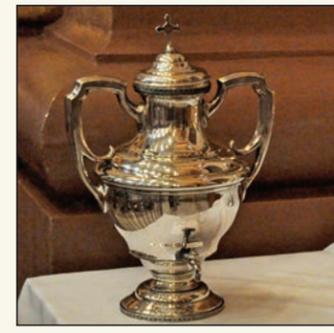




The

# Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



**'A big void'**

Priests, laity saddened by absence of chrism Mass, page 11.

CriterionOnline.com

April 17, 2020

Vol. LX, No. 27 75¢



*A prayer amid the pain*

As students at Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis, twins Eliza and Luke Leffler have found their prayers and their conversations with God increasing as they and all other high school seniors across the archdiocese deal with the coronavirus ending their hopes for prom, one last sports season and other activities and traditions of their senior year. (Submitted photo)

## Pope calls for a 'contagion' of Easter hope, peace, care for the poor

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In an Easter celebration like no other, Pope Francis prayed that Christ, “who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation,” would “dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.” The pope’s traditional Easter message before his blessing “*urbi et orbi*” (“to the city and the world”) still mentioned countries yearning for peace, migrants and refugees in need of a welcoming home and the poor deserving of assistance.



Pope Francis

But his Easter prayers on April 12 were mostly in the context of the suffering and death caused by the coronavirus and the economic difficulties the pandemic already has triggered.

The pope’s Easter morning Mass was unique; missing were dozens of cardinals concelebrating and tens of thousands of pilgrims from around the world packing St. Peter’s Square. Instead one cardinal—Cardinal Angelo Comastri, archpriest of St. Peter’s Basilica—and a dozen faithful sat inside, one in each pew, before the Altar of the Chair where the pope celebrated the liturgy.

Also missing were the more than 50,000 tulips, daffodils and flowering shrubs that growers in the Netherlands donate each year to turn into a garden the steps leading up to the basilica. Yet millions followed on television, by radio and by livestream as the Easter “Alleluia” was repeated and the Gospel account of the disciples finding the empty tomb was proclaimed both in Latin and in Greek.

In a clear sign of continuing prayers to God for the end of the pandemic, the sanctuary around the altar again was dominated by symbols of Romans’ faith in

See **POPE**, page 2

## High school seniors turn to God as pandemic ends their last spring together

By John Shaughnessy

The shock and devastation of losing the final months of his senior year in high school have slowly started to lessen for Luke Leffler.

And during this uncertain time of the coronavirus crisis, he has been praying that this continuing tragedy doesn’t get worse, adding extra prayers for his friends and family, especially his grandparents.

Still there are moments when his sadness returns in response to the understandable decision by Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb to close schools for the rest of the academic year because of the virus’ threat. In those moments, Luke’s thoughts focus on a series of

wishes, including a conversation he’d like to have with God.

The 17-year-old youth wishes that everything would have worked out for his family to take the first spring break vacation they would have had together in years—when he was looking forward to spending time with his older siblings who no longer live at home.

He wishes that he and his twin sister Eliza could have shared the stage together with their friends after all the practices, all the rehearsals of singing and dancing for the musical, *Newsies*—the spring theater production that was planned at Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. He wishes that he could have

enjoyed his last baseball season with his teammates, and that Eliza had the same opportunity in softball.

And maybe most of all, he just wishes he had these final weeks to walk into school, down the halls, into the classrooms and onto the field where he could count on sharing a smile, a laugh, a conversation or even just a hello with all the friends and teachers he has come to count on during these past four years.

Then there’s the conversation he wishes he could have with God.

“There are definitely times when you have a lot of questions for God, and this is one of my times,” says Luke, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

See **SENIORS**, page 10

## Follow the Risen Lord, transform the world



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

(Following is Archbishop Charles C. Thompson’s homily for the Easter Sunday liturgy celebrated on April 12 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.)

It is not supposed to be this way. An empty cathedral, empty churches, “stay in place,” people being diagnosed with a scary virus by the thousands, people dying by the hundreds here in 2020. This isn’t how Easter is supposed to be for Christians. Empty tomb, yes, but not places of worship.

The same would have been speculated among the Apostles and other disciples on that first Easter morning. Locked in a secret room together, in fear and trepidation, disillusioned and demoralized, they had to be thinking and saying to one another, “It’s not supposed to be this way.” The long-awaited Messiah, the Christ, was not supposed to go out like this—condemned as a criminal, mocked, humiliated, beaten, abandoned, crucified and killed. A showdown with evil, yes, but not defeat.

Perhaps this is yet another opportunity to stop thinking about how it is supposed to be on human terms, to be a bit more focused on the will of God. After all, from glorious

See **ARCHBISHOP**, page 2





Pope Francis delivers his Easter message “*urbi et orbi*” (“to the city and the world”) after celebrating Easter Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on April 12. The Mass was celebrated without the presence of the public due to the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

# POPE

continued from page 1

divine intervention: the icon “*Salus Populi Romani*” (“health of the Roman people”) and the “Miraculous Crucifix,” both of which were carried through the city centuries ago in times of plague.

As is customary, Pope Francis did not give a homily during the Mass, but offered his reflections before the “*urbi et orbi*” blessing.

Instead of standing on the central balcony of the basilica overlooking the square, he delivered the address from the gates leading to the tomb of St. Peter under the basilica’s main altar.

The Easter proclamation “Jesus Christ is risen! He is truly risen!” goes forth from “the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family,” the pope said. “In this night, the Church’s voice rings out: ‘Christ, my hope, is risen!’”

The proclamation of hope, new life and victory over death, he said, should be “a different ‘contagion,’ a message transmitted from heart to heart, for every human heart awaits this good news,” he said.

“This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish,” the pope said. “No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not bypass suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.”

The risen Jesus, he said, came forth from the grave still bearing the marks of his crucifixion, he said. “Let us turn our gaze to him that he may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity.”

Pope Francis prayed first of all for those directly affected by the coronavirus, especially the sick, those who have died and those mourning loved ones after not being able to say goodbye.

“May the Lord of life welcome the departed into his kingdom and grant comfort and hope to those still suffering,

especially the elderly and those who are alone,” he said. “May he never withdraw his consolation and help from those who are especially vulnerable, such as persons who work in nursing homes or live in barracks and prisons.”

Pope Francis also prayed for those suffering from solitude because of the pandemic, for those who have lost their jobs, for doctors and nurses treating the sick and for members of law enforcement, who are helping keep people safe.

“In these weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed,” he said. Some people have found it an opportunity to slow down, reflect and spend time with their families.

But, he said, for many others “this is also a time of worry about an uncertain future, about jobs that are at risk and about other consequences of the current crisis.”

The pope asked political leaders “to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities.”

