

# The Catholic TIMES

The Diocese of Columbus' Information Source

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## Inside this issue



**Last priest in Afghanistan:** Father Daniel Swartz (left), a diocesan priest serving as a U.S. Navy chaplain, speaks at the St. Thomas More Newman Center near the Ohio State University campus on April 5 about his experiences as the last priest in Afghanistan in August when troops and civilians were being evacuated, Page 2



**Ordination details set:** The ordination and installation of Bishop-elect Earl Fernandes will begin at 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 31 at Westerville St. Paul Church and a Vespers service will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, May 30 at Columbus St. Andrew Church, Page 3



**Insight on bishop-elect:** Msgr. Frank Lane, a retired priest of the diocese, has worked with Bishop-elect Earl Fernandes in Cincinnati and says he has all of the qualities that it takes to lead the Diocese of Columbus, Page 3



## DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION SPREADS THROUGHOUT DIOCESE

Pages 12-15

# Last priest out of Afghanistan recalls time of chaos, compassion

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

Father Daniel Swartz, the last priest to leave Afghanistan when it fell to the Taliban in late August of last year, described the evacuation of Afghans, Americans and others from the war-torn nation as “like a pageant of the cross.”

“In the midst of chaos, there were countless instances of compassion. People were so willing to give themselves and unleash the full volume of their spiritual resources,” he said.

“It’s a situation you don’t try to understand at the time. You just do whatever you can in that moment. Looking back, I can see that if the Lord in His wisdom allows us to enter into crisis, perhaps it’s so we can understand the depths of His own sacrifice.

“There were many small moments during the evacuation in which I know indelibly that Christ was there, speaking to us not just of that moment, but of the past and of the future. It’s made me reflect constantly on how the Lord has worked in my own life and in the lives of others in small ways we couldn’t understand until later,” he said.

Father Swartz, 32, a priest of the Diocese of Columbus for nearly six years and a U.S. Navy chaplain, spoke in public for the first time of his experiences in Afghanistan on Tuesday, April 5 at the Columbus St. Thomas More Newman Center near Ohio State University. The talk was part of the center’s weekly Buckeye Catholic praise and worship service for OSU students and others.

Father Swartz was deployed to the Middle East to serve as chaplain for the 2nd Battalion, 1st Division of the U.S. Marine Corps, which is part of the Navy. After being evacuated from Afghanistan, he spent about a month in Kuwait and then was sent to the Camp Pendleton, California Marine base to await his next assignment.

He was given a few days of leave last month to visit his family, who are members of Columbus St. Agatha Church, and then began ministry at the Naval base on Guam, which he reached in time to celebrate Palm Sunday Mass and Holy Week services. He has been with the Navy since the summer of



**Father Daniel Swartz speaks at the Columbus St. Thomas More Newman Center near the Ohio State University campus on April 5 about his experiences as a military chaplain in Afghanistan.**  
*Photo courtesy St. Thomas More Newman Center*

2019 after serving as parochial vicar at Gahanna St. Matthew Church and the Perry County Consortium of Parishes following his ordination.

At the time of the evacuation, Father Swartz was ministering to Marine Quick Response Forces (QRFs), groups of elite troops capable of fast deployment to a trouble spot and trained at a higher intensity than most military units.

“These guys were on an ongoing mission which allowed them to be anywhere in the Middle East within six hours,” Father Swartz said. “We had QRFs in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq and Jordan, so I kept bouncing around the Middle East and seeing my guys.”

He said this was similar to his service among four parishes in Perry County or the equivalent of what it must have been for Father Edward Fenwick and other pioneer Ohio priests who traveled on horseback from place to place in the early 1800s in what’s now the Columbus diocese.

Father Swartz said because of the possibility they might have to perform such duty, the QRFs had been practicing noncombatant evacuation oper-

ations designed to get people out of a particular area. Those units were called to the Afghan capital of Kabul when it became apparent the Taliban was preparing to take control of the city.

Father Swartz said that after landing at the Kabul airport, thronged with people trying to leave the country, “I’ve never seen people move like that before. It was like a liquid wave with its own kind of intellect, with my guys trying to corral these panicked people clustering around the airport and planes.

“All of NATO pretty much was there – troops from Britain, Turkey, New Zealand and Australia, even some Japanese, Swedes, Poles, Belgians, Germans, the Italian Carabinieri, the French Foreign Legion – all trying to get their people out.

“In a situation like this, you just take what you can carry. We weren’t sure what the Taliban was going to do. Most of the officers preparing for the evacuation wanted to bring in fully tactical units who were armed for whatever could happen.

“A chaplain doesn’t carry arms, so I wasn’t supposed to go. But someone high in command insisted, ‘We’re go-

ing to bring a chaplain,’ so that’s how I ended up being part of the evacuation.

“We knew the airport runway was compromised, so we made a combat landing – just drop the plane on the tarmac and come out. We stepped off the plane and heard all these shots being fired – just like a firefight. You can tell from the sound of the bullets what country is firing them,” he said.

“I’ve never seen fear, panic and desolation mixed so heavily. Kabul was a concentrated can of chaos. The Afghans who wanted to leave had abandoned all their vehicles at the airport, so we commandeered them and did whatever we needed to do to help people.

“I traded parts of my kit to get Gatorade for my guys. Cigarettes were great for bartering with the Turks. We’d break the doors down to get to stocks of anti-malarial medicine and other first-aid supplies. No matter what we found, it was useful.”

Father Swartz said he was in Kabul for about 10 days but couldn’t tell exactly how long because time became irrelevant as the evacuation force tried to get as many people out as it could. He said more than 100,000 people were processed and flown out of Afghanistan during his time in Kabul. “Even the British escape from Dunkirk in 1940 doesn’t come close to that,” he said.

He said that at some point, he learned that priests he knew were in Kabul from the United States and other NATO nations had been evacuated, and he concluded that he was the only priest there.

“That scared me a little,” he said. “Priests are called to serve a community, but what happens when that community no longer exists? That was a hairy situation. But I calmed down when I realized that the Lord had sent me here for a mission, to be a priest to these persons at this moment.”

On Thursday, Aug. 26, 13 people were killed in a suicide attack at the airport. “Ten of them were my boys (Marines),” Father Swartz said. “We got the message that there were mass casualties, meaning the units at the scene were stretched beyond capacity. As I put my armor on, it seemed the entire atmo-

See **AFGHANISTAN**, Page 4



*Front Page photo:*  
**DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION**  
Divine Mercy Sunday will be celebrated on April 24 in parishes around the diocese, including Columbus St. Christopher Church, where the images of Divine Mercy and St. Faustina are next to the altar and a daily holy hour is dedicated to the devotion.

*CT photo by Ken Snow*

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# Bishop-elect's ordination set for Westerville St. Paul

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

The historic ordination and installation of Bishop-elect Earl Fernandes is scheduled for 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 31 at Westerville St. Paul Church, the Diocese of Columbus announced Friday.

Bishop-elect Fernandes, 49, a priest in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, will become the first Roman Catholic Indian-American bishop and the youngest bishop to currently lead a diocese. He was born in Toledo, but his parents emigrated from India in 1970.

The ordination Mass and installation will be preceded by Solemn Vespers at 7 p.m. Monday, May 30 at Columbus St. Andrew Church and followed by a liturgy at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on Wednesday, June 1.

All events are ticketed and by invitation only, but they will be livestreamed. More details will be announced in the coming weeks.

Pope Francis named Bishop-elect

Fernandes the 13th bishop of Columbus on Saturday, April 2, the 17th anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II's death. He replaces Bishop Robert Brennan, who presided over the diocese for 2 ½ years before being appointed the bishop of Brooklyn, New York, last fall.

The ordination and installation are being held at St. Paul Church to accommodate the significant numbers of bishops, clergy, religious and guests expected to attend the ceremonies, which have historically taken place at what is considered the bishop's church, St. Joseph Cathedral. St. Paul, completed in 2011, is much larger than the cathedral with seating for 1,400.

The incoming bishop has served in various capacities during his 20 years as a priest. He has spent the past three years as the pastor of St. Ignatius of Loyola Church in Cincinnati.

Prior to his current pastorate, he was assigned to the staff of the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington, D.C., where he worked for 3½ years as part of the

Vatican's diplomatic mission to the United States.

From 2008 to 2016, he was the dean of the Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati and a professor of moral theology. During that period, he was assigned to Guardian Angels Church in Cincinnati as a weekend assistant from 2008 to 2014 and as the administrator of Sacred Heart Church in Cincinnati from 2014 to 2016.

Bishop-elect Fernandes' first assignment as a priest after he was ordained in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati on May 18, 2002 was as a parochial vicar at Holy Angels Church in Sidney and a religion teacher at Lehman Catholic High School until 2004. He was then sent for additional studies in Rome, where he received a doctorate in moral theology from the Alphonsian Academy.

He is familiar with the Diocese of Columbus as a member of the Board of Trustees at the Pontifical College Josephinum. One of his four brothers is a



**Bishop-elect Earl Fernandes will be ordained and installed on Tuesday, May 31.**

*Photo courtesy Abigail Pitones*

physician at Ohio State University and Nationwide Children's Hospital, and several relatives are students at Ohio State.

## Msgr. Lane, Father Beseau point to Father Fernandes' bishop-like qualities

By Tim Puet  
For The Catholic Times

A former colleague anticipated that Father Earl Fernandes would be chosen to become a bishop someday and wasn't surprised that Pope Francis has selected him to be the shepherd of the Diocese of Columbus.

"I felt it was just a matter of time before Father Fernandes would be given the honor of becoming a bishop," Msgr. Frank Lane said. "I even thought when Bishop (Robert) Brennan was appointed bishop of Brooklyn that there was a strong possibility Father Fernandes might succeed him in Columbus.

"It's always a surprise when a new bishop is selected, but that's not so much the case with Father Fernandes because he has all the qualities one would want to see in a bishop. Also, he's familiar with Ohio, having grown up in Toledo and spent 20 years as a priest in the Cincinnati archdiocese."

Msgr. Lane, 82, lives in retirement in Cincinnati, where he was spiritual director of The Athenaeum of Ohio – Mount St. Mary's Seminary of the West from 2010 to 2016. He hosts a weekly series on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio in Columbus and southern Ohio and is a former pastor in the Diocese of Columbus, taught at the Pontifical College Josephinum and served as a military chaplain.

Bishop-elect Fernandes was dean of the Cincinnati seminary from 2008-2016, then served on the staff of the Vat-

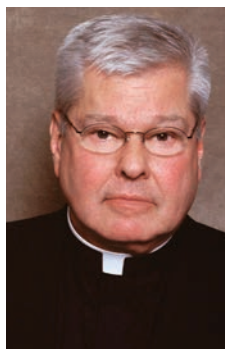
ican's apostolic nuncio in Washington from 2016 to 2019 before becoming pastor of Cincinnati St. Ignatius of Loyola Church, a position he will leave when he is ordained as a bishop on Tuesday, May 31.

"Archbishop (Dennis) Schnurr brought him back to Cincinnati because he thought St. Ignatius needed a problem-solver like Father Fernandes," Msgr. Lane said. "It's a big parish, with around 3,000 families and more than 1,000 students in its grade school, which is the largest in Ohio.

"Travelers from Columbus might have at least passed by St. Ignatius because it's just off Interstate 74 at the North Bend Road exit in the Monfort Heights section of Cincinnati.

"When Father Fernandes came to the parish, it was going through all sorts of problems, which he was able to smooth over in a relatively short period. Now it's a very going concern. It's a big parish, and he had a big job to do, and he accomplished it.

"Father Fernandes will be taking on plenty of challenges in Columbus with the Real Presence Real Future initiative, which is similar to a parish realignment we're going through here in Cincinnati,



**Msgr. Frank Lane**  
CT file photo



**Father Steven Beseau**  
CT file photo

but I'm confident he will be up to the job," Msgr. Lane said.

"Having worked alongside him for six years, I can tell you he's a good man, extremely talented with an enormous capacity for work. He was very popular among the seminarians because of his grasp of

theology and because he worked very quickly.

"As he said at his news conference in Columbus, he was known as 'Father Speedy.' He has more energy than just about anyone I've ever seen, but he does things well, not in a hurried manner. His ability, his sociability, his intelligence, the way he deals with people all combined to make him rise to the top.

"I'm sure that he's going to be a very caring bishop, open to his priests and people, and will do a great job in Columbus. His youth also works in his favor. He may make mistakes as he gets used to his new role, but that's part of being human, and he will learn and grow from any mistakes," Msgr. Lane said.

"All in all, the pope's selection of Father Fernandes is a great appointment for him and for Columbus."

Father Steven Beseau, rector/president of the Josephinum, has known Fa-

ther Fernandes for 17 years, since both of them were working on doctorates in Rome in 2005.

"He's a theologian, a diplomat and a pastor," Father Beseau said. "It's very rare to find a priest with all three qualities.

"He's also a man of deep faith, and he's a connector, very good at connecting people. He's continuously reaching out on the phone, setting up activities, getting people together in a very pastoral way.

"We've been good friends, especially in the six years since he hired me to teach at the Athenaeum. I appointed him to the Josephinum board. It made great sense to have him there because of the time he spent with the nuncio," who also is the Josephinum's chancellor, Father Beseau said. Father Fernandes will automatically become the college's vice chancellor upon his ordination as bishop.

"The nuncio really came to rely on Father Fernandes in his three years in the nunciature. His duties included taking care of much of the nuncio's correspondence and providing input for his homilies. He was not technically a part of the diplomatic corps, but he learned diplomacy by working closely with the nuncio," Father Beseau said.

"He will be a jewel for the diocese. I'm familiar with many dioceses because the Josephinum draws students from throughout the nation, and this diocese I've been a part of since coming here in 2019 is vital and growing," said Father Beseau, a priest of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas.

# We make a difference even halfway around the world

Sometimes I ask myself: Where am I going, and why am I in this handbasket? I'm now asking: Where is the world going, and why are we in this handbasket?

My parents knew World War II and the Korean conflict. I lived through Vietnam, the "end" of the Cold War and all the Middle East incursions. While I think I have a great imagination, I could have never dreamed of COVID and Russia invading Ukraine.

Thank God for Lent – a perfect time to stop and reflect. I relish the time I spend looking at internal Erin and how I can grow closer to God and serve my neighbors better.

I usually find ways to alter my sphere of influence to promote charity and justice. This year, I'm a bit overwhelmed with the magnitude of things happening halfway around the world that I feel I cannot influence. Then I remember ASAP – always stop and pray.

My reach is farther than I usually remember. By contributing to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Rice Bowl during Lent, I am providing resources for help internationally and locally.

