vicki, Kelly (Bob) Phelan and Elizabeth "Chip" (Paul) Pozderac; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

## Retired Cincinnati archbishop dies

### Catholic News Service

Retired Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, an educator and author whose work focused on explaining the Catholic faith to wider audiences, died March 22 at age 85.

A native of Dayton, Archbishop Pilarczyk had been in declining health in recent years. He led the Cincinnati Archdiocese for 27 years until his retirement on Dec. 21, 2009, the day after the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

Prior to his appointment as archbishop in 1982, he was auxiliary bishop of Cincinnati for eight years, also serving as director of educational services for the archdiocese.

"Among his brother bishops, Archbishop Pilarczyk was recognized as one of the outstanding churchmen

of his time," Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati, his successor, said in a statement. "They elected him not only president of what was then the National Conference of Catholic Bishops but also chair of every significant committee of the bishops' conference.

"His accomplishments on the local level in his tenure as archbishop of Cincinnati were equally outstanding. He unselfishly devoted his entire priesthood to this archdiocese."

Archbishop Pilarczyk wrote several popular books as well as pamphlets and articles explaining the Catholic faith.

Nearing retirement, he launched *Grateful Believers*, an initiative to raise awareness of God's blessings in daily life and increase stewardship within the church.

## Deacon Jerry J. Butts

Funeral Mass for Deacon Jerry J. Butts, 76, who died Wednesday, March 18, was celebrated Friday, March 20 at Columbus Corpus Christi Church. Burial was at St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus.

He was born in Columbus on June 24, 1943 and was one of six children of the late Earl and Josephine (Eyerman) Butts.

He attended Columbus St. Leo School and Columbus Aquinas High School, graduated in 1962 from Columbus South High School and served in the U.S. Army from 1962-1965. He was certified as an electrical technician by Bell and Howell in 1972 and worked as a printer with the Xerox Educational Center until his retirement.



He entered the newly formed permanent diaconate program of the Diocese of Columbus in 1978 and was ordained a deacon on Oct. 12, 1980 in Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral by Auxiliary Bishop George Fulcher. He served as a deacon at Corpus Christi Church from the time of his ordination until 2017, periodically helping at Columbus St. Ladislav Church until the two became a parish cluster under one pastor.

Following retirement, he assisted occasionally at Gahanna St. Matthew Church until becoming ill.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Rose (Tople); sons, Jerry and Richard; daughters, Cathy and Sandy; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## Sandra K. Morris

A private funeral Mass for Sandra K. Morris, 75, of Lancaster, who died Friday, March 20, will be celebrated for the family because of the restrictions related to the coronavirus. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Lancaster.

She was born on Jan. 10, 1945 in Lancaster to John and Lula (Reed) Smith and was a member of Lancaster St. Bernadette Church, teaching Sunday school for many years. After her children were grown, she worked at

a Lazarus department store. She also was a member of the Quota Club.

She was preceded in death by her parents; infant daughter, Angie; and brothers, Larry, Edward and Danny. Survivors include her husband, Frederick; sons, Father Matthew Morris, parochial vicar of Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church, and Christopher; daughter, Melanie (Michael Jordan) Morris; brother, Michael; and sister, Connie Stover.

## Notice to readers

Because the coronavirus epidemic has closed all Catholic churches, The Catholic Times asks readers to send death notices of deceased Catholics to Tim Puet at [tput@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:tpuet@columbuscatholic.org), who compiles the newspaper's weekly obituary listings.

The Times obtains many of its death notices for Catholics, especially those in the Columbus area, from the daily obituaries in The Columbus Dispatch. Most of those obituaries list the site of a deceased person's funeral Mass, but generally do not list the parish the person attended.

Since no funeral Masses will be taking place in churches until at least mid-April, that means the deaths of many Catholics will go unrecognized

in the newspaper without reader assistance.

Information needed includes the deceased person's first and last name; maiden name, if married; age; date of death; and parish of affiliation. If the deceased has been a patient in an assisted-living facility for some time, list the parish the person formerly attended.

For deceased persons who now live outside of the Diocese of Columbus, but previously were residents of the diocese, list the parish in the diocese formerly attended by that person, plus the other information requested above.

Thank you for your consideration.



## DeSales' Watson named first-team All-Ohio

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

For the first time since 2010, and only the fifth time in school history, a Columbus St. Francis DeSales boys basketball player was named first-team all-state.

Desmond Watson, a 6-foot-5 junior forward, was selected as one of five players for the first team by the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association after earlier being named the Division II Central District Player of the Year.

"I had just finished a workout and went over to check my phone, and my coach texted me that I made all-state. Oh, man, I was just so happy," Watson said.