When the whole world is suffering, he said, people must pay special attention to the poor, the homeless and refugees.

Pope Francis also called for the lifting of international sanctions imposed on certain countries to put pressure on them, but which now make the suffering of their people unbearable, and for a forgiveness, or at least reduction, of the foreign debt of the world’s poorest nations.

“May Christ our peace enlighten all who have responsibility in conflicts, that they may have the courage to support the appeal for an immediate global cease-fire in all corners of the world,” he prayed. The pope specifically mentioned Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinian territories and Ukraine.

“Indifference, self-centeredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time,” he said. Yet, “they seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives.

“We want to ban these words forever,” he said, and Easter is the time to start. †



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

No public events scheduled at this time.

## Court to hear Little Sisters and Catholic school cases by teleconference

WASHINGTON (CNS)—For the first time in its history, the Supreme Court announced on April 13 it will conduct 10 oral arguments by teleconference in May. Among the arguments it will hear are cases involving the Little Sisters of the Poor and California Catholic schools.

The court also will hear arguments in a case on access to President Donald J. Trump’s financial records.

Specific dates have not been announced for these cases, but the court said the arguments will take place between May 4-6 and May 11-13.

In announcing the decision to proceed with some of the arguments already postponed due to the stay-at-home guidelines in place with the coronavirus, the court said in a news release that it was “keeping with public health guidance in response to COVID-19” and that “the justices and counsel will all participate remotely.”

“The court anticipates providing a live audio feed of these arguments to news media,” the release said.

The last time the justices met publicly was on March 9. They have issued opinions on the court’s website and met by teleconference calls.

The court had initially been scheduled to hear arguments on April 29 in the case *Little Sisters of the Poor v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*. The sisters were returning to the high court because of state challenges to the Trump administration’s decision to allow religious employers to opt out of the Affordable Health Care’s contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization mandate.

The sisters are represented by Becket, a nonprofit religious liberty law firm, which also is representing Catholic schools in a case that was initially scheduled for April 1 oral arguments before it was postponed.

The combined cases, *Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru* and *St. James School v. Biel*, center on two California Catholic schools that were sued by the teachers they had fired who claimed they had been victims of job discrimination. †

# ARCHBISHOP

continued from page 1

beginning to bitter end, and beyond, Jesus remained keenly focused on the will of the Father in all things. In giving us the perfect prayer, the Our Father, He instructed us to do the same.

What may the Lord be desiring or doing for us in this given moment? This is not to say that God willed this pandemic on humanity. However, we might consider how the Lord may use this seeming tragedy to bring about further transformation in our world, our lives, our minds and hearts—he certainly did it with the cross. Just how is it supposed to be?

The Apostles were forced to ponder this very question in a very short period of time. As a result, their sadness and misery were transformed into incredulous joy and great rejoicing. Having been informed by Mary Magdalene about the empty tomb early on that first Easter morning, Peter and the beloved disciple ran to check everything out for themselves. Upon entering, still not yet able to understand what had taken place, we are told that the beloved disciple “saw and believed” (Jn 20:8).

Results of the Apostles later encountering the Risen Lord Jesus Christ on that first Easter Sunday are recorded in our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 10:34, 37-43). Peter, having moved from despair to hope to assurance, boldly proclaims

that Jesus Christ had been risen from the dead, commissioning him and the other disciples to give personal witness and preach the Good News to all people—the same commissioning, down to our own day. In his letter to the Colossians (Col 3:1-4), reminding us that we have been raised with Christ, Paul exhorts us to seek what is above, what is of God, rather than settling for merely what Earth has to offer.

Despite the sadness and hardship of not being able to gather as Church, the Body of Christ, the fact remains that this is Easter Sunday, the Day of Resurrection. Regardless of what we might think that it is supposed to be, we have cause to rejoice in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, who has conquered sin and death for our salvation.

Our faith continues to seek understanding the will of the Father, the mission of the Son and the guidance of the Spirit.

At some point, the Risen Lord will enable us to emerge from locked doors of confinement and gather again in His name. In the meantime, we continue to embrace Him, to pray for one another, to proclaim the Good News by the witness of our lives, and to persevere in faith and hope, even in assurance. This day above all, let our hearts and minds be raised with Him to what is above and beyond anything of this world.

This is indeed the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. Let us go forth this day in assurance: The Lord is Risen; our Salvation is at hand. Alleluia! †



### NEWS FROM YOU!

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion?  
E-mail us: [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

**Staff:**  
 Editor: Mike Krokos  
 Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy  
 Reporter: Sean Gallagher  
 Reporter: Natalie Hofer  
 Graphic Designer / Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans  
 Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



**Phone Numbers:**  
 Main office: 317-236-1570  
 Advertising: 317-236-1585  
 Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570  
 Circulation: 317-236-1585  
 Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1585

**Price:** \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

**Postmaster:**  
 Send address changes to *The Criterion*,  
 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

**Web site:** [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com)

**E-mail:** [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.  
 Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2020 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

*The Criterion* (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

1400 N. Meridian St.  
 Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367  
 317-236-1570  
 800-382-9836 ext. 1570  
[criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.  
 Copyright © 2020  
 Criterion Press Inc.

**POSTMASTER:**  
 Send address changes to:  
 Criterion Press Inc.  
 1400 N. Meridian St.  
 Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367



04/17/20

### Moving?

We'll be there waiting if you give us two weeks' advance notice!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

New Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note: If you are receiving duplicate copies please send both labels.

The Criterion • 1400 N. Meridian St. • Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

# Young adults face defining choice during crisis, faith leader says

By John Shaughnessy

Amid all the unknowns surrounding the coronavirus crisis, Madison Cipoletti is certain about the defining choice that people have at this moment in time.



Madison Cipoletti

choice that people have at this moment in time.

“We have two choices,” says Cipoletti, the director of young adult and college campus ministry for the archdiocese. “We can endure and let it pass by without

being changed, or we can go against the grain and let this time be a turning point in our faith lives.”

She then made reference to Pope Francis’ address to the world on March 27, when the pope described this period of the coronavirus pandemic as “a time to choose what matters and what

passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others.”

Cipoletti is choosing this time to keep her faith a priority, and even strive to deepen it. In hoping to help others do the same, she is sharing some of the ways that are benefiting her during this unsettling time.

For her, it starts with the online Masses that the archdiocese—[www.archindy.org](http://www.archindy.org)—and many parishes in central and southern Indiana are providing on Sunday and throughout the week.

She has chosen to participate in the online Masses of Father Rick Nagel, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The online Masses are available through the parish’s website at [www.stjohnsindy.org](http://www.stjohnsindy.org).