As the Ukrainian conflict rages, CRS continues

## FAITH IN ACTION

Erin Cordle

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



deploying staff members and resources to support Caritas partners in Ukraine, Romania, Moldova and Poland to address the growing need. (CRS is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States.)

Despite the enormous challenges and uncertainty, U.S. Catholics like me are supporting CRS, Caritas Ukraine (of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church) and Caritas Spes (of the Roman Catholic Church) over there.

Initially, our Church's response included food baskets and field kitchens with hot meals and snacks; multiple reception and evacuation centers at train stations and transit hubs (with clothing, information, referrals, food, water and hygiene items); counseling services for displaced and fleeing families; and the evacuation of vulnerable children to safe zones.

The Church continues to provide resources as donations become available.

One of the things I like about CRS is their care of front-line/in-the-trenches staff members. The CRS Moldova Changing the Way We Care team is providing online safeguarding and protection training on recognizing risks for abuse and exploitation, "do no harm" principles, response steps and tips for reducing risk to more than 200 front-line staff and volunteers from Moldova and Romania.

While the needs of the Ukrainian people are sure to shift as the situation changes, the best ways to assist are with prayers, donations and advocacy. For more information on CRS' humanitarian response, visit [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org) or [www.crsespanol.org](http://www.crsespanol.org).

Remember, Rice Bowl donations also support local soup kitchens and food pantries as 25% of our diocesan collection stays in the diocese. Rice Bowl has provided more than \$125,000 already. Funds are available. For more information or an application, contact me at 614-241-2540 or [socmailbox@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:socmailbox@columbuscatholic.org).

## 'Use it or lose it' also applies to spiritual training

In strength training, we are aware that when we stop physical training for an extended period, our muscles begin to change. They atrophy or lose conditioning if we don't use them.

"Use it or lose it" is often what we say jokingly, but that keeps us going day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year. Some athletes I've had the privilege of working with have been training in our group for 10 years – and, thankfully, we don't see an end in sight.

If you've been reading this column for a while, you know that the Holy Spirit inspires me to make comparisons between the physical life and the spiritual life. In this case, use it or lose it applies to the spiritual life as well – if we don't pray and stay committed to a daily relationship with Jesus, we can lose our zeal and fall away from practicing our faith. We might pray less, miss Mass, avoid the sacrament of reconciliation and become more self-focused.

The atrophy can begin almost invisibly, but the evil one takes great delight in any inking of spiritual atrophy and will tempt us to move it along more swiftly.

Use it or lose it does not refer to losing God's love, however – that can't happen even if we walk away

## HOLY AND HEALTHY

Lori Crock



*Lori Crock is a parishioner at Hilliard St. Brendan Church. Lori leads SoulCore Rosary prayer and exercise at parishes, teaches physical strength classes and writes about faith and fitness at [hollyandhealthycatholic.com](http://hollyandhealthycatholic.com).*

from Him forever, as He never gives up on us or stops loving us. However, we can lose our zeal and fervor for Him if we don't practice our faith and seek to stay close to Him with a consistent spiritual life.

Maintaining holy and healthy habits of praying, reading Scripture, attending Adoration and frequenting Holy Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation are key ways to "train" and be strengthened to stay close to Jesus.

My husband and I often travel in March, and I always think that I will have more time to pray and go to daily Mass when I'm on vacation, but maintaining those habits is a challenge when I'm not in my home routine.

Because we traveled during Lent this year, I was particularly determined to keep my habits of morning prayer, daily Mass and exercise. That really was the best part of the day, and praying and reading Scripture and spiritual books outdoors in nature was special.

In this life we are called to be beacons of light and to flex our spiritual muscles in all areas of our lives, each in our own way, by forming good spiritual habits that open our hearts to hearing God's voice and responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We are called to freely and frequently share the gifts and talents God has so generously poured into us.

Pope Francis said this about our life in God: "The great gift of life is the first gift we have received. Sometimes we risk forgetting about this, as if we were the masters of our existence while instead we are radically dependent. In fact, it is a source of great joy to hear that at every age in life, in every situation, in every social condition, we are and remain sons and daughters."

May we, as beloved sons and daughters of God, be faithful to and use our good spiritual habits to grow in holiness so that we don't lose the gift of our fervor and desire to love and serve God and his people.

## AFGHANISTAN, continued from Page 2

sphere at the airport changed. The north side of the airport had been fairly peaceful. Now every unit was on high alert.

"I got to the field hospital, and an Army chaplain, Col. Pinkie Fischer, said, 'Father, quick. Just get in there.' My boys were already dying. I could tell that just by touching them. I gave the Last Rites to anyone who was dead or dying. I didn't ask if they were Catholic because canon law says, 'When in doubt, anoint.'

"You don't think, you just go. I've never seen anything like what I saw that day. It was almost like the Hollywood version you see of war, only in real life, the fight-or-flight instinct kicked in, and

they wanted to get out and into the battle, so they had to be sedated."

Father Swartz said he began ministering to the dead and wounded at about 5 p.m. and finished between 3 and 4 a.m.

"I was worn out," he said. "I didn't have words. I just sang the Ultima in Mortis Hora (Latin for "in the last hour of death"), a hymn traditionally sung at the funeral of a Benedictine monk, which I learned from Father Jacques Daley, my spiritual director, when I was attending St. Vincent College," a Benedictine institution in Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

"Because ours is a faith of truth, we can welcome a crisis," Father Swartz said. "Through all your life, you do the

spiritual groundwork so that when the storm comes, it can serve as an anchor. Father Jacques showed me the care God has for my soul, and singing the Ultima connected me with Him at I time I needed that care.

"I've never been more certain of my faith than I am now," Father Swartz said. "But I know the devil is alive and well. I've never had a greater experience of evil as a living, moving thing than I had that night at the airport. I learned the cross isn't given to us just as a symbol, but as a living opportunity to unite ourselves with God."

He said that after the attack, he had an opportunity to go to Jesus' baptismal site in the Jordan River with some of the

Marines he serves. "Their souls came alive," he said. "These tough guys – you could just see their souls come alive."

He also said that as the military is becoming more aware of how soldiers' feelings affect them, Marines frequently have taken him aside and told him of their emotional reactions to combat or to personal events and of sins they have committed.

"The military instinct is to keep moving, but sometimes your soul tells you to stay," he said. "When someone is Catholic and confesses, you can administer the sacrament of reconciliation to them. When they're not, you listen in the same way and bless them. You just can't give absolution."

# Reviving our hearts with Eucharistic amazement

By Sister John Paul Maher, OP

In November 2021, the U.S. bishops called for a “three-year grassroots revival of devotion and belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.” According to the website, [eucharisticrevival.org](http://eucharisticrevival.org), “these three years will culminate in the first National Eucharistic Congress in the United States in almost fifty years.”

This gathering will take place July 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis as a joyous conclusion to the preparation beginning this June 19 on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The Diocese of Columbus has already begun its emphasis on a return to the splendor and joy of being with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through its 40 Days of Adoration, begun by Bishop Robert Brennan in 2021, and continued this Lent.

The first year of the preparation, the Diocesan Year of Eucharistic Revival, takes place from June 19 to June 11, 2023. The second year, June 2023-July 17, 2024, is the Parish Year of Eucharistic Revival.

Blessed Carlo Acutis, a recently beatified teenager, is the patron saint of the first year of the revival. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) document, “The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church,” called Blessed Carlo “an apostle of the Eucharist through the internet” and quotes his words: “The Eucharist is my highway to heaven.”

More details on the plans for revival can be found on the USCCB website, in the Committee for Evangelization & Catechesis presentation made by Bishop Andrew Cozzens and titled “My Flesh for the Life of the World.”

The Easter season is an ideal time to reflect on how we are coming before the risen Lord in the Holy Eucharist to receive His mercy.



Illustration courtesy Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist

There is a great need to receive the Lord and His mercy in the Eucharist. As Pope St. John Paul II wrote: “The Church and the world have a great need of eucharistic worship.” (*Dominicae Cenae*, 1980, 3)

John Paul II calls Eucharistic worship the “soul of all Christian life” and the “expression of that love which is the authentic and deepest characteristic of the Christian vocation.” (*Dominicae Cenae*, 3)

The heart and soul of Christian life is found in the Eucharist, an unending fountain of the love and mercy of Christ. What grace and treasure wait for all!

We should never tire of wondering at the abundant generosity of God, remaining humbly with us in the Eucharist.

John Paul II hoped to see this revival as part of the new evangelization. He wrote: “I would like to rekindle this Eucharistic amazement. ... The Church draws her life from Christ in the Eucharist; by him she is fed and by him she is enlightened.” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 2003, 6)

The Most Holy Trinity chose a mysterious plan for our salvation that includes Jesus remaining with us on earth through the Holy Eucharist. We are never alone.

John Paul II reminds us that our life with Christ, begun in baptism, takes on a deep sharing with His life in sacramental communion: “We can say not only that each of us receives Christ, but also that Christ receives each of us. ... Eucharistic communion brings about in a sublime way the mutual “abiding” of Christ and each of his followers: ‘Abide in me, and I in you.’ (John 15:4).” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 22)

As the Easter season recalls the power of Christ’s rising from the dead and breathing the mercy of His Holy Spirit upon us, let us reflect: How are we making time to allow Jesus to love us in the Holy Eucharist? How are we turning to Jesus, to receive His mercy and to renew our friendship with Him?

As we deepen our love and friendship with Jesus, we will be strengthened to bring this peace and consolation to our friends and family. We know how much our loved ones need Jesus. Let us bring Him to them.

Let us remember that we are all on our own pilgrimage to heaven, which occurs in God’s own time. As we journey, we can look forward to joining our brothers and sisters in Christ on a shared pilgrimage to a national revival in 2024.

Sister John Paul Maher, OP, is the principal at Worthington St. Michael School and a member of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist.

## To a mom, each child has a special need

I heard the alarm before his brother came into our room, groggily telling of how he had been awakened by his brother’s alarm and went in to turn it off.

A flag raised in my heart, and I sat up in bed asking, “Did he not turn it off himself?”

“No, but everyone else is awake from it, Mom.”

I spoke to my husband, mentioning that this did not feel right, and quickly went upstairs. Thoughts of worry crossed my mind as I imagined all the reasons that he didn’t turn off his alarm.

Fastidious about being on time and rising early to get his work done, this son of mine also spends his days in a wheelchair and relies on us to be his hands. I felt his forehead and called his name. I rolled his body over and called his name again, and he mumbled, “I’m tired, Mom.”

Watching him take his breath as only a mother does, I covered him back up and told him to take a few hours off school and I’d check on him in a bit. It was a simple cold. Thank you, Jesus.

I walked out of his room and down the stairs and sat in my den, my prayer space, my quiet. It is here I go to for breath, peace and solace. As I pondered why my heart was racing, my mind was alert and I could feel the adrenaline rushing through my body, it occurred to me that this is the reality in our home, not just for this child but also for all of them.

The fluidity of our days requires a surrender to

### ALL THAT WE HAVE

MaryBeth Eberhard

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



God’s plan every moment. There are times filled with abundant graces of joy and laughter, praise and thanksgiving, and others filled with suffering, worry and surrender. Each day is a gift with each child, no matter what preexisting condition they might have.

As a mother of eight children, two of whom have a rare neuromuscular condition that has them in power wheelchairs not able to use their limbs fully, my life is very full. My days resemble a corporate executive in time management as I move from child to child, teaching, coaching, listening, cheering and then transition seamlessly into wife mode with meals, chores, errands, listening, praying and relaxing.

I love my time with my family, and it is often a paradox in that it relaxes me to just be in their presence. They bring me such joy! Their laughter, thoughts, insights and gentle love are beacons of the Father’s love throughout my day.

Even the growing pains of older kids as they stretch

and search for their own identity are beautiful; I get to see them wrestle with the world’s temptations and the calling of who they were made to be. It is a simple privilege.

On many nights, my children whose challenges are less visible have kept me up late and have brought me to my knees. No less dire is their need for communication, connection and affirmation. They need to know they are held just as closely.

When you are a mom of a child with special needs, you are given a visible reminder that you are needed and that, without you, their quality of life would be quite less. It is not pride from which this realization comes but rather the understanding that your hands will be Christ’s in a very tangible way.

It’s easy to have this recognition when someone physically needs your support, but should we not have it as parents always, no matter what our children’s abilities might be? I am pondering this.

We have always raised our family to recognize that everyone has a special need, some you see and some you do not. We must raise all our children with that motherly understanding. My goal is to radiate Christ’s love to my family in how I love, speak, serve and pray for each of them.

That goal requires a keen eye, taking time to invest in each family member, and an utter reliance on the mercy and provision of Jesus Christ.

# When we're suffering and doubting, God waits for us

By Michele Williams

"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Just a few weeks ago, I asked the same question that's raised in the Palm Sunday Psalm response: "Why, God?" And I also asked, "How could You let this happen?" and "Don't You love me and want what is best for me, because this can't possibly be it?"

I was, and still am, struggling with grief. I had worked continuously for more than a year on an extremely important project and presentation. My whole prison life had revolved around it – time, energy, conversations and a million prayers. I felt God's presence during my preparation as He helped me grow in courage and strength. Family and friends had been lighting candles and praying with fervor as the due date for my project slowly approached.

When the day finally arrived, I was ready! I was prepared! Not only did I have an army of supporters behind me, I had God beside me, and I gave the presentation of a lifetime. I walked out of the room feeling heard, understood and very hopeful for a positive outcome.

Weeks passed, as is standard procedure, and I was percolating somewhere between confidence and trepidation, on the verge of nausea every single day. Oh, the waiting was so difficult! Patience is not my strong suit, so, for Lent, I was going to give up complaining about God's timeline.

And then the unthinkable happened.

The answer came in an email – an impersonal, emotionless, undisputable, big fat "No." It was like a sledgehammer to my heart. With one whack, it was obliterated. All my hopes, dreams, sweat and tears were splattered everywhere. My project had not been good enough. My work didn't matter and was ignominiously tossed in the garbage. By extension, I had not been good enough. I didn't matter and was also tossed away.

That's when I asked all those "Where are You" questions, plus "How do I just go on and face hundreds of tomorrows when I can't see past today? What about

all those people who prayed for me? Didn't You hear them? Don't I even matter to You?" These played on a loop in my head because God was eerily silent.

Anger and confusion joined forces to add to my misery. I was confused by the rejection and the harsh words used to rationalize it. I was angry because the opinions of the decision makers had redefined my existence, and there was no recourse.

I was told that God gave people free will and sometimes their decisions were disturbing to Him. So did that make them more powerful? Because the God I knew would never decide this. Why did I bother praying if He wasn't going to help? Who was I supposed to be mad at – them or Him?

I chose both.