"It was definitely a goal of mine. My freshman and sophomore year I was just out there playing, but this year I got really, really serious. I started making all these goals, and throughout the year I started accomplishing these goals."

The last first-team all-state player from DeSales was Nick Kellogg in 2010.

"It was well deserved," DeSales coach Pat Murphy said of Watson's selection. "We played a lot of good competition this year, and he was the best player in Division II in our area hands down."

Watson helped lead the Stallions to a 19-6 record and their first district title since 2016. Their regional semifinal game against New Philadelphia in Athens was postponed on March 12 because of the coronavirus outbreak.

A few weeks earlier, Watson became just the seventh player in DeSales history to surpass 1,000 career points, reaching the milestone in a 66-53 win at Worthington Kilbourne.

Watson averaged 23.0 points, 7.1 rebounds and 4.2 assists per game as a junior while shooting 54.6 percent from the field and 33.9 percent on 3-pointers.

"He put in tremendous work in the offseason with us," Murphy said. "He was really dedicated in the weight room and in the gym."

"He's really changed from being a guy playing around the basket to playing everywhere on the floor. He played all five positions for us this year. That's a credit to his worth ethic. ... He was a really difficult matchup for our opponents this year."

A starter since his freshman season, Watson credits his offseason work in the gym and the weight room for elevating his game to another level as a junior.

"This offseason I don't think I missed one day in the gym," Watson said. "I really expanded my game."

Watson moved out to the perimeter this season and showcased his talents



DeSales junior Desmond Watson (with ball), named first-team all-state in Division II, reached a milestone this season when he surpassed 1,000 career points.

Photo courtesy Shane Flanagan/ThisWeek Newspapers

at both guard positions and at forward.

Watson is projected as a wing player at the next level.

"I put up 500 shots a day during the summer," Watson said. "When you get to the next level, you've got to be able to shoot."

"Every coach I've talked to say they really love my game. The main thing they said is, they like my alpha dog role that I show, but they love the perimeter (game) and when I can get to the hoop."

Watson, whose uncle is former Ohio State University standout Dennis Hopson, has college offers from Ohio University, Cleveland State and Stetson universities and the University of Tennessee-Martin. He also has made unofficial visits to Ohio State and West Virginia University.

Zanesville Bishop Rosecrans' Weston Nern, a 5-11 senior who averaged 15.4 points per game, made second team All-Ohio in Division IV.

## High school athletes experience bittersweet March

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

Thousands of high school student-athletes were stuck in limbo over whether the winter sports seasons would be completed and spring sports would begin.

The coronavirus outbreak led to the closure of all schools in Ohio by Gov. Mike DeWine and the postponement of the girls state basketball, boys hockey and wrestling state tournaments in mid-March. Postseason competition in boys basketball had reached the regional round when the Ohio High School Athletic Association suspended all competition.

Wrestlers from Columbus Bishop Hartley, Columbus Bishop Ready and Newark Catholic had qualified for the state tournament, and the boys basketball team from Columbus St. Francis DeSales had advanced to a Division II

regional semifinal before getting word that the postseason was suspended.

DeSales had won a district boys basketball title for the first time since 2016 and was preparing to leave for Athens on Thursday, March 12 for a regional semifinal that evening to be played in front of a limited number of family members and essential personnel at Ohio University's Convocation Center when coach Pat Murphy received an email at 1 p.m. that afternoon announcing the postponement.

"The first meeting (with the team) was really devastating," DeSales coach Pat Murphy said. "But after we had some time to reflect on it, the next day, we just talked to (the players) again, and it just seemed like everyone grew up in those 24 hours, from coach to player, because school had been cancelled at that point."

"So we said, 'Make your last game No. 1.' That's a special thing. Cutting down the nets in the district final is

something they'll always remember. A lot of great final moments, if that is the case."

The district championship was the eighth in school history. DeSales had not won a regional title since 2009, its last appearance in the state final four.

"We just we were trying to get there, and the guys were really excited about that," Murphy said. "We definitely we played a really tough schedule, and we talked about the tournament. It's just, you know, kind of the last part of that story is going to be unwritten. Things go that way sometimes."

DeSales players and junior Desmond Watson, named first-team all-state in Division II and the team's leading scorer at 23.0 points per game, couldn't help but feel disappointed, especially the seniors at the end of their high school basketball careers.

"We felt like we would be playing in the (state final)," Watson said.

Jerry Snodgrass, commissioner

of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, tried to sound hopeful at a March 19 news conference, but at press time a decision was forthcoming on whether sports would resume this year.