“Every weekday, St. John’s is livestreaming Mass at 12:10 p.m. [and 10 a.m. on Sunday],” she says. “Father Rick has pertinent homilies,

and it is a feeling of community and joy to see how many others are on the livestream. There’s an amazing feeling of communion with the larger Church, even if we’re all at our separate homes.”

Cipoletti also relies upon the podcast homilies of Father James Hudgins, pastor of St. Jude Parish in Fredericksburg, Va. His podcasts can be found at [www.fatherhudgins.com](http://www.fatherhudgins.com).

“Even before the coronavirus, Father Hudgins has been a source of spiritual encouragement and enlightenment for me,” she says. “He records the Gospel reading and his homily from daily and Sunday Masses. I *always* get nuggets of wisdom or insight that require deeper prayer and reflection—even from a five-minute daily Mass podcast.”

Another online resource she taps into is Lisa Cotter on Instagram, [www.instagram.com/lisaanncotter](http://www.instagram.com/lisaanncotter).

“She has multiple children, and she

is good at sharing how her family is prayerfully and spiritually living the quarantine time,” Cipoletti says. “She is sure to give you a lot of great ideas.”

Cipoletti especially recommends that young adults who want to deepen their faith join “virtual Emmaus groups” that are being offered through the archdiocese’s young adult and college campus ministry.

“I was previously a part of a weekly small group of women,” she says. “We have continued meeting virtually, and I look forward to it so much each week, and especially now with social distancing.

“It’s incredible to get to journey through this crisis with other women of faith, and process, struggle and pray through it all together.”

For anyone, male or female, interested in joining a young adult virtual group, contact Rebecca Kovert, event and volunteer coordinator of the archdiocese’s young adult and college campus ministry, at [rkovert@archindy.org](mailto:rkovert@archindy.org). †

# Youths are encouraged to connect with their faith community

By John Shaughnessy

As the director of youth ministry for the archdiocese, Paul Sifuentes believes that this time of quarantine is a valuable opportunity for teenagers to deepen their faith and strengthen the connections they already have with people who share their faith.



Paul Sifuentes

“In times like this, I would encourage everyone to connect with their faith community,” Sifuentes says. “We all have what the early Church called a ‘community of believers.’ Right now, it is important to connect with the community. Maybe that’s a teacher at school, an uncle, a youth minister, your pastor, a friend from youth group or from school. Whoever it is, reach out and check in.

“We are meant to live the faith with the Body of Christ. Reach out, and I am confident that will bring you great joy.” While Sifuentes says that seeking that personal connection with a faith community should come first, he also provided a list of online, faith-related resources for youths in the archdiocese to explore while they are quarantined at home.

Here are his recommendations:

## Music

Sifuentes notes that the Archindy Youth Ministry Spotify Channel “features playlists from local Indiana Catholic musicians as well as informative and engaging podcasts for young people.”

The channel is available at: [spoti.fi/3dNS7ca](https://spoti.fi/3dNS7ca).

## Video

For youths seeking a weekly video with reflections on the Sunday Mass readings, Sifuentes recommends this Life Teen website, [www.Summit.lifeteen.com/teen](http://www.Summit.lifeteen.com/teen).

“It is a great way to keep up with the liturgical rhythm of the Church,” he says.

## Sunday youth nights

Sifuentes suggested two youth night opportunities, starting with Online Catholic Youth Night: ProjectYM Live, which broadcasts at 8 p.m. Eastern time, at [projectym.com](http://projectym.com).

“It features an online icebreaker and amazing speakers each week. It tops off with the opportunity to praise with some great praise-and-worship musicians. Watch on your phone, and maybe even watch at the same time as a friend and text about it during the program.”

The other “Sunday youth night” opportunity is [LFTN.CO/LIFENIGHT](http://LFTN.CO/LIFENIGHT).

“This is a global youth meeting that happens live at 5 p.m. Eastern time

on YouTube,” Sifuentes notes. “It is a great way to hear a message directed to teens and find community in the chat room. Maybe you even watch it at the same time as your friends and then check in afterward. It runs about 30 minutes.”

## Instagram

In forming this list of people to follow on Instagram, Sifuentes says these sites “have been putting out great messages during this time of quarantine.”

• @archindyym: “Our office’s account has been sharing the inspiring content that is being put out there right

now. Definitely the first follow for a youth or someone who serves youth in the archdiocese.”

• @ncycofficial: “This account is sharing messages of hope and Gospel reflections from many of the speakers at NCYC [National Catholic Youth Conference].”

• @corazonpuronyc: “Father Augustino Torres was one of the emcees for NCYC. He has been sharing great insights.”

• @joemelendrez: “A Catholic performer with great music and a great message. He has been doing live ‘praise parties’ and sharing great insights on his stories.” †



GOD'S WORK  
*through*  
OUR HANDS

“For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45

For those who are blessed with economic security, if you have not already been doing so, please consider providing financial support to your parish in this critical time of need.

The Church stands as a beacon of hope in many communities, hope that does not so much radiate in the brick and mortar of a building as through the ministries and services provided by your parish.

Make your gift online today at [www.archindy.org/Giving](http://www.archindy.org/Giving)

**"Air Conditioner - Heat Pump - Furnace"**

Our staff has over 76 years of Catholic Education

**137<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sale**

137<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sale

FREE LABOR

On the installation of a FURNACE, HEAT PUMP OR AIR CONDITIONER

Cannot be combined with any other offer. Must be presented at time of order. EXPIRES: 05/01/20  
THIELE 639-1111

CALL TODAY!

639-1111

Still Locally Owned & Operated

WWW.CALLTHIELE.COM

137<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sale

1/2 OFF SERVICE CALL

Save \$45 with Paid Repair

Cannot be combined with any other offer. Must be presented at time of service. EXPIRES: 05/01/20 M-F 8-4  
THIELE 639-1111

137<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sale

FREE

10 YEAR WARRANTY ON PARTS & LABOR

90% Furnace, Heat Pump or High Efficiency Air Conditioner.

Cannot be combined with any other offer. Must be presented at time of order. EXPIRES: 05/01/20  
THIELE 639-1111

SERVING CENTRAL INDIANA

THIELE

Heating & Air Conditioning

SINCE 1883

18-5987722



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*  
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Greg A. Otolski, *Associate Publisher*  
John F. Fink, *Editor Emeritus*

## Editorial



Members of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Parish in New York City pray the rosary in Union Square Park on April 2, 2016, the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday that year. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

# 20th anniversary of the feast of Divine Mercy

This Sunday will mark the 20th anniversary of the official designation of the Sunday after Easter as the feast of Divine Mercy. Many Catholics, though, seem unaware of this feast.

Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus pandemic, the observance of the feast this year will have to be muted considerably. However, our parishes are doing what they can under the circumstances. See page 6 for a list of parishes that are livestreaming Divine Mercy services this year.

We believe that Jesus himself asked for this feast during appearances to a Polish nun, Sister Faustina Kowalska, beginning in 1931, but it wasn't accomplished until April 30, 2000. That was the date the Second Sunday of Easter fell in 2000. On that day, St. Pope John Paul II both canonized Sister Faustina and ordered that the feast be officially included in the Church's liturgical calendar.

St. John Paul II continued to promote Divine Mercy Sunday the rest of his life. In 2002, he granted plenary indulgences to those who participate in prayers in honor of the Divine Mercy.

He also died on the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2005, was beatified on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2011, and was canonized—along with Pope John XXIII—on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2014.

It seems that people to whom Jesus or Mary have appeared to and asked for favors always have a difficult time getting that accomplished. We think of St. Juan Diego at Guadalupe, or St. Bernadette at Lourdes, or the three children at Fatima. This was true, too, in the case of Sister Faustina.

She had her first vision of Jesus when she was 19, when she was at a dance. He instructed her to go to Warsaw, Poland, and join a convent. She tried to do that, but was continually turned down because, as she was told once, "We don't accept maids here," referring to her obvious poverty. But she was eventually accepted by a convent, provided that she could pay for her religious habit.

On Feb. 22, 1931, while she was in her cell in Plock, Poland, Jesus appeared to her dressed as he is in the painting above. He instructed Faustina to paint his image as he appeared, with the message, "Jesus, I trust in you." Then, he said, he wanted that image to be venerated throughout the world, and he promised, "The soul that

will venerate this image will not perish."

Not knowing how to paint, it took her three years to persuade an artist to paint the image under her assistance. By that time, she was assigned to Vilnius, then in Poland but now in Lithuania.

In Vilnius, she met Father Michael Sopocko, who became her confessor. She told him about her visions. Obviously doubtful, he insisted that she have a complete psychiatric evaluation by psychiatrist Hele Maciejewska. Sister Faustina was declared of sound mind.

Father Sopocko then supported her efforts and secured artist Eugene Kazimierowski to paint the image of Divine Mercy. He also instructed Sister Faustina to keep a diary of the conversations she had with Jesus, which she did and which has come down to us. Devotion to Divine Mercy began to spread in Poland.

Sister Faustina became ill in 1936, probably with tuberculosis. She died on Oct. 5, 1938, at age 33. She is now buried in Krakow's Basilica of Divine Mercy. Now it was up to Father Sopocko to spread the devotion.

World War II intervened and Father Sopocko went into hiding from the Nazis for two years. During that time, he wrote the constitution for a new Congregation of the Sisters of the Divine Mercy. But it wasn't until the Polish Archbishop Karol Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II that devotion to the Divine Mercy really began to spread in the universal Church.

We encourage our readers to learn to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet, which is said on a rosary. This prayer opens each decade: "Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world."

Then this prayer is repeated 10 times in succession for each decade: "For the sake of his sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world." For complete instructions on how to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet, go to [www.thedivinemercy.org](http://www.thedivinemercy.org), select "The Basics" then "Divine Mercy Chaplet."

As we mark Divine Mercy Sunday, may we all learn to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and make it a continual part of our lives of faith.

—John F. Fink

Sight Unseen/Brandon A. Evans

## On the path of the golden keys

My grandfather once said something that changed my life.

He wasn't even talking to me, and I didn't appreciate its real importance until many years later. Yet, of all the things he said, of all the things *he was*, that one moment bridged a gap between our lives and unlocked a door I didn't know was there.



It was back in the early '90s. My brother and I often spent a few weeks each summer with my grandparents, back when they still worked. Wilfred Schuetzenhofer was the son of Austrian immigrants, providing for his family as a supervisor at a plant that manufactured power transformers outside of St. Louis.

To me, he was larger than life: a hard worker, a good cook, stern when he had to be, unbelievably skilled with tools, jovial and, most of all, kind.

In looking up to him, I also knew that I could never reach the standard he set, and always considered myself made of lesser stuff than him.

Except for *one* night, when he said something so simple and so plain and so natural that it became as though an inheritance passed on to me; a word from the man I admired most besides my own father; a word to *forever* call me to remember my place.

We each have such stories, such moments: things that change us. Maybe it was the sight of something beautiful, or a sharp word of correction, or a dream, or even the grand, sweeping note of a piece of music that makes our eyes suddenly see beyond their dull horizon.

Nevertheless, such moments set us on a path. They are touchstones that define us, ultimately.

And so I would venture that there are in each of our lives things that can be best described as *golden keys*.

These golden keys are more than just insights, they are *proofs* of the existence of God—things our hearts sense are beyond

coincidence. They are a unique way that God shows us his presence: not in history, nor in the wonder of creation, nor in a book or a teaching or an argument, but written on the tapestry of *our own life*.

This miracle is only possible because the locks that the golden keys turn have been forged by a hundred different events that only we know; like living tissue, the sinews have twisted together until our souls, silently preparing for their fulfillment, have crafted an *absence* that only a certain moment can fill.

For me, that absence can be described as timidity. It can be expressed in virtue: kindness, an easy-going nature, obedience to just authority; but it is more often expressed in vice: a lack of direction, an unwillingness to lead, and worst of all, cowardice.

It was timidity I showed that night in front of my grandpa. One of his friends from the plant was over, and I was trying to convince him that, according to Albert Einstein, time slowed down the faster an object moved.

His friend wasn't having any of that nonsense from someone who was barely a teenager, and after going back and forth a couple of times with me, he said that I had no idea what I was talking about.

Even though I knew I was right, I immediately backed down. I felt ashamed for bringing up something so academic and ethereal, and thought for sure I'd embarrassed my grandfather.

But as I hung my head, and looked away, something happened.

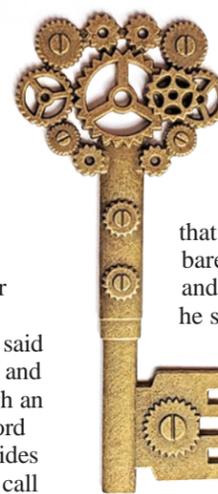
My grandfather, sitting in the recliner that welcomed him after each day's labor, turned his head quickly.

"Don't talk to him like that," he barked, rather seriously. "He's the smartest kid I know, and if he says it's true, then it is."

Those words stayed with me, even when I forgot them.

As my life went on, they proved that there was created, by the very weakness I hated, a pathway to overcoming it, made

See EVANS, page 11



Reflection/Natalie Hoefler

## A triple call to trust

I have a cousin who is an assistant principal of a high school in southern Indiana. We spoke the other day about



the effectiveness of e-learning as families shelter in place due to the coronavirus.