Then sadness emerged, and it was so frightening, so engulfing, that it felt like a physical threat, like a 50-foot tidal wave looming out of nowhere, paralyzing me with its enormity. I couldn't run or escape or swim my way out. It was too big, and I'm too little. Maybe I should've seen it coming, but I didn't, and it swept me under.

Repeatedly, I found myself crying, venting or otherwise coming undone in the safety of the chaplain's or my therapist's office. They let me know I wasn't crazy, I was going through the grieving process, and it was normal. Phew! I was thankful to hear that because trying to make sense of all my emotions was as futile as carrying water in a bucket full of holes.

At Mass, where I had the job of leading the congregation in song, I was apprehensive because I thought my voice would crack, revealing the brokenness of my entire being. Singing took everything I had, but I did it for the women present. They deserved music and normalcy, despite my personal suffering.

Miraculously, they didn't notice any difference. I was still trying to be a good servant, but my efforts, combined with my unanswered questions, added to my frustration. I was bargaining with God, albeit unintentionally. I thought perhaps He would see my herculean efforts, be pleased and change His mind.

Hoping physical exertion would help unravel the knot of feelings in my gut, I went to the gym almost

daily and rode the stationary bike 10 miles to nowhere. I threw the Slam Ball down to the ground as hard as I could, over and over, until I could hardly pick it up anymore. The exhaustion made me comfortably numb, which I appreciated, but it was temporary.

Eventually, I reached a point of reckoning in my grief. You either believe God is God – omniscient, omnipresent, loving, holy and in total control – or you don't, and then all you've got is a sometime-y superhero who can't control anything.

Psalm 31:14 says it more succinctly: "You are my God." The prophet Jeremiah wrote this Psalm when he was hurt by the injustice and persecution he was facing, yet he decided to trust God anyway. He had to lean on his faith.

I decided to lean on mine, too. So, just as grief had done earlier, now faith was going to have to become a physical entity, propelling me forward. But would I be able to back up my faith with words, and my words with actions? Can I serve and love Him with my broken heart? Can I trust Him?

The short answer is "Yes" because there is no other way. He is the way and has the only map. However, it's going to be a slow process, and we have to work on our relationship. We're not as copasetic as a year ago. It's taking some time for me to recover and refocus. I can't just say, "Gee whiz, God, I'm fine now, let's get back to business."

In light of working through my grief, I have a new perspective and mission for Holy Week. I need to humble myself, ask forgiveness for doubting and for strength to carry on. I need to trust in the compassion, mercy and love of God, even when I seem to have 17 Good Fridays in a row.

The Passion of Jesus is proof that I won't understand God's ways. The Resurrection of Jesus is proof of God's unconditional love for me and for all of us. We don't have to understand; however, we do have to trust. And prison is going to be my personal proving ground to do just that.

*Michele Williams is an inmate at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville.*

## Real Presence Real Future draft models tough truth

By Deb McEllistrem

Have you seen the latest information from Real Presence Real Future? The draft models are out [realpresencereal-future.org](http://realpresencereal-future.org).

Fair warning – it's excruciating. The draft models talk about closing schools and even whole parishes. It's not a fun read. They have beautifully colored line graphs and bar charts that illustrate devastating facts.

Catholic marriages? Down 47% since 2000. Baptisms? Down almost 30%. Every parish has seen a decline in Mass attendance. My "planning group" has seen a 34% decline. All this despite the fact that the population in Columbus has continued to grow (according to 2021 census data).

But you know what's great about all this? It lays the devil's plan wide open. He's been attacking for decades. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world." (Ephesians 6:12)

Maybe his goal was to make us so busy with our daily lives that we'd forget that we were made for more. Or maybe he told people that if they disagreed with a Catholic teaching, they should stop going to Mass. Or, join another faith – one that doesn't enable them to have such an intimate union with Christ through the Eucharist.

Whatever his goal, he's had a good run. But we haven't forgotten who we are. That we were made for more. For hope. For joy. For never-ending, earth-shattering, wildly fulfilling, reckless love. We've believed the lie for too long. It's time for us to take back our diocese.

And the process of taking back our diocese starts with us. Because all that decline, all those numbers dropping? We had a role in it.

Speaking for myself, I didn't evangelize. I didn't tell anyone, "You know Jesus? He comes into my heart every Sunday at Mass. You should totally come. It'll blow your mind." This isn't a diocesan problem or a priest problem. It's a laity problem. That's us. That's me.

The good news is that if it's a "me" problem, then I can help fix it. I've thought and prayed about it. I've even laid out an action plan. I hope you'll join me.

Step 1: Go to Adoration. Pray a rosary for priestly vocations. Forty Days of Adoration is a great time to do this.

Step 2: Attend Father John Riccardo's Rescue Project Live! on June 18-19 at the Ohio Expo Center. He'll have great insights, I'm sure.

Step 3: Combine evangelization with food. My parish doesn't have fish fries. So, I'm going to go to other parish fish fries this Lent. It'll be a sacrifice, but I'll force myself! Ask people there what

they love about their parish. Remind them why they joined the Church in the first place.

Step 4: If I go on a pilgrimage, I'll invite family and friends to join me. When I come back, I'll tell everyone about how much I enjoyed it.

Step 5: Pray a rosary every night as a family.

Step 6: Surround myself with Catholicity – St. Gabriel Radio, *The Catholic Times*, *the Magnificat*.

Step 7: Three words: Read the Bible.

I'm not sure if any of this will stop schools from closing. It might not. After all, we didn't get in this situation overnight. The devil has been working in silent, subtle ways. But that doesn't mean we can't use our voice to get out of this mess. To put God back at the center of our lives.

To say to our children, "I love you

## Finding Lenten answers with ‘Lectio Divina’

By Jean P. Kelly

“Your words were found, and I ate them. And your words became to me a joy and delight of my heart.” — Jeremiah 15:16

Words have always offered me solace, companionship, escape, insight and even challenge. So when almost 10 years ago I learned at a parish retreat that reading can be prayer, I was hooked. Since discovering *lectio divina*, I’ve been on a path of faith revision, one word at a time.

The structured approach of reading in four stages — read, meditate, pray, contemplate — has not only made prayer more accessible especially in times of anxiety and confusion, the practice also has allowed me to consider the possibility of “bi-directional” prayer. When done with intention, *lectio divina* can provide real answers.

While the ancient monks relied on scriptural texts, Pope Benedict encouraged “new methods, carefully thought through and in step with the times” when he promoted *lectio divina* during his pontificate.

So, while I sometimes open my Bible randomly, letting the Holy Spirit “give me a word,” I also *lectio* with other texts, everything from writings of saints to decidedly secular essays, fiction and even paintings and music. I delight in finding faith revealed obliquely

but often no less powerfully in, for example, the short stories of Flannery O’Connor or *Catholic Worker* newspaper columns by Servant of God Dorothy Day.

I’ve also come to appreciate that what I select to read is grace inspired. A particular text might seem obtuse on one day but infused with meaning the next. That is why I never abandon completely words for *lectio* that challenge my understanding and acceptance.

For example, during my first reading of *The Story of a Soul* by St. Thérèse of Lisieux, I dutifully performed the four steps, which some practitioners liken to taking a bite, chewing, savoring and finally making the message part of one’s mind and body. However, when it came to the Little Flower’s self-mortification and desire for personal suffering, my contemplation step stalled. Until, that is, I suffered.

One morning, during a period of great personal crisis and doubt, I opened *The Story of a Soul* and prayed with this passage: “One Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the Cross, I was struck by the blood flowing from one of his divine hands. I felt a pang of great sorrow when thinking this blood was falling on the ground without anyone’s hastening to gather it up. ... I shall spend my life gathering it up for the good of souls. To live from love is to dry Your Face.”

However, the meaning of the passage was not revealed until hours later when I attended morning Mass at Westerville St. Paul Church. For years I had

admired the beautiful mosaic behind the altar, which depicts the communion of saints arrayed on each side of Christ suffering on the cross. But, not until that day did I notice two angels collecting the blood of Christ in shells at the base of the cross.

That connection, between words I read in *lectio* and my lived experience, allowed me to truly believe Christ would give me strength. That is why in prayer I still request the intercession of St. Thérèse so I can willingly accept the suffering that is sure to come each day. Somehow anticipating trials, then offering them back to Christ for the sake of other suffering souls, heals and helps me.

As poet and podcaster Christine Valters Paintner observes, “As we practice *lectio divina* ... we no longer worry about whether we get the steps right. We surrender ourselves into the natural grace and rhythm of our heart’s deepest longings.”

If this Lent you are in search of a new way to pray, one that is both forgiving and fulsome, I hope you will try *lectio divina*. Any text — even the text of our daily lives — can reveal the voice of God. We just need to listen.

Jean P. Kelly is a member of Sunbury St. John Neumann Church and the host of Read. Pray. Write: Searching for Answers, Finding Grace, a podcast and website promoting the practice of *lectio divina* at [www.readpraywrite.com](http://www.readpraywrite.com).

## The recovery of fraternal correction among bishops

In the golden age of the Catholic episcopate — the days of great Church Fathers like Cyprian of Carthage and Augustine of Hippo in the early and mid-first millennium — bishops were not infrequently in contact with each other, encouraging, consulting, and, when necessary, correcting. The practice of episcopal fraternal correction has withered over time, not least in the decades since the Second Vatican Council. And that’s strange. For Vatican II taught that the world’s bishops form a body or “college” that, with and under the Bishop of Rome, shares full authority within the Church. Somehow, though, the practice of episcopal “collegiality” came to resemble the unwritten etiquette within Evelyn Waugh’s fictitious London club, Bellamy’s, where one simply didn’t criticize another member, no matter how disturbing, even bizarre, his behavior.

Whatever else German Catholicism’s multi-year “Synodal Path” has accomplished thus far, it has changed that dynamic dramatically.

The bishops of Poland and Scandinavia recently sent letters of fraternal concern and correction to the German episcopate, questioning the German Synodal Path’s deconstruction of settled truths of Catholic faith and practice. Then, on Tuesday of Holy Week, a group of more than seventy English-speaking bishops from the United States, Canada, and Africa publicly released “A Fraternal Open Letter to Our Brother Bishops in Germany.” Stressing that the seven issues they flagged were not their only concerns with the German Synod-

**REAL PRESENCE**, continued from Page 6

deeply, so we’re going to Mass today or we’re going to pray as a family today. Because I love you, I want everlasting happiness for you. And the way you get that is through the Church. The way you get that is through the parish. The way you get that is through the priest.”

So, c’mon, let’s go.

Deb McEllistrem is a parishioner at Columbus St. Andrew Church.

### THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

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



al Path’s work to date, the Anglophone bishops’ letter nonetheless identified the key points at which the German Church seemed to be careening toward what can only be called apostasy.

First, by “failing to listen to the Holy Spirit and the Gospel,” the Synodal Path was undermining the credibility of Scripture, the teaching authority of the Church (including that of Pope Francis), and the Catholic understanding of the human person.

Second, the documents and discussions of the Synodal Path seem dominated by secular ideologies, including gender theory, rather than being framed by Scripture and Tradition — which, the Anglophone bishops reminded their German brethren, Vatican II declared “a single sacred deposit of the Word of God” that is binding on the Church over time, irrespective of the prevailing public culture.

Third, the Synodal Path persistently reduces freedom to personal autonomy — the dumbed down freedom of “I did it my way” — and confuses conscience with personal preference. Yet as the Anglophone bishops put it, a truly Christian conscience “remains subject to the truth about human nature and the norms of righteous living revealed by God and taught by Christ’s Church.” There is no freedom without truth, they wrote, “and Jesus is the truth who sets us free.”

In the fourth place, the Synodal Path’s documents and discussions seem devoid of that joy of the Gospel that Pope Francis has stressed as “essential to Christian life.” How can there be serious Church renewal and reform, the English-speaking bishops asked, if the joy of the new life in Christ is absent? Is it possible for a

soured, self-referential Church, obsessed with real and imagined failures, to evangelize?

Fifth, the Anglophone bishops noted that the Synodal Path has been an elitist exercise run by entrenched and determinedly woke Church bureaucrats. But how can the Church proclaim the new life in Christ if the vast German Catholic bureaucracy “displays more submission and obedience to the world and to ideologies than to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior”?

Sixth, the Anglophone bishops flagged the Synodal Path’s fixation on ecclesiastical “power,” as if flying a desk in a chancery office and telling others what to do has greater evangelical value than bringing others to Christ, or back to Christ, through a personal witness to the Gospel.

And finally, the “Fraternal Open Letter” warns that a Catholic “synodality” which reduces Catholicism to another liberal Protestant sect is a distraction from “the Church’s necessary conversation about fulfilling [its] mission of converting and sanctifying the world.” The Anglophone bishops know that Christian mission today requires deep Catholic reform. Reform does not mean deconstruction, however. The Church has a “form” given it by Christ, and all true Catholic reform is in reference to that form.

Whether the Fraternal Open Letter and the parallel letters from the Polish and Scandinavian episcopates slow what seems to be, in Germany, a Gadarene rush over the cliff of apostasy remains to be seen. But the brave bishops who signed that letter have identified key issues for the Church of the immediate future, and for the next papal conclave.

And that is a service to the Gospel and the cause of Christ.

[The full text of the Fraternal Open Letter is available at <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/storage/pdf/fraternal-open-letter-to-brother-bishops-germany.pdf>. Bishops wishing to join this initiative may register their signatures by e-mail to [episcopimundi2022@gmail.com](mailto:episcopimundi2022@gmail.com).]



## Celebrate Motherhood with Mommies Matter!

Join Mommies Matter May 1st-8th in celebrating motherhood by making a donation to Mommies Matter in honor or memory of a special mother in your life!

Each donation goes toward helping single, pregnant mothers receive the financial, emotional, and spiritual support she needs.

Support Mommies Matter and have a Mother's Day Care Package sent to the mother of your choice or receive a Mommies Matter tumbler!



Learn more at [www.mommiesmatter.org/mothers-day](http://www.mommiesmatter.org/mothers-day)

## Celebrate Mother's Day by supporting Mommies Matters

*"The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother." – St. Therese of Lisieux*

Mother's Day is an opportunity for Mommies Matter to celebrate its clients and the gift of motherhood. As the organization partners with single mothers throughout the year, it witnesses firsthand the mothers' resilience, hope and faith as they choose life and embrace the struggles of single parenthood.

Motherhood is a gift, and single mothers need the love and support of "community" as they strive to live out their God-given vocation. One of the organization's moms shared the impact the community of Mommies Matter had on her:

"I cried so many nights when I was pregnant with my second. I felt I wouldn't be able to handle everything alone. I thought about abortion when I was feeling overwhelmed and stressed,

and was struggling with depression. Joining Mommies Matter saved me mentally because I knew I could talk to somebody, and that I was not alone."