"I want to emphasize the fact that this is emotional for everyone," he said. "... Everyone watching this understands how rapidly moving and fluid this whole situation has been. ... Athletics will come back, and now more than ever, we need to be unified to get them back."

No matter what happens, Watson said, the DeSales players know what they accomplished on the court.

"We put in so much work as a team during the offseason that people really didn't see, and we could just tell that the chemistry was there," Watson said. "I felt like we shocked the world --- everybody but ourselves. I don't think anybody expected us to go this far or do this well."

## Woodford steps down as Watterson girls basketball coach

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

After 19 seasons as Columbus Bishop Watterson girls basketball coach, Tom Woodford is stepping away.

Woodford, 51, announced his decision to resign on March 17. He will continue in his current job as a



Tom Woodford won 417 games in 25 years as a girls basketball coach at London and Bishop Watterson.

*Photo courtesy Bishop Watterson High School.*

guidance counselor for Hilliard City Schools.

“This decision wasn’t easy,” Woodford said. “The players on the team are amazing people, and their parents are special. All of them cheer for each other and want what is best for the team. It has been a treat to be a part of their lives.”

The Eagles ended the 2019-20 season with a 23-3 record, won the Central Catholic League championship with a 6-0 record, cracked the top 10 in the state rankings, and finished as Division I district runners-up for the third time in the past four years after losing to Pickerington Central in a district final.

Woodford leaves the coaching ranks with 417 victories in 25 overall seasons at Watterson and London High School. He collected his 400th victory during his final season in a Dec. 9 game against Hilliard Davidson.

The daily grind of being a coach and a desire to watch one of his daughters, Paige, play in college next year at Mercyhurst University led to

Woodford’s decision. Paige was a senior point guard who played for her father the past four years.

Woodford’s replacement will inherit a team that returns a strong nucleus of underclassmen, including Kilyn McGuff, a junior guard who was named first-team All-Central District this season.

Not only did Woodford appreciate the dedication of his players and parents at Watterson during his coaching tenure, but also “the administration at Watterson has been equally as supportive,” he said. “Their support over the past 19 years is something I will never forget. It truly has been a great place to coach.”

## St. Anthony students receive Reconciliation



Columbus St Anthony School second-grade students received the Sacrament of Reconciliation just before the restrictions imposed by the spread of the coronavirus were imposed. Father Raymond Larussa is shown hearing the confession of a student.

*Photo courtesy St. Anthony School*

## Students adjust to closing



Columbus Immaculate Conception School students Will Lewis (left) and his brother Zach get back into their normal routine by listening to principal Colleen Kent doing morning announcements while the school is closed because of the coronavirus.

*Photo courtesy Immaculate Conception School*

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## Claver auxiliary serves community



St. Cyprian Court 298 of the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary has donated a layette including baby clothes and care items for mothers in need to the Christ Child Society every year for more than a decade. Lori Caldwell of the society is pictured with auxiliary members (from left) Colleen Cannell, Janice Davis, Yvonne Torres and Lanell Wade.



Members of St. Cyprian Court 298 of the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary make more than 200 sandwiches for the Community Kitchen at Columbus Holy Rosary-St. John Church once every three months. Pictured at the most recent Sandwich Day are (from left) Carolyn Borden, Lynn Chavers, Yvonne Torres and Kathy DuPart.

## Cuban food at St. Agatha



Columbus St. Agatha School seventh-grade students had a tasty lesson during a Spanish class as they ate Cuban chicken and rice, avocado and tomato salad with olive oil, and bread. Dessert was guava and cream cheese. Pictured are students JP Norton and Ava Kennedy.

*Photo courtesy St. Agatha School*

## Biographies come to life



Worthington St. Michael School fifth-grade students presented their class biographies dressed as their subjects. Anne Frank, Henry Ford, Mother Teresa, Milton Hershey and many more made an appearance.

*Photo courtesy St. Michael School*

### 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. The person must say this prayer three consecutive days, after three days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor has been granted. LS

## More than a guide to prayer

By Sarah Reinhard

*Pray Fully: Simple Steps for Becoming a Woman of Prayer*  
Michele Faehnle & Emily Jaminet  
2020, Ave Maria Press  
\$15.95

A lot of books cross my desk, and among those books which are both Catholic and for women, there are quite a few that focus on prayer.

We Catholic women are a prayerful lot, aren't we?

Or, at least, that's what the publishers must think.

I don't think they're wrong.

But I do think it takes a special sort of book to actually, you know, work.