He commented that many of his school's students live in remote areas without Internet access, so e-learning has been a challenge.

"Next fall, teachers are going to have to teach things that kids didn't really learn this year," he said. "They can't move on with their own curriculum until the kids have that foundation of knowledge."

The same can be said of our spiritual journey and relationship with Christ: we can't really grow or move forward without a firm handle on some elements foundational to any relationship. For instance, trust in God.

Trust so essential to our relationship with God. Yet our inability to trust him is an obstinance with roots deep in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve just couldn't trust that God had their best interest at heart when he forbade them to eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Let's face it—lack of trust in God's commands has never brought good results. Look at the Hebrews in the Old Testament.

Their distrust in the goodness of God's laws and plans led to generations-worth of wandering, captivity and turmoil.

Not that we're much better, not even after God sent his only Son to die for our salvation. Such mistrust not only hurts us, but Christ as well. He said as much to a Polish nun in a series of visions in the 1930s.

The mistrust of "even chosen souls ... wounds My Heart!" she quoted Christ as saying in her chronicle of the visions, *The Diary of St. Faustina Kowalska*. "Remember my Passion, and if you do not believe My words, at least believe My wounds" (*Diary*, 379).

We stand now, in mid-April 2020, in the confluence of a triple call to trust.

First, just a few days ago we memorialized the salvation Christ won for us by his wounds, death and resurrection. He calls us to trust in that salvation and in the radical, all-consuming love for us that drove him to the cross.

Next, we're certainly being challenged to trust in God in the midst of the coronavirus crisis. We've been hit with a two-by-four of truth: that we, despite our efforts, are not in control. So much is uncertain now.

But it's through just such uncertainty that God beckons us to entrust to him our hopes, our plans, our loved ones and our lives. He calls us to believe what he told the prophet Jeremiah, that his plans are for our "welfare and not for harm, to give

See HOEFER, page 11



# Christ the Cornerstone

## Compassionate Jesus is the face of God's mercy

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time”* (1 Pt 1:3-5).

Happy Easter! After a long Lent, the sun is once again shining, and we are blessed with Easter joy!

The Second Sunday of Easter is also known as Divine Mercy Sunday. This is most appropriate because Easter celebrates the greatest act of divine mercy in human history. Our generous and merciful God has redeemed us by an extraordinary act of humility and self-sacrifice. By his wounds, we are healed. By his extreme suffering and his cruel death, all our sins are forgiven. By his glorious resurrection, we have been rescued and set free.

In the second reading for Divine Mercy Sunday (1 Pt 1:3-9), St. Peter tells us that Jesus' resurrection from the dead has given us “a new birth to a

living hope” (1 Pt 1:3). Not only that, St. Peter tells us that we will receive “an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1 Pt 1:4). This is the unfathomable mercy of God—not only to forgive our sins, but to grant us a reward “kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time” (1 Pt 1:4-5).

No wonder we shout for joy and sing “Alleluia” during this season of rejoicing. No wonder we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday with such heartfelt gratitude and joy!

The Gospel reading for this Sunday (Jn 20:19-31) tells us that Jesus not only forgave our sins, but he granted the power of forgiveness to his disciples and asked that they continue to share it with all who seek God's mercy. “Mercy toward a human life in a state of need is the true face of love,” Pope Francis has said, explaining that it is by loving another that one becomes a true disciple of Jesus and that the face of the Father is revealed. “Jesus is the Face of Mercy, the Face of the Father,” the pope tells us. When we forgive someone who has offended us, we become the face

of mercy in that situation. When we show genuine compassion to someone in need, we share with them the love that comes from our merciful Father in heaven.

Sunday's Gospel tells the familiar story of the “doubting Thomas.” According to St. John:

“Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’

But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe’” (Jn 20:24-25).

Many of us can understand Thomas' position. We are practical people and, as the saying goes, “seeing is believing.” But faith in Jesus requires much more than trusting the evidence of our senses. It demands that we encounter the risen Lord as he appears to us in new and different ways—in the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), in the Scriptures, in communion with and service to others (especially “the least of these,” our brothers and sisters).

Jesus, who is the face of mercy, has compassion on his unbelieving disciple. He shows Thomas his wounds saying: “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe” (Jn 20:27). As with Thomas and the other disciples, Jesus goes out of his way to be present to us, to greet us warmly with “Peace be with you,” and to invite us to believe in him even if we have not seen him with our own eyes.

God's mercy always gives us a second chance to encounter Jesus and to believe in him. No matter how skeptical or doubtful we may be; no matter how far we have strayed from the experience of communion with Christ in and through his Church; and no matter how seriously we have sinned, Jesus always reaches out to us with open arms. He embraces us and invites us to experience his friendship and his forgiveness.

We're right to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday during the Easter season. Let's rejoice in God's mercy this Easter by encountering Jesus in the holy Eucharist, in his sacred word and in our love for one another. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## Jesús compasivo es el rostro de la misericordia de Dios

*“Bendito sea el Dios y Padre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, quien según Su gran misericordia, nos ha hecho nacer de nuevo a una esperanza viva, mediante la resurrección de Jesucristo de entre los muertos, para obtener una herencia incorruptible, inmaculada, y que no se marchitará, reservada en los cielos para ustedes. Mediante la fe ustedes son protegidos por el poder de Dios, para la salvación que está preparada para ser revelada en el último tiempo”* (1 Pe 1:3-5).

¡Feliz Pascua de Resurrección! Después de una larga Cuaresma, ¡el sol brilla nuevamente y somos bendecidos con la alegría de la Pascua!

El segundo domingo de Pascua se conoce también como el domingo de la Divina Misericordia, lo cual resulta especialmente adecuado porque la Pascua celebra el mayor acto de misericordia divina de la historia de la humanidad. Nuestro Dios generoso y misericordioso nos ha redimido mediante un acto extraordinario de humildad y autosacrificio. Mediante sus heridas, fuimos sanados; a través de su enorme sufrimiento y su muerte cruel todos nuestros pecados han sido perdonados. A través de esta gloriosa resurrección hemos sido rescatados y liberados.

En la segunda lectura del domingo de la Divina Misericordia (1 Pe 1:3-9),

san Pedro nos dice que la resurrección de Jesús de entre los muertos nos “ha hecho nacer de nuevo a una esperanza viva” (1 Pe 1:3). Y no solo eso: san Pedro nos dice que recibiremos “una herencia incorruptible, inmaculada, y que no se marchitará” (1 Pe 1:4). Así es la inmensa misericordia de Dios: no solo perdona nuestros pecados sino que nos concede una recompensa “reservada en los cielos para ustedes [...] mediante la fe ustedes son protegidos por el poder de Dios, para la salvación que está preparada para ser revelada en el último tiempo” (1 Pe 1:4-5).