This Mother's Day, the staff of Mommies Matter invites you to join them in celebrating motherhood by making a donation to the organization between May 1-8 in honor or memory of the special mother in your life.

Your support enables Mommies Matter to provide the financial, emotional and spiritual support that single, pregnant women need.

When you give \$9 (or more) per month, the special mother in your life will be sent a Mommies Matter Mother's Day Care Package. For a one-time donation of \$40 or more, the special mother in your life will receive a Mommies Matter tumbler.

To donate, visit [www.mommiesmatter.org/mothers-day](http://www.mommiesmatter.org/mothers-day)



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For additional information about the Catholic Men's Luncheon, contact Joe Testa at [joetesta9@icloud.com](mailto:joetesta9@icloud.com)



# Father Acosta traveled a long way to become a priest

By Tim Puet  
For The Catholic Times

Father Kenneth Acosta's journey to Delaware St. Mary Church took him halfway around the world and back again.

He grew up in the Dominican Republic, was ordained as a priest in Australia, where he had his first two parish assignments, then came to Delaware 4 ½ months ago to serve as parochial vicar for two years under an agreement between former Columbus Bishop Robert Brennan and Archbishop Timothy Costelloe of the Archdiocese of Perth, Australia.

"What happens after two years, I don't know," Father Acosta said. "I'll either go back to Australia or continue here, depending on where Bishop Brennan's successor and Archbishop Costelloe decide I'm most needed."

Father Acosta, whose full name is Max Kenneth Acosta Garcia, met Bishop Brennan during one of the bishop's frequent visits to the Dominican Republic while he was a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, which has a large number of Dominican immigrants.

"I came in contact with then-Father Brennan while I was helping in my home parish, doing office work and assisting the parish priest," Father Acosta said. "I kept in touch with him, and he was a source of encouragement as I was discerning whether God was calling me to the priesthood."

"After four years in Australia following my ordination in 2017, I wanted to have an experience as a priest closer to my homeland, somewhere my family could visit. I wrote Bishop Brennan in Columbus asking if he could help me, and he and Archbishop Costelloe worked out a way to make it possible."

Father Acosta, 36, is the second of four children and has a younger brother and two sisters. He grew up in the Dominican capital of Santo Domingo, where his mother is an administrator with the government and his father is a coffee merchant. He was brought up mainly by his mother and grandparents because his parents are divorced.

"I felt the first stirrings of a call to the priesthood when I was about 9 years old," he said. "As a young boy, I loved singing and playing music and serving as an altar boy. Possibly because of my family situation, I had a longing to be more involved in the Church because I felt comfortable there. Like many Dominican boys, I also enjoyed playing baseball."

At age 14, he became part of the Neocatechumenal Way, an apostolate of small, parish-based communities

## ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

*Answering God's Call profiles the life of a priest, deacon or professed religious sister in the Diocese of Columbus.*

founded in 1964 in Spain that takes its name from the early Church's baptismal preparation of converts from paganism, known as catechumens. It provides post-baptismal information to adults who already are Catholics or to people who have been attracted by the communities' testimony of Christian love and unity.

It has been an important part of the Church's World Youth Day celebrations, has about a million members in 21,300 communities in 134 nations and has established 125 diocesan seminaries. In the United States, it has about 1,000 communities in 300 parishes in 75 dioceses.

"My parish Neocatechumenal Way community played a big part in my life," he said. "I learned to play the guitar, became a cantor in my parish and joined a pre-seminary group. Though I was interested in the priesthood, I still had doubts."

"I had some friends who were seminarians, so I knew the type of life you had to lead in the seminary and knew you had to study a lot. I was looking for a girlfriend and studying business administration and just sort of wandering about."

"In 2007, I attended a European youth meeting in Loreto, Italy, led by Pope Benedict, and during that time, I felt a flame in my heart that took away whatever fear I had of the priesthood. I was ready to jump into the adventure. The Neocatechumenal Way wanted to send young people to Europe, Asia, America and Australia. I was willing to go anywhere, so I was picked for Australia."

After six months of intensive training in English, he left for Australia at the end of 2007. He studied for the priesthood at Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Perth and the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle, both in western Australia, and was ordained on Nov. 17, 2017 by Archbishop Costelloe.

During his seminary training, he spent a year in the community of Alotau along Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea, where the Allies had an important naval base in World War II. "It was exciting to do street preaching there and to get an instant response and know you were affecting people," he said.

His first service as a parochial vicar came at Good Shepherd Church in Kelmscott, Australia, a parish of about 600 people. "I did the usual variety of things a vicar does, working with the young and the old, with people in various types of distress," he said. "This

makes you realize your importance as a representative of the Church, 'another Christ,' and your closeness to Christ in being a priest."

"My greatest enjoyment comes in working with young people. I've seen in the three parishes I've served that there is a great future in the Church through its young people, and we need to give more to them to encourage their spirituality."

After two years in Kelmscott, he was transferred to St. Helena Church in Ellenbrook, a suburb of Perth. He was stationed there until coming to Columbus. He said Ellenbrook is very much like Delaware in that both communities are about 20 miles from a larger city and are undergoing a similar type of transformation caused by expansion of that city into formerly rural areas.

In Delaware, he is leading St. Mary's adult faith formation and youth outreach and is working with the parish's Hispanic community, celebrating a 2 p.m. Mass in Spanish every Sunday. He said his biggest adjustment so far has been adapting to the weather.



Father Kenneth Acosta

"I've never served anywhere where it's been this cold," he said. "But the people have been very hospitable here, making it very warm in spite of the cold weather. I've found the Church to be a fundamental part of life in many countries, and it's the same here."

"It's a bright and alive Christian community, and Father Brett (Garland, the parish's pastor) and I want to make sure the people of the parish take their calling to be missionary disciples seriously."

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# Marian apparitions in Rwanda spur devotion in southern Ohio

By Father Jacob Stinnett

Were you to take a survey of popular Marian titles and apparitions, Our Lady of Kibeho would probably not be first on the list, especially in a small town in southern Ohio. And yet, in the small parish of Waverly St. Mary, Queen of the Missions, devotion to Our Lady of Kibeho is growing.

In August 2021, I visited Africa for almost two weeks to attend the ordination of my seminary classmate, Emmanuel Ingabire, in the Diocese of Gikongoro, Southern Province, Rwanda. It was a beautiful trip, not only to see my classmate ordained a priest, but also to experience the great and joyful faith of the people in Rwanda, a country with a recent history of division and violence but that has also responded to the invitation of God for reconciliation and peace.

Just as Our Lady of Guadalupe is at the heart of devotion for Christians in Latin America, the apparitions of Mary now under her title of Our Lady of Kibeho are at the heart of Catholic life in Rwanda and much of Africa.

As a parting gift, Bishop Célestin Hakizimana gave me two statues of Our Lady of Kibeho to bring back to Ohio. The first was a personal present to Bishop Robert Brennan as a sign of gratitude for allowing me to attend the ordination as well as for his ordaining Emmanuel a deacon while still in the seminary.

The second statue was a gift for me, to be placed in my parish, to help bring the message of Our Lady of Kibeho to Ohio. Bishop Hakizimana gave me one statue, but Bishop Brennan assigned me as parochial vicar to three parishes. Even worse than the baby in King Solomon's court, I was not about to split the statue in three!

I decided to place the statue in the church of St. Mary in Waverly for two reasons: Our Lady appeared to the smallest ones, young schoolgirls; and as the parish under the patronage of Mary, Queen of the Missions, it seemed most fitting that a link be established with Mary's recent apparition in Africa.

On Nov. 28, 1981, in one of the poorest villages in Rwanda, a high school girl named Alphonsine Murmureke was



**Waverly St. Mary, Queen of the Missions Church parishioners prayed the devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows in March.**

at lunch when she heard a soft voice call to her: "Child." When Alphonsine responded, she saw a beautiful lady, who introduced herself as "Ndi Nyina wa Jambo" – "I am the Mother of the Word."

During the next four months, Mary appeared to two other girls, Nathalie Mukamazimpaka and Marie Claire Mukangango. Over the course of two years, beginning from Alphonsine's first encounter with Mary in 1981 and concluding with an apparition to Nathalie on Dec. 3, 1983, the public apparitions of Mary at Kibeho conveyed a message for the world.

While only these three girls could see Mary and be transported in ecstasy to a place of encounter with her, a place that the visionaries could not describe, their time of ecstasy was viewed by everyone around them.

In later appearances, Mary clarified that the title "Mother of the Word" is the same as "Mother of God," and that Mary prefers the first title because it prepares us to communicate the "Word of God," her Son, Jesus Christ.

Each of the girls was given a related mission by Mary. To Alphonsine, Mary gave the mission of praying for the Church, which would be persecuted. To Nathalie, she asked for prayer and mortification, to unite herself with Jesus and Mary's sufferings for the salvation of sinners. And to Marie Claire, Mary requested spreading devotion to the rosary of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady.

In his letter officially recognizing the authenticity of the apparitions, Bishop Augustin Misago stated that Mary appeared at Kibeho to stir up the neglected consciences of Christians to remind them of their duties as children of God, to encourage spiritual renewal in believers of the way to salvation and to let Christians know of Mary's presence with them every day.

Mary came to lead people back to her Son, the Word of God, bringing back those who have gone astray and encouraging those persevering on the right path. While public apparitions ended in 1983, Alphonsine continued to receive private apparitions once a year



**Father Jacob Stinnett meets visionary Nathalie Mukamazimpaka at the Mater Dolorosa shrine in Kibeho, Rwanda, in August 2021. Photos courtesy Father Stinnett**

until 1989.

In her final appearance to Alphonsine, on Nov. 28, 1989, Mary gave these parting words: "My children, I am going to leave you. I love you. I love you. I love you so much. But woe to those who will be indifferent to the love I expressed to you and promise you!" Thus, we approach Mary full of love and confidence because we are her children.

The most significant apparition occurred on Aug. 15, 1982. The girls were lifted to a state of ecstasy in front of 20,000 people. Instead of a joyful message, as expected on the Solemnity of the Assumption, Mary appeared full of sadness and tears. She warned the world of its complacency in sin and continual disobedience to God and His Will.

The scenes shown to the visionaries were of the gruesome consequences of sin, a fiery abyss and what some believe to be predictions of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In her messages of repentance, Mary said this was a call to the world. She said to Marie Claire: "When I speak to you, I do not appeal to you alone. I am appealing to all people. People of this age have gone against all reason. When they do wrong, they do not feel guilty."

Similarly, she said to Alphonsine: "I opened the door, and people did not want to enter! I saw the world in a very bad state (nearing its own complete destruction), and when I came to help, you refused."

Mary encouraged the willful acceptance of suffering in the life of the Christian as a way to participate in Jesus' own passion and suffering for the salvation of the world. In her final apparitions to Nathalie, Mary said: "No one

is exempt from suffering in this world."

It is necessary to suffer, as Jesus did, to attain the glory of God in heaven. Marie Claire's mission to spread devotion to the rosary of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady is a way to stimulate repentance for sins and to participate in the sufferings of Jesus and Mary so that hearts might come to embrace the mystery of the Cross.

As Mother of the Word and our mother, too, Mary is inviting the world into a deeper relationship with her Son. In her farewell to Alphonsine, Mary leaves us with these words: "My children, pray, pray! If you follow the Gospel of my Son and put it into practice, nothing will prevent you from being at ease in your souls."

Heeding the words of Our Lady of Kibeho, in September, we began a monthly devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. We chose the 15th of the month because of the significant Marian feast days on Aug. 15 and Sept. 15, days that Mary chose in her apparitions at Kibeho.

On the 15th of each month, or the closest Wednesday, parishioners stay after Mass and pray the rosary of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady and the Litany of Our Lady of Sorrows. The first few months saw only a few parishioners stay for the devotions, but each month, more and more pray together to the Sorrowful Mother, asking her to assist us in uniting our sorrows and pains to those of her Son for the salvation of the world.

This year, April 15 was Good Friday. After Stations of the Cross that day, parishioners prayed together the devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows. How fitting it was, on the day of Jesus' Passion, to unite ourselves not only with Jesus, but also with Mary, who spiritually offered herself from the foot of the Cross.

The Fifth Sword of Sorrow is the Crucifixion. The reflection for this sorrow reads: "Through this bitter sword of sorrow, obtain for us the grace to unite all our sufferings to our crucified Lord with unselfish generosity and love."

While some might struggle to find Rwanda on a map, or even Waverly, Ohio, Our Lady's presence is being renewed and strengthened because of the connection these two places have with each other.

At Kibeho, Mary spoke a message for the world, calling everyone back to her Son. At Kibeho, Mary reminds us that salvation is not found by fleeing the sorrows and pains of this life for one of comfort, but that it is precisely by offering these sorrows with her to God that we are open to the holiness to which



## Holy oils blessed at Chrism Mass

(Clockwise from upper left) Bishop Emeritus Frederick Campbell leads a renewal of priestly promises, receives the holy oils to be blessed, and pours oil into one of the urns during the annual Chrism Mass at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on Tuesday, April 12. Bamuamba Kabeya, a candidate in the Cathedral RCIA program, fills cruets with the Oil of the Catechumens to be distributed to diocesan parishes.

*CT photos by Ken Snow*

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# Pallottine priests promote Divine Mercy devotion at St. Christopher

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

When the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy gave Pallottine Father Wojciech Stachura, SAC, a first-class relic of St. Faustina Kowalska last September in Poland to bring back to Columbus St. Christopher Church, it came with the stipulation that his order would spread the Divine Mercy devotion.

Not just on Divine Mercy Sunday, which the Catholic Church observes worldwide this year on April 24, but also throughout the year.

At least a dozen churches in the diocese this Sunday will offer special Divine Mercy devotions outside of their regular Masses, which include recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, holy hours,

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Page 15

the sacrament of reconciliation and, at some parishes, a Mass.

St. Christopher Church, 1420 Grandview Ave., will do all of that and also provide something extra at the end of Mass, which starts at approximately 3:15 p.m. after the chaplet is recited.

Father Marek Kasperczyk, a native of Poland who is director of sacred liturgy and an assistant professor at the Pontifical College Josephinum, will serve as the principal celebrant for the Mass at St. Christopher. Last year, Bishop Robert Brennan presided at the Mass there on Divine Mercy Sunday.

Those in attendance can venerate not only the relic of St. Faustina but also one from Pope St. John Paul II.

The Church considers a first-class



**Pope St. John Paul II and St. Faustina relics at Columbus St. Christopher Church**

relic an authenticated part of a saint's body. The St. Faustina relic at St. Christopher is a piece of her bone, and the Pope St. John Paul II relic is a drop of his blood.