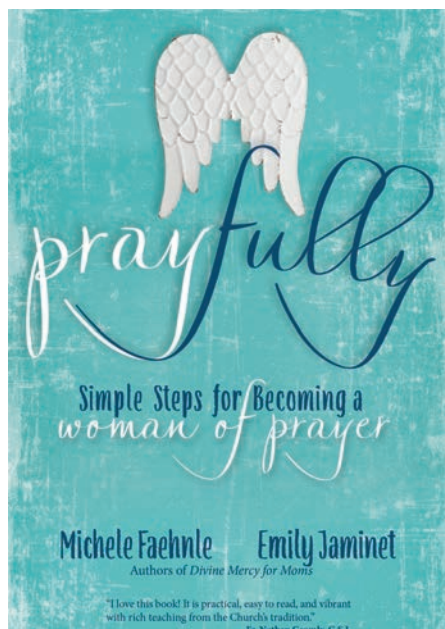
For one thing, how hard can prayer be? Sit in your seat and DO IT.

Easy for me to say, right? I'm a type-A person and nearly perfect. Just ask my kids.

According to a survey quoted in the introduction, Michele Faehnle — co-founder of the wonderful Columbus Catholic Women's Conference so many of us attend and love — reports that "only 51 percent of Catholic women surveyed pray daily." She continues, "Yes, it can be difficult to carve out time with God, and to learn to pray. On the other hand, prayer cannot be something we leave on the back burner and only pull out in times of need. Prayer is the lifeblood of our faith, a two-way conversation with God that alternately comforts, strengthens, and inspires."

What follows are seven chapters that have some of the best-done journaling prompts and discussion ideas I've ever seen in a book of this sort. I'm not a journaler, to be honest, and I usually roll my eyes when there are discussion questions. What Faehnle and Jaminet have done here, though, is amazingly approachable and provoking.

The book alternates between the two voices of Faehnle and Jaminet, two local authors whose previous books include *My Friend Faustina*:



Life Lessons in Divine Mercy, The Friendship Project and Divine Mercy for Moms. Each chapter includes an introduction that will probably make you nod along, tips and practical advice for applying prayer to the situation, an introduction to a type of prayer, a short introduction to a saint, quotes and insight from the saint, and a prayer prompt.

Sprinkled throughout, in ways that are natural and feel almost like a friend interrupting to say, "Hey. Let's talk RIGHT NOW THIS VERY MINUTE!" are discussion paragraphs. Unlike the three-to-five questions you find at the end of every single book for women these days, these feel like they're actually discussions. Like people are listening. Like someone cares about the answers.

Mind you, I was reading ALONE. BY MYSELF.

I picked this book up with no small amount of skepticism and walked away completely enchanted. At last, a book that will not just tell me the what and how, but whose authors walk with me and serve as companions on the journey to heaven. I not only highly recommend it, I invite you to pray along.

### PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

O St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster father of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we turn to you in our time of need, knowing fully that you are a source of consolation, comfort and solace. Comforter of the Afflicted and Hope of the Sick, help those throughout the world who have the coronavirus. Bring them strength, perseverance and healing. Patron of the Dying, deliver the souls of those who are dying of the coronavirus into the merciful arms of your Son, Jesus Christ. Joseph most courageous, help those on the front lines of this pandemic with health of mind and body and assist them with their challenges and strife. And finally, in times of fear and anxiety, take us under your loving protection and aid us from on high. Amen.

### WOMEN, continued from Page 8

Instead, for some women, the abortion experience initiated a life of denial and regret, and inaugurated a life of fear that someone would find out. Someone would know their dirty little secret.

So they hide.

Some find refuge in drugs or alcohol. Others find comfort in a sanctuary of activity, busying themselves with frenzied preoccupations like hobbies, or work, or volunteering. Some may retreat to a shelter of obsessive perfection, taking normal undertakings to an extreme.

Their façade of seclusion protects them from anyone ever knowing their past. They embrace their secrecy with such vigor that it evolves into denial, convincing even themselves that it never happened.

But denial works until it doesn't. Something or someone may awak-

en the past and bring it to the fore. That's when they'll need you and me (and programs like Bethesda Healing Ministry) to help them maneuver through the maze of healing to arrive at the door of redemption.

Yes, we all remember the bad things that we've done in the past. Our past is our past.

But the woman who has an abortion experience in her past is tortured with a very different type of remembrance that is more profound and more devastating than that which occurs from a few minor indiscretions.

It's now part of her story and part of the story that God wrote for her. The memory won't ever go away, but the pain from it can.

Her past is her past, her now is her now, and her future is hopeful if we all recognize and facilitate her healing.

## CATHOLIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

The Catholic Foundation is launching an emergency fund to raise needed money for families and individuals in our parishes and food for our food pantries.

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