Con razón exclamamos llenos de alegría y cantamos el aleluya durante esta temporada de regocijo. ¡Con razón celebramos el domingo de la Divina Misericordia con una alegría y un agradecimiento tan profundos!

La lectura del Evangelio de este domingo (Jn 20:19-31) nos dice que Jesús no solamente perdonó nuestros pecados sino que concedió el poder del perdón a sus discípulos y les pidió que siguieran compartiéndolo con todos los que busquen la misericordia divina. “La misericordia hacia una vida humana en estado de necesidad es el verdadero rostro del amor,” ha dicho el papa Francisco para explicar que a través del amor hacia el prójimo nos volvemos verdaderos discípulos de Jesús y se revela el rostro del Padre. “Jesús es el rostro de la misericordia,

el rostro del Padre,” nos dice el papa. Cuando perdonamos a alguien que nos ha ofendido nos convertimos en el rostro de la misericordia en esa situación; cuando demostramos genuina compasión hacia alguien necesitado, compartimos con ellos el amor que proviene de nuestro Padre misericordioso en el cielo.

El Evangelio del domingo nos presenta el relato conocido de Tomás el incrédulo. Según san Juan:

“Tomás, uno de los doce, llamado el Dídimo, no estaba con ellos cuando Jesús vino. Entonces los otros discípulos le decían: ‘¡Hemos visto al Señor!’ Pero él les dijo: ‘Si no veo en Sus manos la señal de los clavos, y meto el dedo en el lugar de los clavos, y pongo la mano en Su costado, no creeré’” (Jn 20:24-25).

Muchos de nosotros podemos comprender la postura de Tomás; somos personas prácticas y, tal como dice el dicho “ver para creer.” Pero la fe en Jesús requiere mucho más que creer en la evidencia que nos presentan nuestros sentidos. Exige que encontremos al Señor resucitado según se nos presenta en formas distintas y nuevas: en los sacramentos (especialmente en la eucaristía), en las escrituras, en la comunión con otros y en el servicio al prójimo (especialmente a los «más pequeños de nuestros hermanos»).

Jesús, que es el rostro de la misericordia, muestra compasión hacia su discípulo incrédulo. Muestra sus heridas a Tomás y le dice: “Acerca aquí tu dedo, y mira Mis manos; extiende aquí tu mano y métela en Mi costado; y no seas incrédulo, sino creyente” (Jn 20:27). Al igual que con Tomás y los demás discípulos, Jesús hace lo indecible estar presente para nosotros, para saludarnos con un cálido “la paz sea contigo” e invitarnos a creer en él, aunque no lo hayamos visto con nuestros propios ojos.

La misericordia de Dios siempre nos da una segunda oportunidad para encontrar a Jesús y creer en él, sin importar cuán escépticos o recelosos seamos, sin importar cuánto nos hayamos separado de la experiencia de la comunión con Cristo en la Iglesia y a través de esta, e independientemente de la gravedad de nuestros pecados, Jesús siempre nos recibe con los brazos abiertos. Nos abraza y nos invita a vivir la experiencia de su amistad y su perdón.

Resulta muy acertado que celebremos el domingo de la Divina Misericordia durante la temporada de la Pascua. Alegrémonos en la misericordia de Dios durante la Pascua mediante el encuentro con Jesús en la sagrada eucaristía, en la Palabra y en nuestro amor por el prójimo. †

# Pandemic leads to missing the Eucharist, treasured family memories and a shout-out to technology

Compiled by Natalie Hoefler

We asked readers of *The Criterion* to share how they are staying connected to their faith and faith communities with the coronavirus pandemic that has impacted all corners of the globe, including in central and southern Indiana.

Here are some of their responses.

## 'Jesus is always with me'

In these uncertain times with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are fortunate to have the technology to be able to attend Mass online. As I am attending these Masses, I realize how much I miss receiving Communion. I have always had a soft spot for Jesus.

When I was a little girl, attending Mass with my parents at my home parish in Richmond, I would cry because Jesus was at the front of church and I could not go up to be with Jesus. As an adult, there were times when I would not be allowed to receive Communion, and I would cry at Mass because I could not be with Jesus.

I enjoyed my 15 years as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion, helping distribute Communion during Masses in Richmond and Knightstown.

And as I am attending Mass online, I get a little weepy and feel the tears well up in my eyes, as I am not able to receive Communion.

The absence of physical Communion, not being able to receive the body and blood of Christ, makes me realize the personal relationship with Jesus that I have. Jesus is always with me, whether as a crucifix on my wall, the soft spot in my heart, or spiritual Communion.

Mary Catherine Kinnevey  
St. Anne Parish, New Castle

## Memory of a past quarantine-like time

My son teaches art at Noblesville High School [in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese]. He sometimes tells the kids stories from when he was growing up. He calls them "Mr. Smith stories."

While the students are learning from home, he gives them assignments, and the kids report back to him. One boy reported back to him, and then asked him to tell a "Mr. Smith story."

My son told me he said to the student, "I went through a time like you, when the schools were closed. It was a big snowstorm we now call the Blizzard of '78." He told me he told the boy what he remembered most about being out of school for so long. My husband and I decided to re-do the kitchen cabinets, since we were stuck inside. We took the cabinets down, took off the varnish, sanded them down, re-varnished them and put them back up. That's what he remembered about that time.

I have a daughter who has been using this time to go through and sort old photos and movies.

I hope other people write in. I would like to read other people's stories.

Marcella Smith  
Holy Spirit Parish, Indianapolis

## 'Technology has been a blessing'

I'm a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, and I have to say—I've been so impressed with my parish's efforts to keep the faith community connected digitally during this unprecedented time.

Like many parishes, St. Monica's devoted priests and staff members have made possible the blessing of the Mass seven days a week via livestream.

They have also livestreamed the rosary

each day from a different area of the parish campus, giving parishioners a glimpse of familiar and much-missed sights within the church and around the grounds.

"Zoom" has become the technology buzzword of the time. Accordingly, the parish has offered young adult meet-ups via Zoom.

But my favorite form of creative connection St. Monica has offered are livestreamed how-to sessions via the parish's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/saintmonicaindy](http://www.facebook.com/saintmonicaindy), under "Videos").

Trying to watch your money? Watch St. Monica School principal Eric Schommer as he demonstrates how to change the oil on a car. Or take notes as parish pastor Father John McCaslin explains how to make pizza with items typically found in every kitchen. And cook along with St. Monica Parish secretary extraordinaire Julia Gonzalez as she teaches how to make fish tacos and tortillas.