Father Stachura obtained the pontiff's relic during a visit to his native Poland in 2020. It was presented to him by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, the former archbishop of Krakow and the late pope's personal secretary for 40 years.

Both relics came with certificates of authenticity verifying that they came from the bodies of the two Polish saints.

"I met the cardinal in his office, and we'd been talking awhile, and he gave me the relic with an authentic letter," Father Stachura said. "He gave a few pictures of John Paul II, I told him about my work here in the United States in the parish, and he asked me a few questions. It was beautiful."

Father Stachura is carrying through on his promise to spread devotion with a daily Divine Mercy hour in the church, which starts at 3 p.m. Monday through Friday (the time when Jesus Christ died on the cross) and includes the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, confessions and Adoration, and ends with Mass at 4 p.m.



**A Divine Mercy image is displayed near the altar at St. Christopher Church.**

Anyone is welcome to attend.

The priest received the relic of St. Faustina during a trip to Poland last September. It was given to him by one of the sisters of Faustina's congregation, the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, with the approval of the mother general of the order.

"One of the conditions the sisters gave us is that every month we're supposed to have a special retreat or days for people who have devotion to Divine Mercy, and we have, especially Divine Mercy Sunday," he said. "We will be praying with the two relics."

The Pallottine Fathers came to the Diocese of Columbus in 2020, and Bishop Brennan assigned them to St. Christopher Church. Father Stachura, the pastor, is assisted by Father Andrzej Kozminski, SAC, the parochial vicar. The order also has priests, who are from

India, located in Toledo.

Divine Mercy devotion has grown by leaps and bounds throughout the world over the past 30 years. Nowhere is the devotion stronger than in Poland, the Pallottines' home base.

Pope John Paul II added Divine Mercy Sunday to the Church calendar on the Sunday after Easter in 2000 following the canonization of St. Faustina.

The pontiff felt an obvious connection to his fellow Pole, St. Faustina, and last visited his home country in 2002, three years before he died, when he consecrated the world to the Lord's Divine Mercy from a basilica and shrine in Krakow that is the resting place for her body.

"His homily from the consecration Mass at the basilica is beautiful," Father Stachura said. "Everyone should read it. It's absolutely beautiful. The last words are the consecration of the whole world to Divine Mercy, and that was amazing."

Father Stachura first became aware of the Divine Mercy devotion when he started seminary in the mid-1980s. One of his colleagues had been studying Sister Faustina's diary, which has become a popular book that contains the messages she received from Christ in the 1930s.

"The messages were sent to Sister Faustina, but the one who helped spread the message was John Paul II," Father Stachura said. "He started this as the bishop of Krakow" (long before he became pope).

Father Stachura pointed out that John Paul II's first encyclical as pope was titled *Dives in Misericordia*, which is translated to Rich in Mercies and God in All Comfort, and promulgated on Nov. 30, 1980, two years after he became the vicar of Christ.

"As Pallottines, we have a very big devotion to Divine Mercy," Father Stachura said. "We want to make this place a center for Divine Mercy in Columbus in the future. Bishop Brennan asked us to do this."

Father Stachura emphasized the importance of mercy in the present age, pointing to the conflict in Ukraine as an example.

"Why has devotion to Divine Mercy spread? Because, first, people need conversion," he said. "People need to know faith. People need to love. They need forgiveness."

"People should read the Divine Mercy diary. It is long, but the messages are straight from Jesus through Sister Faustina to us. Mercy is missing in the world, especially with this war in Ukraine."

"Look what tragedy there is there now. People couldn't accept this type of love."



**Father Wojciech Stachura, SAC (right) holds a letter of authenticity for a relic of Pope St. John Paul II given to him by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz (left).**



**Father Andrzej Kozminski, SAC offers a blessing at the end of Eucharistic Adoration during a holy hour that included recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet and confessions at Columbus St. Christopher Church on Thursday, April 7.**

CT photos by Ken Snow

# Encountering the heart of Jesus

By Emily Jaminet

This Easter season, we can encounter the heart of Christ. This is the heart that, pierced by a soldier after Jesus died, poured forth blood and water. The action signified that His loving heart pours forth mercy and forgiveness for all who embrace it.

Two devotions honor Jesus' loving heart – the Sacred Heart devotion and the Divine Mercy devotion. These devotions are complementary, but each has a different emphasis. Yet, they are inseparable because both are based on one heart: the loving and merciful heart of Christ.

Many people, including the late Pope St. John Paul II, practice both devotions. John Paul II was instrumental in the establishment of the Divine Mercy devotion and yet maintained a strong devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The Sacred Heart devotion, as practiced today, is based on the visions of Christ received by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque from 1673 to 1675. The devotion focuses on the humanity of Christ

and the love contained in His heart.

This devotion is founded on the 12 promises Jesus gave to St. Margaret Mary. These promises are a path to holiness and virtue, and as they are fulfilled in our lives we grow closer to Jesus the more we become like Him.

The Sacred Heart devotion also emphasizes holy reparation, or offering up our daily prayers, trials, joys and sorrows to the Lord.

The Divine Mercy devotion started with the revelations from Jesus to St. Faustina from 1931 to 1938. This devotion focuses on His mercy and the need for us to trust in it. When Jesus asked St. Faustina to have a painting made of the image of His mercy, He wanted the signature at the bottom to state "Jesus, I Trust in You."

The Divine Mercy image portrays Jesus coming toward us with His hand pointing to His hidden heart, which is emitting healing rays of mercy and forgiveness. Jesus told St. Faustina, "These two rays issued forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when my agonized heart was opened by a lance on the cross."

The Divine Mercy devotion and the Sacred Heart devotion speak of the same heart that poured forth blood and water for our salvation.

St. Margaret Mary once wrote, "Not only is the Sacred Heart the seat of all virtues, but is also the source of the grace by which we acquire these virtues. Have devotion to the Sacred Heart, full of love and mercy. Through It, demand all that you wish to obtain and offer all your actions because the Sacred Heart is the treasury of all supernatural gifts."

## Feasts, important days

Jesus promised St. Faustina that souls who approach Him on Divine Mercy Sunday (the Second Sunday of Easter) will "pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Font of My Mercy." (Diary, 699)

St. Faustina reminds us that Jesus is still offering us love and mercy. I marvel over the blessing of Divine Mercy Sunday on April 24 this year. I like to call it a "Catholic parent's dream," as this dear heart lavishes graces of mercy upon the souls approaching it. We read from St. Faustina that:

"From all My wounds, like from streams, mercy flows for souls, but the wound in My Heart is the fountain of unfathomable mercy. From this fountain spring all graces for souls. The flames of compassion burn Me. I desire greatly to pour them out upon souls. Speak to the whole world about My mercy." (Diary, 1190)

This year the Feast of the Sacred Heart will take place Friday, June 24. We are also invited to attend Mass each First Friday and offer up our communion for the reparation of sins.

The greatest way to encounter the heart of Christ is by opening our own hearts to this life-changing love, allowing us to receive this love, share it with others and experience the rays of forgiveness and mercy.

The heart of Christ is the source of all grace, love and mercy. May we encounter the loving heart of Christ this Easter season and seek Christ's mercy during Divine Mercy Sunday.

*Emily Jaminet is executive director of the Sacred Heart Enthronement Network found at [www.WelcomeHisHeart.com](http://www.WelcomeHisHeart.com).*

# Divine Mercy Sunday holds special blessings

By Tim McAndrew

On April 30, 2000, Pope John Paul II announced that the Second Sunday of Easter would be known as Divine Mercy Sunday.

That day, during his canonization of Sister Faustina Kowalska, the pope said: "It is important that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on throughout the Church will be called Divine Mercy Sunday. This gift of mercy will be particularly needed in the third millennium."

The institution of the feast was requested by Jesus in 1931, while communicating His will during the painting of the image of the Divine Mercy:

### Our Lord speaks:

"I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy." (Sister Faustina Diary 49)

### Our Lord speaks:

"The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sin and punishment." (Diary 300)

This feast is intended to celebrate and proclaim God's tender mercy that is available to all who turn to Him with trust. The floodgates of God's mercy are opened. God in His great mercy is



**St. Faustina and Pope St. John Paul II with a Divine Mercy image**

giving us all a chance to start over with complete pardon of sin and punishment. We need only to give a wholehearted confession, holding nothing back from Our Lord.

### Our Lord's words to St. Faustina about confession:

"When you go to Confession, to this fountain of mercy, the blood and water which came forth from My heart always flows down upon your soul." (Diary 1602)

"In the tribunal of mercy (Confession) ... the greatest miracles take place

and are incessantly repeated." (Diary 1448, 1602)

"Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy." (Diary 1602)

"Come with faith to the feet of My representative." (Diary 1448)

"I, Myself, am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest. ... I, Myself, act in your soul." (Diary 1602)

"Make your confession before Me. The person of the priest is, for Me, only a screen. Never analyze what sort of a priest it is that I am making use of; open your soul in confession as you would to Me, and I will fill it with My light." (Diary 1725)

Through the feast of mercy all is washed clean. It's like being baptized again. Complete pardon of all sin and punishment. No purgatory time.

The graces received on this day are similar to baptismal graces. This is the grace Christ promises to give. All is forgotten as if it has never occurred. Temporal punishment, sins known and unknown, completely gone.

Picture the whole parish, diocese and the whole Catholic world leaving the Church as if they never sinned. That is Divine Mercy incarnate.

This is not human mercy, but Divine Mercy. His wisdom, His version.

"All the Divine floodgates of grace are open."

Jesus did not limit His generosity to this one exceptional grace of complete remission of sin and punishment; He

promised to drown us with graces unimaginable.

### Our Lord speaks:

"On that day, the very depths of My Mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon souls who will approach the font of My Mercy. On that day all the Divine Floodgates through which graces flow are opened." (Diary 699)

All these graces and benefits are accessible on this day to everyone, as long as we ask for them with great trust and love for God and our neighbor.

Jesus promised St. Faustina that those who receive Holy Communion in a state of grace on Divine Mercy Sunday (Feast of Mercy) would receive "the complete remission of sin and punishment." (Diary 699)

The theologian who examined St. Faustina's writings for the Holy See, the Rev. Ignacy Rozycki, explained that, "This is the promise of a complete renewal of baptismal grace. The most exceptional grace promised by Jesus for the Feast of the Divine Mercy is greater than a plenary Indulgence, which only consists of a remission before God of temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven, and never the remission of sins itself."

To sum up, go to confession, receive the Blessed Sacrament in a state of grace, love God and your neighbor, and God will set you free. Don't delay, the time is now. God is waiting for you.

# For the sake of His sorrowful passion, **Have Mercy On Us and On the Whole World**

“Tell the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners.”



-The Men of The 72



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### The 12 Promises of The Sacred Heart

1. I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.
2. I will establish peace in their homes.
3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.
5. I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
6. Sinners will find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
9. I will bless every place in which an image of My Heart is exposed and honored.
10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart.
12. I promise you in the excessive mercy of My Heart that My all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in My disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.

...and learn more about Catholic Men's Ministry and the Mission of The 72 at:

[www.CatholicMensMinistry.com](http://www.CatholicMensMinistry.com)



# Divine Mercy Sunday events scheduled in diocese

The following parishes in the Diocese of Columbus have scheduled programs for Divine Mercy Sunday, April 24:

**Chillicothe St. Peter** – Novena recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 3 p.m. daily through Saturday, April 23. Eucharistic Adoration, from end of 11:30 a.m. Mass April 24, with confessions available, followed by recitation of the Chaplet and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 3 p.m.

**Circleville St. Joseph** – Adoration, confessions, 2 p.m.; Chaplet, 3 p.m.

**Columbus Holy Family** – Adoration, noon, followed by confessions; solemn blessing and veneration of Divine Mercy image; 2:30 p.m.; Chaplet, 3 p.m.; Benediction, 4:50 p.m.

**Columbus Sacred Heart** – Adoration, confessions, 2 p.m.; Chaplet, 3 p.m.; Benediction, 3:15 p.m.

**Columbus St. Catharine** – Adoration, rosary, confessions, 2 p.m.; Chaplet, 3 p.m.; Benediction, 3:30 p.m.

**Columbus St. Cecilia** – Chaplet, blessing of Divine Mercy im-

age, Adoration, confessions, 3 to 5 p.m.

**Columbus St. Christopher** – Adoration, confessions, 2:15 p.m.; Chaplet, 3 p.m.; Mass, 3:15 p.m.

**Columbus St. Leo the Great Oratory** – Low Mass in Latin, 8 a.m.; High Mass in Latin, Adoration, Chaplet, 10:30 a.m., followed by Easter egg hunt for children in Moeller Park and family potluck in church parking lot

**Gahanna St. Matthew** – Confessions, 2 p.m.; Adoration, Chaplet, reflections by Father Tomas Blau, 3 to 4 p.m.

**Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help** – Adoration, 1 p.m.; confessions, sung Chaplet followed by praise and worship music, 3 p.m.; Benediction, 3:50 p.m.

**Hilliard St. Brendan** – Sung Chaplet, 3 p.m.

**Lancaster St. Mark** – Chaplet, followed by Mass, with opportunity to receive Sacrament of Reconciliation, 3 p.m.

**Mount Vernon St. Vincent de Paul** – Adoration, confessions, prayers, Chaplet, Benediction, 2 p.m.

**Newark Blessed Sacrament**

– Novena, 3 p.m. daily through April 23. Adoration, from end of 10:30 a.m. Mass April 24, with conclusion of novena at 3 p.m.

**Pickerington St. Elizabeth Seton** – Holy Hour with Adoration and Chaplet, 3 p.m.

**Plain City St. Joseph** – Adoration and confessions, 2 to 3 p.m.; Chaplet and Benediction, 3 p.m.

**Reynoldsburg St. Pius X** – Adoration, rosary, Chaplet, Benediction, confessions, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Scioto Catholic Community** – Adoration, Chaplet and other devotions, 2 to 4 p.m., Pond Creek Holy Trinity Church; Anointing of the sick at all Masses at Holy Trinity, Portsmouth Holy Redeemer, Portsmouth St. Mary and Wheelersburg St. Peter in Chains churches

**Sunbury St. John Neumann** – Adoration, Chaplet, confessions, Benediction, beginning at end of 11 a.m. Mass and concluding after an hour

**West Jefferson Ss. Simon and Jude** – Adoration, Chaplet, Reconciliation, Benediction, 3 to 4 p.m.

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Dureti "Mimi" Tadesse



Daniel Daffa



Carlos Mijares Mendoza

# Program offers insight into immigration

Immigration was the focus of a recent program at New Albany Church of the Resurrection. "God's People Coming Together, an Evening of Witness, Reflection, and Prayer" took place Monday, April 4.