And to keep viewers focused on faith, each video includes Scripture readings, information about a saint and prayer petitions.

I've heard it mentioned in numerous talk-radio broadcasts and news analysis shows: We will emerge from this crisis with far more knowledge, capability and creativity on the digital front. Such technology has certainly been a blessing in keeping Catholics connected during this challenging time.

Natalie Hoefler  
St. Monica Parish, Indianapolis

## How are you coping with COVID-19?

During this time of uncertainty and church closings because of the coronavirus, *The Criterion* is inviting our readers to share their ideas and stories about how individuals



Father John McCaslin, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, welcomes viewers to his Facebook livestreamed session on how to make pizza from items found in most kitchen cabinets. (Courtesy [www.facebook.com/pg/saintmonicaindy](http://www.facebook.com/pg/saintmonicaindy))

and families are coping and maybe even thriving; how you are still trying to create a sense of community among your friends, neighbors and fellow parishioners in this period of social distancing; and also how you are using this time to become closer to God. By sharing your ideas and stories, from the humorous to the poignant, maybe you'll inspire someone else to do the same or, at the least, create another welcomed human connection for all of us. Send your stories and ideas to reporter Natalie Hoefler at [nhoefler@archindy.org](mailto:nhoefler@archindy.org). Or leave her a message on her work phone at 317-236-1486 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1486, and she'll return your call as soon as possible. †

## Several parishes to livestream Divine Mercy Sunday services on April 19

Livestreamed Divine Mercy Sunday prayer services on April 19 reported to *The Criterion* as of April 13 are as follows:

All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, 3 p.m.  
• [bit.ly/2w4yKdI](https://bit.ly/2w4yKdI) (YouTube)

• [shorturl.at/mnpX5](https://shorturl.at/mnpX5) (Facebook)  
• [twitter.com/AllParish](https://twitter.com/AllParish) (Twitter)  
• TV: Local Chanel 905

St. Joseph Parish, Shelbyville, 3 p.m. (bilingual)  
• [www.facebook.com/stjoeshelby](https://www.facebook.com/stjoeshelby)

Holy Family Parish, New Albany, 3 p.m.  
• [www.facebook.com/HolyFamilyCatholic](https://www.facebook.com/HolyFamilyCatholic)

St. Paul Parish, Tell City, and St. Mark Parish, Perry County, 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT  
• [bit.ly/2UBa6L9](https://bit.ly/2UBa6L9) (YouTube)

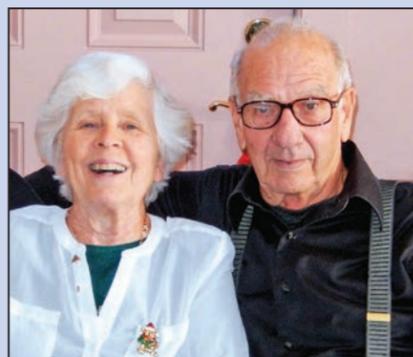
Prince of Peace Parish, Madison, 3 p.m.  
• [shorturl.at/gCOX4](https://shorturl.at/gCOX4) (Facebook)

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood, 10 a.m.  
• [zoom.us/j/712954744](https://zoom.us/j/712954744)  
• Phone: 312-626-6799, enter meeting ID 712954744 †

St. Ann Parish, Indianapolis, 2:15 p.m.  
• [www.facebook.com/stannindy](https://www.facebook.com/stannindy)  
• [www.st-ann-rcindy.org](https://www.st-ann-rcindy.org)

### VIPs

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to [bit.ly/2M4MQms](https://bit.ly/2M4MQms) or call 317-236-1585.



**Frank and Marlene (Kreiner) Deutsch**, members of St. Michael Parish, in Brookville, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on April 23. The couple was married in St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Reading, Ohio, on April 23, 1960.

They have five children: Lynn Brown, Paula Sizemore, Andy, Chris and Steve Deutsch.

The couple also has 13 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. †



**Dennis and Connie (Obermeyer) Harmeyer**, members of St. Louis Parish, in Batesville, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 18.

The couple was married in St. Louis Church on April 18, 1970.

They have two children, Angela Hartman and Scot Harmeyer.

They will celebrate with a Mass and reception at a later date. †



Proud supporter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Marian University Founders Classic Golf Outing honoring the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana

September 22, 2020  
Prairie View Golf Course

[Marian.edu/FoundersClassic](http://Marian.edu/FoundersClassic)

McNULTY



Providing assistance for all of your real estate needs

317-507-0688

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

Brokers • Attorney • Investment Advisors

# Faith *Alive!*

A supplement to Catholic newspapers published by Catholic News Service, 3211 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. All contents are copyrighted © 2020 by Catholic News Service.

## Renaissance artist Raphael created timeless masterpieces for the Church

By Shemaiah Gonzalez

This year marks the 500th anniversary of artist Raphael's death. This painter would glean the best qualities of his contemporaries, Leonardo and Michelangelo, to create a style all his own. His elegance carried him to work in aristocratic courts, churches and for two popes.

His depictions of Christ grasped both his divinity and humanity, and has captured our imagination. And he accomplished all this before his death at age 37.

### Early years

Raffaello Sanzio (or Santi), and known simply as Raphael, was born in 1483 in Urbino, Italy. In his family, art was a passion as his father was a court painter to the Duke of Urbino. Urbino was a cultured and vibrant town where the duke praised lovely manners above all else.

Learning to be a gentleman was part of the education Raphael received at a young age working alongside his father in his art workshop. These manners proved helpful in his future career.

Young Raphael showed talent and was given an apprenticeship to Umbria master Pietro Perugino at the young age of 8. Orphaned by age 11, Raphael continued his studies with Perugino while he co-managed his father's workshop with his stepmother.

By age 17, Raphael finished his education and was considered a "master." He was in high demand from the start of his career, taking commissions in churches and courts in central Italy.

### Florence

In 1504, Raphael went to study in Florence with a letter of recommendation from the Duke of Urbino's mother, ensuring that he would meet all the right people. Leonardo da Vinci was working in Florence during this time.

As Raphael studied Leonardo's work, his own painting style began to blossom. Raphael's painting "Madonna del Granduca" shows this development and Leonardo's influence. Raphael employed his technique, known as "*sfumato*," in which the transition between colors are softened. This technique eliminated harsh outlines and made the image more believable to the viewer.



A tapestry titled "Miraculous Catch" by Renaissance master Raphael is pictured in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican on Feb. 21. Ten enormous tapestries by Raphael were displayed in celebration of the 500th anniversary of his death in 1520. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

### Rome

Four years later, an architect, Bramante, from Raphael's hometown of Urbino, was entrusted with the construction of the new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. He invited Raphael to work alongside him. Bramante introduced Raphael to Pope Julius II, and thus began the work that would define Raphael's career. Raphael was just 26 years old.