"The concept was to have an interfaith event to further people's understanding of the breadth of possible reasons people immigrate to the United States and the impact on their lives," said John Tucker, who spearheaded the program. "Then to pray for God's support for them."

The timeliness and importance of the topic inspired the church's Social Concerns Committee to open the program to the faith community of central Ohio.

There was prayer, singing and presentations by two men who spoke about their experiences coming to the United States.

Carlos Mijares Mendoza arrived a few years ago from Caracas, Venezuela after deciding his family was not safe there. He had worked as a licensed pilot, but the government wanted him to fly illegally.

After receiving physical threats when he refused to break the law, Carlos, his wife and their two children left Venezuela. With the help of friends, the family settled in New Albany and are going

through the asylum process.

Daniel Daffa arrived in central Ohio almost 30 years ago. While studying political science at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, he was imprisoned for opposing government crimes against his people.

In Columbus, he helps emigrants from the Oromia region of Ethiopia assimilate into the local workforce.

Dureti "Mimi" Tadesse met and married Daniel after he was released from 10 years in prison. Attempting to leave the country on foot, they both were arrested, separated, imprisoned, and tortured. Upon release, they requested asylum through the U.S. Embassy and arrived here.

They have become U.S. citizens and co-founded C.G. Women's Empowerment to assist women in Oromia.

All the speakers expressed how they miss their friends and relatives from their homeland, how hard it was to leave them and how difficult their journeys had been.

Following the program, organizations hosted information tables with opportunities to volunteer or offer financial assistance. The groups represented were:

- A Salvadoran mission school sup-

ported by Church of the Resurrection in the rural town of Agua Caliente.

- Little Dresses of Love, a sewing ministry started by church members that makes dresses for children and women in impoverished areas of the U.S. and abroad.

- C.G. Women's Empowerment (CGWE), sponsored by New Life Church of Gahanna. CGWE supports women by providing long-term solutions to their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Women receive a free cow and the use of its products for food and profit. The women then pass on the first-born female calves to other needy families.

- Community Refugee and Immigration Service (CRIS) of Columbus, which serves local refugees and immigrants. CRIS' programs and services aim to facilitate self-sufficiency and integration.

- The New Albany Food Pantry, which aims to eliminate food insecurity in the New Albany-Plain Local School District by connecting those in need with food and other resources.

A video of the event is available on Church of the Resurrection's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/allrwelcom/](http://www.facebook.com/allrwelcom/), under "Videos."

## Divine Mercy Sunday Year C

## Faith prevails when signs are lacking

**Acts 5:12-16**  
**Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24**  
**Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19**  
**John 20:19-31**

Signs and wonders were the attractions that drew the first hearers of the Gospel after the resurrection of Jesus to give credence to the preaching of the Apostles. In the Acts of the Apostles, which is the source for many of the readings of the Easter season, we follow Luke's account of the growth of the early Church.

The disciples of Jesus have been transformed from the companions of Jesus who did not understand into believers whose lives are engaged with revealing the power of the resurrection at work through their actions performed in the name of Jesus.

We live in a time that seeks signs and wonders but is skeptical of them. Even when unusual circumstances present themselves, we tend to doubt the veracity of what we see. Images can be manipulated so easily that we are naturally hesitant to put our trust in them.

Signs and wonders continue to occur in our time. Even though most people do not speak of them, in moments of intimate sharing from the heart, nearly everyone has a story to tell. Nevertheless, people of our era need something "more" to persuade us of the truth of the Gospel.

Lord Jesus calls "blessed" those who do not see and yet come to believe. Our lives and our faith itself, in the testimony of the Scriptures and the teachings of the Apostles handed down to us through the Church, become the means by which new believers are called to faith in Christ. When signs and wonders are lacking, or when skepticism rules the day, the living witness of faith can still prevail.

To be an effective witness, we must confront our own skepticism. What doubts do

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Timothy Hayes

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



you harbor that are dispelled in the face of your experience of the God made known to you through the Holy Spirit? What is the "fact" that persuades you personally of the truth of the Gospel? What does the Lord make known to you when you demonstrate your willingness to move from unbelief to belief?

Thomas is the first to acknowledge that Jesus is "Lord and God." He announces the truth that he knows through experience that Jesus is truly one with God. "My Lord and my God!" is an expression of faith that sets aside all doubt and makes Thomas ready to embrace the truth that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

When the disciples who knew Jesus before His death encountered the risen Lord, it opened them to a new way of seeing and a new manner of living. What followed their encounter with Jesus risen was different from what they experienced before, but it was done in His name and through the power of the Holy Spirit poured out on them because of their faith in Jesus.

Our world needs witnesses. The impact of the Gospel is evident to all who have the eyes to see it. But it has been obscured for many because we who profess faith in the risen Lord do not live fully in the light of the resurrection. Our doubts and our tendencies to compromise with the world get in the way of our witness.

God's love is offered to us. When it is rejected, it is offered once again as mercy. The Second Sunday of Easter has been designated as Divine Mercy Sunday, a day of special grace that builds on what

## THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

4/25-4/30	FRIDAY Acts 5:34-42 Psalm 27:1,4,13-14 John 6:1-15	WEDNESDAY Acts 8:1b-8 Psalm 66:1-3a,4-7a John 6:35-40
MONDAY 1 Peter 5:5b-14 Psalm 89:2-3,6-7,16-17 Mark 16:15-20	SATURDAY Acts 6:1-7 Psalm 33:1-2,4-5,18-19 John 6:16-21	THURSDAY Acts 8:26-40 Psalm 66:8-9,16-17,20 John 6:44-51
TUESDAY Acts 4:32-37 Psalm 93:1-2,5 John 3:7b-15	5/2-5/7	FRIDAY Acts 9:1-20 Psalm 117:1bc,2 John 6:52-59
WEDNESDAY Acts 5:17-26 Psalm 34:2-9 John 3:16-21	MONDAY Acts 6:8-15 Psalm 119:23-24,26-27,29-30 John 6:22-29	SATURDAY Acts 9:31-42 Psalm 116:12-17 John 6:60-69
THURSDAY Acts 5:27-33 Psalm 34:2,9,17-20 John 3:31-36	TUESDAY 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 Psalm 19:2-5 John 14:6-14	

## DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION

## MASS SCHEDULE: WEEKS OF APRIL 24 AND MAY 1, 2022

## 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) and diocesan website, [www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org).

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

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

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7

p.m., and midnight).

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

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

## DAILY MASS

8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above; and on I-Lifetv (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City, Washington C.H.: Channel 125, Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia: Channel 207, Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio

(AM 820), Columbus, and at [www.stgabrielradio.com](http://www.stgabrielradio.com).

12:05 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. Saturdays, Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at [www.stgabrielradio.com](http://www.stgabrielradio.com) and diocesan website, [www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org). (Saturdays on radio only).

Videos of Masses are available at any time on the internet at these and many other parish websites: Mattingly Settlement St. Mary ([www.stannismary.org](http://www.stannismary.org)); Columbus St. Patrick ([www.stpatrickcolumbus.org](http://www.stpatrickcolumbus.org)); Delaware St. Mary ([www.delawarestmary.org](http://www.delawarestmary.org)); Sunbury St. John Neumann ([www.saintjohnsunbury.org](http://www.saintjohnsunbury.org)); and Columbus Immaculate Conception ([www.iccols.org](http://www.iccols.org)). Check your parish website for additional information.

We pray Week II and the Octave of Easter Seasonal Propers of the Liturgy of the Hours.

Lent has accomplished for us.

Easter invites us to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is risen, and Divine Mercy Sunday repeats the message, calling us to receive and share the mercy that has been

unleashed on the world through the resurrection.

Jesus, I trust in You! Eternal Father, have mercy on us and on the world!

## Third Sunday of Easter Year C

## As with Peter, Jesus wants our full commitment

**Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41**  
**Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13**  
**Revelation 5:11-14**  
**John 21:1-19**

The Gospels offer a splendid variety of stories of encounter with the risen Lord. No two are exactly the same, even when presenting parallel stories. The Gospel of John tells us about the "rehabilitation" of Simon Peter after his threefold denial that he knew Jesus.

Allusion to the past relationship between Peter and Jesus is present in the miraculous catch. Jesus is recognized, not by their seeing Him, but by His word and action.

He tells them to try the other side of

the boat when they have fished all night without a catch. Jesus also feeds them, with fish He has caught as well as some of their own, along with bread. The multiplication of the loaves and fishes and the meal shared the night before He died are the history that is renewed in this post-resurrection encounter.

When Jesus takes Peter aside, He reaches deep into the soul of the one He has chosen to be the leader among the disciples, freeing him of his sinful denial and opening up the pathway of love and mercy in his heart. The meal by the charcoal fire on the shore of the Sea of Galilee redeems the denial near the charcoal fire in the courtyard of the high priest's house in Jerusalem.

Jesus does not make things easy. He presses Peter for a full commitment of love, expressed clearly and with passion. "Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You." Accepting Peter's profession, He now entrusts to him the role of shepherd: "Feed My sheep." He also warns Peter of the fact that in time, his fate will be like that of his Master.

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles shows Peter and the Apostles in the thick of the battle, experiencing rejection and persecution for their message about the resurrection. They have been fully transformed by the Spirit of Jesus, free to make a clear proclamation of the truth and to accept joyfully the suffering they must endure for the sake of the mes-

sage.

Peter puts it in a nutshell: "We must obey God rather than men. The God of our ancestors raised Jesus, though you had him killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior to grant Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins. We are witnesses of these things, as is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

The resurrection is the transforming moment in human history. When all of history was leading up to death, God was preparing the opening to new life. The faith of the Apostles gives them courage



Local news and events

# Columbus Holy Name Church to host Mass for nurses

A special Mass for nurses, sponsored by the Columbus chapter of the National Association of Catholic Nurses, will take place at 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 29 at Columbus Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave. Father Antonio Carvalho will be the celebrant and will offer a blessing of hands for nurses.

The date was chosen for the Mass to honor the feast day of Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska, who saved hundreds of lives in Krakow, Poland during World War II and who worked closely with Pope St. John Paul II when he was bishop of Krakow. It also honors National Nurses Day, Friday May 6.

For more information, go to CatholicNursesColumbus@gmail.com or call Teresa Sipos at (740) 652-5321.

## 'Promise and the Power' program will lead to Pentecost

A five-week program titled The Promise and the Power will be presented on

**DEVOTION**, continued from Page 10

God is calling us.

One of the opening prayers of the rosary of the Seven Sorrows says, "O Blessed Virgin Mary, you are our tender Mother and Refuge of sinners. ... Obtain for me the forgiveness of my sins and the grace to live a life of heroic holiness."

Everything Mary does for us is as the mediator between us and her Son, as

**COMMITMENT**, continued from Page 16

and zeal for their task of sharing this new life with any who are willing to hear it.

In our time, we find that the message of the Gospel has been rejected or forgotten. Jesus makes Himself known to us and calls us to renew our faith in Him, committing to serve as witnesses.

The Gospel accounts of the resurrection include many elements that can be useful in a life of prayer. John's Gospel in particular gives us nuances that can serve to stir up in our hearts the kind of response that Jesus elicits from Peter.

St. Ignatius of Loyola suggested a form of meditation using the Scriptures that can draw us into the story and open our hearts to a greater awareness of love and mercy. Read the passage a few times, paus-

the Sundays of May starting May 1, after the 10 a.m. Mass at Columbus Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road.

The program, which will last for 90 minutes each week, will conclude on the Sunday before Pentecost and is designed to prepare its viewers for a personal Pentecost by sharing the promise of the Father and the power of the Spirit.

Speakers will include; Jackie Temple, Patrick Shroyer, Bill Durrant, Lisa Bowman and

Deacon Chris Reis. For more information, call (614) 861-1242 or go to [ccrcolumbus.org](http://ccrcolumbus.org).

## Father Dailey to continue luncheon talks

Father Stash Dailey, diocesan vicar for religious and pastor of Columbus Holy Family Church, will present the third talk in his four-part series on "Rebuilding a Christian Culture" at the

the Second Vatican Council proclaims. We ask Mary for the grace to be holy, to spread the joy of the Gospel even in the midst of sorrows. This is how St. Mary, Queen of the Missions parish is doing its part to build up the Catholic Church in southern Ohio.

*Father Jacob Stinnett is the parochial vicar at Waverly St. Mary, Queen of the Missions Church.*

ing on the parts that engage your imagination. Then, read it once again, slowly and prayerfully to let the Lord speak to your heart through the words that you are reading.

Once you "know" the story well, allow the Spirit to lead you through your imagination into it. Are you one of the disciples in the account? Are you Peter? Are you a bystander, one of the unnamed disciples?

Do you discover, much to your surprise, that the Spirit moves you to enter into the very heart of Jesus? Are you asking someone to make known the love that needs to be spoken? Are you being called to speak words of commitment? Who are the sheep entrusted to you?

Catholic Men's Luncheon Club meeting on Friday, May 6.

The club will meet following the 11:45 a.m. Mass on that day at Columbus St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave. No reservations are necessary. A \$12 donation is requested to cover the cost of the lunch and meeting. Free parking is available on the Columbus State Community College lot across from the church.

Father Dailey will speak on "Our Lady as Mother and Queen: Living the Life of the Church." The final talk in the series, "Frequent Encounters with the Sacred Heart of Jesus," will be presented at the club meeting on Friday, June 3.

The first two talks, on St. Joseph and on the Scriptures, are available on the club's website [www.catholicmensministry.com](http://www.catholicmensministry.com). The entire series is sponsored by the Nos Lumine and Attollo organizations for Catholics in business, AM 820 St. Gabriel Radio, the Egan-Ryan Funeral Service and the Bottoms Up diaper drive.

## St. Brendan Knights sponsor Maria Stein retreat

Father Thomas M. Hart, OSB, will lead a men's retreat on "Foundations of the Catholic Faith" at the Maria Stein Spiritual Center, 2365 St. John's Road in Maria Stein, from Friday to Sunday, May 20 to 22. The retreat will be sponsored by Hilliard St. Brendan Church Knights of Columbus Council 11208, but all men are invited to attend.

Father Hart entered the Benedictine order in 1983 and was ordained in 1988. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville and a Master of Divinity degree from St. Vincent Seminary in

Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

Casual attire is appropriate for the weekend. The cost is \$170, which includes all meals and a private room with bath. A one-night Saturday-Sunday package is available for \$110. For registration information, contact Gerry at (614) 946-8117 or email [Gerryliz90@gmail.com](mailto:Gerryliz90@gmail.com).

## Time change announced for Sacred Heart devotion

Effective Friday, May 6, the Sacred Heart Mass and Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration at Columbus Holy Cross Church, 204 S. 5th St., will start at 7 p.m. instead of 7:30 on the first Friday of each month.

The devotion has taken place in downtown Columbus for more than 40 years and at Holy Cross for more than 20 years. It used to start with mass at 7:30 p.m., followed by Adoration until 7:30 a.m. Because of dwindling attendance, it was scaled down to end at 11 p.m. The COVID-19 pandemic forced additional reductions.


During Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is administered. Those attending the devotion come from throughout central Ohio. More information is available at

<https://firstfridaycolumbus.wixsite.com>.

## Steubenville Catholic Central reunion planned

A reunion for all central Ohio graduates of Steubenville Catholic Central High School will take place from 4 to 11 p.m. Saturday, May 21 at The Woodlands Backyard, 668 Grandview Ave., Columbus.

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# PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

**ALLEN, Frances, 95, Feb. 18**  
St. Colman of Cloyne Church, Washington Court House

**ARMBRUST, Carolyn, 94, April 1**  
St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

**BRAHM, Richard, 77, April 6**  
Resurrection Cemetery Chapel, Lewis Center

**CAMPBELL, Ann, 66, March 14**  
St. Colman of Cloyne Church, Washington Court House

**DAPPOLLONIO, Rocco D., 94, March 26**  
St. Michael Church, Worthington

**HOLT, Mark A., 70, April 5**  
St. Mary, Mother of God Church, Columbus

**JURCICH, Steve, 74, March 31**  
St. Margaret of Cortona Church, Columbus

**KELLY, John G.L., 89, April 2**  
St. Ladislav Church, Columbus

**MacKINNON, Kathleen M. (McKinney), 72, April 7**  
St. Catharine Church, Columbus

**MEIER, Barbara L. (Eckenrode), 87, April 3**  
St. Ladislav Church, Columbus

**MILLS, John M., 71, March 14**  
St. Mary, Mother of God Church, Columbus

**MOORE, George T., 80, April 7**  
St. Joseph Church, Circleville

**MOTIKA, Joseph A., 90, April 7**  
Holy Family Church, Columbus

**PFEIFER, Jane, 77, April 4**  
St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

**ROBERTS, Warren W., 86, April 9**  
Holy Cross Church, Columbus

**RIMER, Richard, 75, April 7**  
Immaculate Conception Church, Dennison

**ROGERS, Joyce, 76, March 4**  
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

**SCHWARTZ, Julia, 72, March 26**  
St. Colman of Cloyne Church, Washington Court House

**SEIPEL, Richard, 83, April 1**  
St. Brendan Church, Hilliard

**SMOCK, Almina R., 87, April 7**  
St. Paul Church, Westerville

**VARDA, Charles, 92, March 31**  
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

**WALKER, Jean (Stefani), 92, April 2**  
St. Joseph Church, Dover

**WARD, Nancy Lou, 82, March 9**  
St. Colman of Cloyne Church, Washington Court House

**WARNER, Charles R., March 28**  
Sacred Heart Church, New Philadelphia

**WILLS, Michael A., 77, formerly of Columbus, March 29**  
St. Mary Church, Bellevue

**WORLEY, Mary A. (Plageman), 76, April 6**  
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus

## Bernadette M. Schalk

Funeral Mass for Bernadette M. Schalk, 77, who died Monday, April 4, in Maryville, Tennessee, was celebrated by her son, Father David Schalk, on Saturday, April 9 at Columbus Christ the King Church. Burial was at St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus.

She was born in Rossford to Hubert and Louise Liedigk. They raised their family in central Ohio and she was as a registered nurse for several years in Columbus. She moved to eastern Tennessee in 2000 and was a member of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Maryville.

She was preceded in death by her parents and a son, Matthew. Survivors include her husband, Larry; Father Schalk, pastor of Christ the King and Columbus St. Thomas Church; other children, Brian, Marty Pack, Missy (Bill) Pope and Chris; 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

### JOB OPENING - COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Buckeye Lake - St. Leonard Church, Heath

The parishes of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Buckeye Lake, and St. Leonard, Heath are seeking a person to fill the position of Coordinator of Religious Education. This is a part-time, salaried position of 25 hours per week. Travel is required on Sundays between the two parishes for PSR and once during the week. Main responsibilities include recruiting and training of catechists, preparing schedules, ordering PSR materials, working closely with those preparing our youth for the sacraments, and helping in the coordination of Vacation Bible School and other faith formation programs. For further information or to apply for the position, please contact Father William A Hritsko by calling 740-928-3266 or by email at office@olmcbuckeyelake.com. Protecting God's Children and a BCI background check are required.

### College news

## ODU to offer Anesthesiologist Assistant Studies Master's program

Ohio Dominican University (ODU) will launch central Ohio's first Anesthesiologist Assistant (AA) Studies master's-level program in January 2023.

The inaugural class will include 25 students, and approximately the same number of students will begin the program each spring thereafter.

Anesthesiologist Assistants work within an anesthesiologist-led anesthesia care team to provide care to patients before, during and after surgery or other procedures. During a procedure, an AA administers, monitors and adjusts anesthetic as necessary. Also, AAs may perform a multitude of procedures and assist in conducting laboratory work, such as drawing blood and conducting various tests.

During ODU's 24-month program, students will complete a combination of didactic and clinical education in the first year, which consists of time spent in the classroom, simulation labs and clinical affiliates. During the second year, students will be immersed in full-time clinical experiences at various sites to accumulate required case volume and experience anesthesia specialties to further clinical hours. The program will prepare students to take the National Commission for Certification of Anesthesiologist Assistants (NCCAA) exam, which is required prior to beginning clinical practice and state licensure (state dependent).

The University of Cincinnati College

of Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology, and the University of Cincinnati Medical Center serve as ODU's Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accredited school of medicine and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) sponsor institution. The ODU AA Program is under review and will be offered pending final review and approval of the Higher Learning Commission.

The AA program will occupy approximately 7,000 square feet of newly renovated space inside Peace Hall, which is located adjacent to ODU's main campus at 2600 Airport Drive, Columbus. The modern student-centered facility will feature state-of-the-art equipment and include a high-fidelity anesthesiology simulation lab, two lecture hall classrooms, student lounge and a large lecture hall auditorium.

Aaron Grabovich, MS, MHS, CAA, a certified Anesthesiologist Assistant with 12 years of clinical experience, has been appointed to serve as the program's director.

"Throughout my professional journey, I've had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of medical experiences and work within a dynamic anesthesiologist-led care team," Grabovich said. "One aspect of my career that I most enjoy is the opportunity to give



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# Centers continue to help with challenging pregnancies

Pregnancy Decision Health Centers (PDHC) has been making a difference every day for 41 years in central Ohio.

PDHC operates four pregnancy resource centers providing hope and support to women facing unexpected or challenging pregnancies. The services include a 24/7 hotline, personalized consultations, pregnancy tests, ultrasounds and links to a community of support and resources.

Last year, 834 life decisions were made at PDHC after an abortion-vulnerable or abortion-minded mom saw her baby's heartbeat on an ultrasound.

"The first time I heard about this precious child of mine was when I first visited PDHC," Fatmata said. "I can remember when the nurse said, 'You are seven weeks and three days pregnant.'

"At first, I was scared because I was thinking, 'How am I going to take care of this child?' But then I was so happy about her, and she is finally here." Fatmata's baby girl Delilah was born in early January.

PDHC has also saved lives by providing abortion pill reversal (APR) services to women who have taken the abortion pill, regretted their decision and wanted a second chance to save the life of their baby.

According to the latest statistics from the Ohio Department of Health in 2020, 80% of abortions in Franklin County

were chemical abortions via the abortion pill. Therefore, APR continues to be a critical service provided at PDHC.

"Without PDHC, I wouldn't have the option of being a mom to my beautiful, healthy daughter," said a mom who received APR services at PDHC. "You helped me after I made a bad decision, and I am forever grateful."

In 2021, new moms and dads empowered themselves and their families through participation in more than 6,000 online parenting education classes offered through PDHC's Family Empowerment Center. These families also received much needed baby items, including clothing, car seats, pack and plays and 113,865 diapers.

"Definitely the classes were the most helpful, especially CPR, parenting techniques, swaddling, and the ABCs of sleeping, and the maternity clothes and baby clothes and diapers they gave us, too," said Jessica, a parenting class participant. "I appreciate that. ... Some people don't have that opportunity for that help."

Last year, PDHC's youth development program served middle and high school students in 44 schools in Franklin and Fairfield counties with healthy choice education. One high school student said, "This was the best and most informative presentation I've ever seen in class. The speaker's delivery, humor

and sincerity feel genuine, and I learned some things that I didn't know. I'm going to listen and go by it for the rest of my life, thank you."

PDHC also serves individuals struggling from a recent or past abortion decision by providing hope and healing through the 24/7 Abortion Recovery (aR) Care Line, drop-in connection meetings, eight-week Bible studies and weekend retreats.

"I reached out for support at aR," a participant said. "I look back at my journey, and I'm overwhelmed by how I have grown stronger and feel more at peace."

If you or someone you know is struggling from a past abortion experience, call or text the aR Care Line at (614) 721-2100 or go to [AbortionRecovery-Info.org](http://AbortionRecovery-Info.org).

To help fund these free programs and services, PDHC will be holding its 31st annual Golf for Life event on Monday, May 23, at Pinnacle Golf Club. For more information

on sponsorship or participation as an individual or group, register online at [SupportLifePDHC.org/golf](http://SupportLifePDHC.org/golf) or contact Ryan Wheatley at [RyanW@pdhc.org](mailto:RyanW@pdhc.org).

"Not only are we rescuing lives, but we are also impacting families for generations through those lives saved," said Kathy Scanlon, PDHC president.

If you or someone you know is pregnant and needs help, contact PDHC through the 24/7 hotline at (614) 444-4411 or go to [pdhc.org](http://pdhc.org).

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**To Register:**  
**[SupportLifePDHC.org](http://SupportLifePDHC.org)**

**GOLF for LIFE**

# Watterson seniors present talk at international scientific conference

Columbus Bishop Watterson High School seniors Matthew Fu, Timothy Govenor, and Quentin King presented a talk at an international conference on March 21 about their research work on the origin of astrophysical neutrinos.

They were the only high school students to present at the conference, titled the "First Pan-African Astro Particle and Collider Physics Workshop," which ran March 21-23. Other presenters included professors and scientists from universities all over the world.

"For high-school students, the background and motivation of this research are far beyond anything that one would normally learn in school, so they worked hard to learn about particle physics and astrophysics, to scan the Swift X-Ray Telescope database for information about X-ray flaring blazars, and to prepare the presentation, including throughout their Spring break," Bishop Watterson physics and astron-

omy teacher Dr. Parisa Roustazadeh said. "Their presentation was very well received.

"Neutrinos are electrically neutral, almost massless elementary particles which almost never interact with anything. The IceCube detector on the South Pole has, since 2010, detected a flux of very-high-energy neutrinos from cosmic sources, but their origin remains a mystery.

"A special class of active galactic nuclei called blazars have long been considered a prime candidate to be the sources of these high-energy neutrinos. In many active galactic nuclei, a super-massive black hole at the center of a galaxy voraciously accretes matter from its environment and, in the process, ejects collimated jets of material moving out with almost the speed of light.

"In blazars, one of these jets points almost directly towards Earth, greatly enhancing the brightness of radiation we

see from them. While previous searches to confirm the association between high-energy neutrinos and blazars have focused on the highest-energy form of radiation, gamma-rays, to be particularly bright when neutrinos are produced, there are strong theoretical arguments that such a correlation is more likely to be ubiquitous between neutrinos and X-ray bright sources.

"Matthew, Timothy, and Quentin have, therefore, systematically searched for X-ray bright counterparts of neutrino alerts from the past 10 years. Whenever such information was available, Matthew, Timothy, and Quentin actually did find possible counterpart blazars to be in X-ray bright states. This may be an important step towards confirming that blazars are the sources of at least some of the neutrinos detected by the IceCube detector."



Columbus Bishop Watterson High School seniors (from left) Matthew Fu, Timothy Govenor and Quentin King make their presentation. At far left is Dr. Parisa Roustazadeh, the school's astronomy teacher. Photo courtesy Bishop Watterson High School

## POSITION AVAILABLE Finance Assistant Diocese of Columbus

The Catholic Diocese of Columbus, located at 197 East Gay Street, Columbus, is looking for a qualified individual to join its staff. This full-time position will perform various duties within the Finance Office including cash disbursements and cash receipts. The primary function will be to process donor and parish receipts related to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. Miscellaneous balancing and processing duties pertinent to a batch transaction environment.

The candidate should have a high school degree; a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, mathematics or related field is preferred with a minimum of two years of data entry is required; keyboard and computer experience is required; a minimum of two years prior bookkeeping experience is preferred.

The ideal candidate should understand the Catholic perspective, be self-motivated, take initiative, and the ability to plan and meet deadlines. Additional responsibilities include the processing of Bishop Annual Appeal receipts, paying authorized bills for agencies, account for all deposits ensuring all designations/restrictions are appropriately accounted for, and provide miscellaneous duties as assigned by the Assistant Controller or Controller. Additional job-related skills include communicating effectively both in written format and oral presentation, multi-tasking, proficiency in MS Office software (Word, Excel), establishing priorities, and exhibiting initiative, responsibility and flexibility.

Job offer is contingent on the successful passing of the mandatory background screening and completion of the VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" course. Compensation is commensurate with candidate's experience. We offer a full complement of benefits, including health, dental, vision, life, short & long-term disability, and matching 403(b). Send cover letter, resume, and references to Dominic Prunte, Director of Human Resources, at [dprunte@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:dprunte@columbuscatholic.org).

## COLLEGES, continued from Page 18

back. I am excited to share my experiences, insight and passion with students as we train and prepare future generations of anesthesiologist assistants who are committed to providing patients with the outstanding care they deserve. As the need for anesthesiologist assistants grows, ODU's program will be vitally important in helping to ensure patients and providers, especially those in Central Ohio, continue to have access to anesthesiologist-led care in the years to come."

For more information about the program, visit [ohiodominican.edu/AA-Studies](http://ohiodominican.edu/AA-Studies) or contact ODU's Office of Graduate Admission at 614-251-4615 or [grad@ohiodominican.edu](mailto:grad@ohiodominican.edu).

## Ohio Dominican spring commencement set for May 7

Ohio Dominican University (ODU) will hold its 114th commencement ceremony at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 7.

Approximately 200 students will receive degrees in Panther Stadium on ODU's campus at 1216 Sunbury Road, Columbus.

Baccalaureate Mass will take place at 9 a.m. May 7 in the Sr. Mary Andrew Matesich, OP Theatre, located on the second floor of Erskine Hall.

Barbara Smoot, president and CEO of Women for Economic and Leadership Development (WELD), will deliver the keynote address. She also will receive the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters honoris causa.

## Archbishop Cordileone, Kreeft to address Franciscan grads

Franciscan University of Steubenville's 74th commencement exercises will be held May 13-14 for more than

760 students registered to graduate in more than 100 programs of study.

Included in this year's class are the first graduates of the Master of Arts in Catholic Studies and the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco will preside at the baccalaureate Mass at 6 p.m. Friday, May 13 in Finnegan Fieldhouse and receive an honorary doctorate of Christian ethics.

Installed as archbishop on October 4, 2012, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, he has led the faithful of San Francisco with steadfast determination amid an increasingly secular culture. A vigilant defender of the sacredness of human life, he called abortion "the new secular religion of our own time" and advocates for eucharistic reverence to counter the culture of death.

He gained national attention for promoting the holiness and virtues of St. Junípero Serra to counter the woke movement that vandalized the saint's statue, burned one of his missions, and removed the saint's statue from the California state capitol.

Commencement exercises are scheduled for Saturday, May 14, starting with the Science Commencement at 9 a.m., followed by the Arts Commencement at noon, both in Finnegan Fieldhouse.

Dr. Peter Kreeft, a professor of philosophy at Boston College since 1965, will receive an honorary doctorate of humane letters and deliver the commencement address at both the science and arts ceremonies.

Kreeft is perhaps the most widely known Catholic philosopher of this generation. His 80-plus books include *The Handbook of Christian Apologet-*

*ics, Christianity for Modern Pagans and How to Win the Culture War.*

Franciscan president Father Dave Pivonka, TOR, a graduate of the Class of 1989, will preside at both ceremonies along with members of the Board of Trustees and Board of Advisors.

For those unable to attend, ceremonies will be streamed online at [Franciscan.edu/commencement](http://Franciscan.edu/commencement).

## Restoring a Nation conference comes to Franciscan in October

"Restoring a Nation: The Common Good in the American Tradition" will be the theme of a Oct. 7-8 conference at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

The conference will examine how the liberal agenda, with its promises of equal opportunity and an endless array of lifestyle choices, has plunged working- and middle-class people into job and health insecurity and yielded a public square owned and controlled by a narrow elite, said Sohrab Ahmari, conference organizer and publisher of *Compact* magazine.

"Franciscan University is among the nation's premier faithfully Catholic universities," said Ahmari, a visiting fellow at Franciscan University's Veritas Center for Ethics in Public Life. "It also happens to be set in a wider region that has suffered a great deal from de-industrialization and working-class decline. So, what better place to convene this stellar group of scholars, writers, and public intellectuals to recover our nation's common-good tradition and re-purpose its wisdom for the challenges of the 21st century?"

Eleven talks, panel discussions, and keynotes will be given. To register or for more information, go to [Franciscan.edu/restoring-a-nation](http://Franciscan.edu/restoring-a-nation).



## Wheelersburg St. Peter's PSR holds Prayer-a-Thon for Ukraine

The Parish School of Religion (PSR) at St. Peter in Chains in Wheelersburg recently held a Prayer-a-Thon to benefit Ukraine and its war refugees.

The motto of this PSR school year, "God + 1 = Army" was displayed as the students sought to counter the injustice of the Russian invasion.

Each month, the PSR program holds a day of service. These have focused on cleaning up at the church and putting together Christmas stockings for soldiers, winter care packages for the homeless and Valentine gifts for local nursing home residents. For April, the students planned to assemble Easter baskets for local foster children.

For March, the program's lay leaders, Stephanie McClure and Alison Tennant, decided to conduct a Prayer-a-Thon for Ukraine. Soon flyers explaining the effort were posted on social media and in the church bulletin. Parishioners of St. Peter and the other three parishes of the Scioto County Consortium as well as other community members participated.

On Sunday, March 13, requested prayers were written on sticky notes and fastened to bulletin boards at the front of St. Peter church. Individuals and families claimed the requests and prayed for the Ukrainian people.

When the boards had been cleared, participants had offered 515 Hail Mary prayers, 142 Our Father prayers, 75 St. Michael prayers, 25 quotes from Philippians 4:6-7, 22 Glory Be prayers, 21 rosaries and two Divine Mercy chaplets.

They also raised \$1,402 for Catholic Relief Services and Caritas Partners to provide shelter, food, fuel, transportation and counseling services for those affected by the war.



Families and students participate in the Prayer-a-Thon at Wheelersburg St. Peter in Chains Church.

Photos courtesy Stephanie McClure

## IC art show, Vespers



Third-grader Marley Holsinger (top) points to artwork displayed at Columbus Immaculate Conception's annual Art Show. IC parishioners (above) gather for Vespers. Photos courtesy Immaculate Conception Church and School

## Recent events at St. Michael



Worthington St. Michael School students recently celebrated a baptism (top photo), participated in the Invention Convention (middle photo) and had its seventh graders visit Damascus Catholic Mission Campus for a leadership retreat.

Photos courtesy St. Michael School

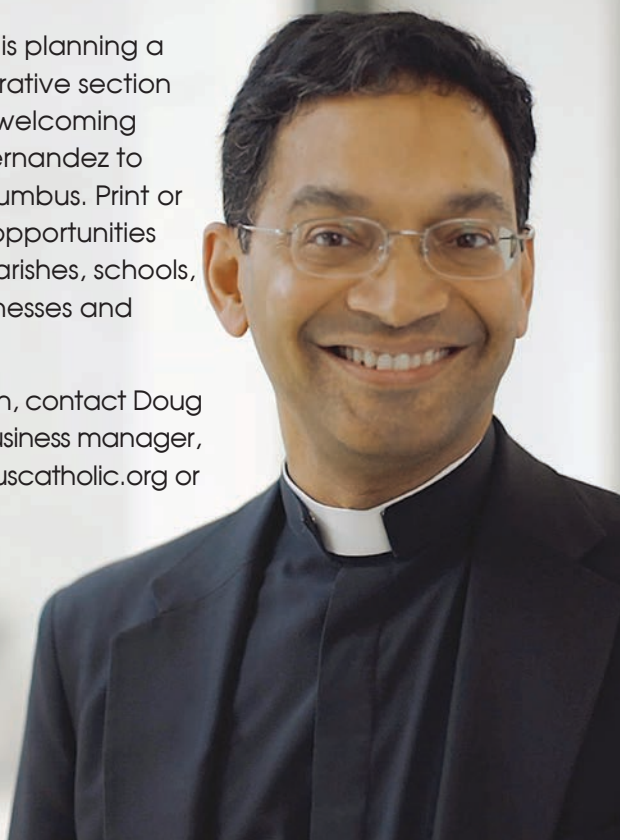
## Welcome Bishop-elect Fernandes in 'The Catholic Times' special section

The Catholic Times is planning a special commemorative section in the June 5 issue welcoming Bishop-elect Earl Fernandez to the Diocese of Columbus. Print or online advertising opportunities are available for parishes, schools, organizations, businesses and individuals.

For more information, contact Doug Bean, editor and business manager, at [dbean@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:dbean@columbuscatholic.org) or 614-224-5195.



The Catholic Times



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# Travel

## Discovering Lowcountry Cooking

Originating in South Carolina's West African Slave Culture

By Aaron Leventhal

Gumbo, fried green tomatoes, shrimp and grits and sweet potato pie are found on the menus of many of South Carolina's most acclaimed restaurants. In fact, Charleston's claim to being one of America's top culinary destinations may stem in part from the growing popularity of its Lowcountry cuisine.

According to Charlestonian Alphonso Brown, noted historian and author of "A Guide to Gullah Charleston," these dishes and many more evolved along South Carolina's coastal seaboard, an area below sea level and referred to as the Lowcountry. "Plantation slaves of West Africa prepared their meals incorporating their homeland's culinary traditions," he says. "They lived on 'free food' – vegetables, herbs, fish and seafood harvested in the wet marshlands and ocean's edge."

Long-grain rice, okra, peas, tomatoes, onions, sweet potatoes and watermelons flourished in the hot subtropical climate. The waters yielded an abundance of shrimp, crab, oysters and flounder. They flavored their pots with basil, thyme, sea salt and black peppercorns, as well as "offal" meats, such as ham hocks, pigs' jowls and chitlins' trashed by the masters as unfit to eat.

Through the centuries, these simple dishes were infused with European, American and Caribbean influences. Often Southern cooking and soul food is referred to as Lowcountry cuisine, however, this is a misnomer. The chef's preparation and inclusion of local ingredients are unique to authentic Lowcountry specialties.

**If you go:** For the past four years, my wife Beth, our Labrador retriever Lily and I have escaped Columbus's harsh winter days for Folly Beach Island's wide sandy beaches, tranquility and mild temperatures, about a 30-minute drive south to downtown Charleston. We rent a cozy, fully-furnished home on a wooded residential street from Kevin Edenborough of Seaside Property Management (sea-

sidefolly@gmail.com).

**For more information:** [www.visitfolly.com](http://www.visitfolly.com)

If you can't get down to Charleston in the immediate future, there is a great new Columbus restaurant. LaSalle's Southern Kitchen and Bar recently opened downtown serving many Lowcountry specialties, including fried okra, Papa J's Fried Chicken, fried whiting or catfish and sweet potato pie. [www.lasalleskitchenbar.com](http://www.lasalleskitchenbar.com).

Alphonso Brown recommends a number of area restaurants where local Black chefs offer their unique takes on Lowcountry specialties.

**Nigel's Good Food, (two North Charleston locations)**

**Chef Amsure Royal**  
**Open Mon-Sat, 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.,**  
**[www.nigelsgoodfood.com](http://www.nigelsgoodfood.com)**

Nigel and Louise Drayton opened this neighborhood favorite in 2011. Many dishes have a personal touch, including Bam's Spicy Gumbo, Grandma Fred's Shrimp and Grits, Liz's Chicken and Waffles and Trenton's Bourbon Pecan Pie. Low Country Ravioli incorporates bacon, collard greens, black-eye peas



Chef Amsure Royal, Nigel's Good Food.



Sean Mendes, owner and chef of Gillie's Seafood on James Island.

and roasted corn tossed in a whiskey cream sauce. And don't miss the crispy fried wings with Nigel's special Geechee Sauce. General manager Schari Mazyck proudly proclaims, "We treat everyone with warm hospitality and a hot meal."

**Gillie's Seafood, James Island**  
**Sean Mendes, Owner and Chef**  
**Open daily, 12 noon – 8 p.m.,** [www.gilliesseafood.com](http://www.gilliesseafood.com)

Located along Folly Road, this restaurant popular with both locals and visitors features a hospitable wait staff and many recipes from Se-

an's grandmother, Lareese Gilliard, including Grandma's Fried Chicken, meatloaf and smothered turkey Wings. Sean's own seafood creations feature Catfish Charleston topped with crawfish and shrimp in a cream sauce and Seafood Purloo with seasoned rice, shrimp, crawfish, oysters, okra, onions and smoked sausage. Unique to Gillies are Soul Rolls, an eggroll wrapper stuffed with collard greens, red rice, homemade pimiento cheese and pulled pork.

By Columbus travel-writer, Aaron Leventhal. Photos by Beth Ervin Leventhal



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# Diocese welcomes missionaries seeking our support

By Sister Zephрина Mary Gracykuty, FIH  
Director, Diocesan Missions Office

The Diocese of Columbus Missions Office annually assigns visiting missionaries to speak at local parishes.

The annual Missionary Cooperation Plan (MCP) centralizes the efforts of missionary organizations worldwide that wish to appeal to Catholics in the United States and tell parishioners about their mission experiences as they appeal for prayers and financial support.

The plan allows parishioners to learn about the missions at home and abroad and to assist mission organizations financially as they spread the Gospel.

The MCP allows missionaries to speak at an assigned parish or parishes one weekend between May and September. Each year, a national MCP Committee selects 38 applicants and invites them to participate.

The Missions Office also collects and disburses funds from the MCP appeal. The office distributes the funds via check to each organization's U.S. contact.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many mission organizations have helped orphans and the poor by deliv-

ering prevention information, sanitation supplies, masks, health kits, food, water and more.

Jesus commissioned the Apostles to proclaim the Good News to the ends of the earth. He was a missionary sent by God to redeem us from sin and eternal death. As Jesus was sending forth His disciples, he empowered them with the Holy Spirit, saying, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21)

Missionaries often leave family, friends and familiar surroundings and are sent to unfamiliar cultures. Missionaries come from all parts of the world, but most are from Africa and Asia. On this planet of about 6 billion people, Christians make up almost 2 billion. There are 1.3 billion Muslims, 850,000 Hindus and 418,000 Buddhists.

In A.D. 52, St. Thomas the Apostle was founding Catholic churches in southern India. India is rich with natural resources, yet more than half of the population suffers with deprivation, poverty, marginalization and exploitation. Nevertheless, the Church is committed to the spread of the Gospel in the face of many tribulations and with hope in Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the

way, the truth and the life. He is the true Savior who redeemed all humanity from eternal punishment and freely gave eternal salvation to all mankind. However, to receive this blissful eternity after our death, we must believe and accept Jesus Christ as our God and redeemer.

God loves us all unconditionally. We can compare the extent of His love to the vastness of the sky or the depth of the ocean. Above all, Jesus embraced crucifixion and death so that humanity could have immortal life when we leave our mortal body on earth. Jesus won a glorious life for all of us in heaven through His resurrection.

The life of Jesus, as true God and true man, was spent close to the poor, the forgotten and lonely. He offered compassion to the sick, the lame, the deaf and the mute; forgave human failings; and redeemed the world.

We have a blissful life waiting when we say goodbye to this present life. We must be aware that, before we came to earth, God had already visited earth as a human being and showed great human dignity toward sinners, the lonely, sick, vulnerable and needy and taught them God's

ways.

Jesus lived a simple life on earth and experienced every hardship for the sake of God's kingdom. Jesus was open to our cultures and traditions and lived among us except for sin.

We know our mission work is impossible without the people of God and their support and prayers. This is also an opportunity for missionaries to pray for you who provide financial support.

On behalf of our diocese, I welcome the missionaries who are ready to share their stories and mission activities with our parishes.

Mary, Queen of the Missions, pray for us!

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Night 2: "Internalizing the Mission of God" – Monday, April 25, 2022 (6:30-8:30 pm)

**Do you understand your life's true purpose?**  
Night 3: "Forming Disciples That Are Disciple Makers" – Tuesday, April 26, 2022 (6:30-8:30 pm)

**Register at:** [bit.ly/ParishMissionStJ](https://bit.ly/ParishMissionStJ)

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