For the next decade, Raphael worked almost exclusively for the Church, producing nearly 100 works of art, serving as chief architect from 1514-1520 for both Pope Julius II and Pope Leo X.

Raphael's portrayal of the Madonna and child brought a new tenderness and humanity to both mother and son. In his "Madonna of Loreto," Mary plays a game with her veil with the Christ Child, and in "The Bridgewater Madonna," the two look lovingly at one another. And in his most famous, "Sistine Madonna," both look out at viewers with eyes that beg them to come closer.

Raphael painted an adult Christ with a balance of both tranquility and embodiment. This can be best found in his images for tapestries commissioned by Pope Leo X, "The Miraculous Catch." Christ sits composed and peaceful at the head of the boat, while the Apostles bustle in frenzy about him.

Raphael's "The School of Athens" has long been considered his masterpiece. Commissioned by Pope Julius II, the painting is the personification of the classical spirit of the Renaissance.



Raphael painted "The Niccolini-Cowper Madonna" in 1508. He painted many images of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Christ Child that caught the imagination of viewers for centuries. (CNS photo/National Gallery of Art)

In the work, which is now part of the Vatican Museums, nearly every eminent Greek philosopher can be found, gathered about the central figures of Plato and Aristotle, as well as greatest mathematicians and scientists, learning, sharing and teaching one another.

Michelangelo had been working in Rome at the same time and grew to despise the younger, up-and-coming Raphael. After seeing Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, Raphael gleaned the older artist's dramatic poses and groupings of his figures and learned from them, using these techniques in his "School of Athens."

Michelangelo's scorn for the young artist was widely known, as was his cantankerous temper. Raphael got the last laugh, painting him as the acrid philosopher, Heraclitus, pouting at the foot of the steps in "The School of Athens." He even added the brown boots Michelangelo reportedly slept in, so there would be no missing him.

After a swift mysterious illness, Raphael died on Good Friday in 1520, which may also have been his birthday. He was 37 years old. He was able to

confess sins and receive last rites.

His funeral was sizeable and held at the Vatican. Four cardinals served as pallbearers and Pope Leo X reportedly kissed his hand farewell. He is buried at the Pantheon in Rome.

### Legacy

Sir Joshua Reynolds, and 18th-century English artist, said of Raphael:

"The excellency of this extraordinary man lay in the propriety, beauty and majesty of his characters, his judicious contrivance of his composition, correctness of drawing, purity of taste and the skillful accommodation of other men's conceptions to his own purpose."

Raphael changed the art world with his supple poses, and transformed the way we view the Blessed Virgin Mary with his tender and loving portrayals. Raphael absorbed the beauty the Renaissance had to offer, and let us see it through his eyes.

(Shemaiah Gonzalez is a freelance writer. Her website is [www.shemaiahgonzalez.com](http://www.shemaiahgonzalez.com).) †

## Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Cheryl McSweeney

## We are all being called to a different kind of silence

Here I am, sitting at home, during a pandemic. It's Holy Week. I'm supposed to be at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat



House in Indianapolis, hosting a day of silence, enjoying Mass and embracing silence with others that feel called to it.

Instead, we've all been called to another sort of silence.

Many people are being called to the

silence of their homes, living alone, others called to the silence of their hands, suddenly stilled and without work. Many are feeling the call of silence in the form of fear, anxiety and sadness. So many feel like they are not living without the "busy" of life.

I would like to share a little secret with you since we are all here in this space together: Slowing down and embracing silence is sacred and should be cherished.

I've been walking each morning since this all started, and I've noticed so many

things that I've never noticed before because I was always rushing through my days. There are horses about a quarter of a mile from my house; willow trees blowing in the wind are like pieces of art; I have way too many "things" in my house; a yellow pansy can hold about 100 shades of yellow in one petal; an approaching rainstorm still smells amazing; simply watching water move is incredibly relaxing; and watching a bee pollinate a flower is absolutely fascinating.

"Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10).

It is a phrase that is often stated, especially during times of great stress. However, when you really study this Scripture, you find out that it's not just about slowing down and letting God be God. It's more of a wake-up call to all of us. To me, it says, stop what you are doing and spend time being in awe of all that God is.

When I tell people that we offer "Days of Silence" at Fatima, the typical reaction is one of denial. "I could never do that!" In

all honesty, I used to be one of those people until I started to experience the silence. I don't know if I was afraid of what I would hear God say, or if I could ever get my mind to slow down long enough to listen, but what I have found is absolute peace in the silence. I understand why people crave it now. It provides an intimacy with our God in a way I never knew possible.

We believe that people are called by God to do different things. We are all being called to a new and different kind of silence right now. We may not be able to embrace one another right now, but I hope that we can all find a way to embrace this gift of time, of change, of stillness, to grow closer to our God, our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

When this all passes, and it will, please know that you are always welcome to come to Fatima to find that place of stillness yet again.

(Cheryl McSweeney is associate director of operations at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis.) †

## For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

## Choose what matters in life

It is "time to choose what matters and what passes away," Pope Francis told us on March 27 when he spoke from the Vatican.



Like millions around the Earth, I tuned in to hear the pope deliver his blessing to the world. Globally, we pandemic-besieged souls gathered around screens and on a

multitude of devices to form a community with a leader who exuded moral authority and hope.

And what did we see and hear?

Visually, it was stunning. For those who have been in St. Peter's Square when it was crowded—and of course, prior to this pandemic, when was it not?—it was moving to see the solitary figure of Pope Francis walking alone through the rain, without an umbrella, slowly mounting the stairs to a small covered platform. Empty, rain-glistened pavement stretched behind him to the streets of Rome.

The emptiness was interrupted only by a solitary person or a couple scurrying by—perhaps a technician or a cameraman or residents of Vatican City?

The pope walked crookedly as if favoring one side of his body. Someone said he has sciatica.

He chose, symbolically, to speak as Roman dusk fell. The theme, from the Gospel of Mark 4:35-41, was Jesus calming the sea after the terrified disciples awaken him. The chapter begins by telling us evening has arrived. Indeed, as we listened to the pope, darkness descended fully over the Vatican.

And the rain steadily fell. Once, in 2001, I covered a ceremony at the Vatican where our new archbishop was receiving his pallium with other archbishops from around the world, and the square was packed.

Suddenly, the sky darkened ominously, and a violent June cloudburst erupted. Waves of water rolled down through the square. Nuns in black garb picked up chairs and put them over their heads.

I couldn't help but think of that violent storm, like the one the disciples experienced in the sea, as the pope walked in solitude through the soft rain. It fell gently, as if the heavens themselves were weeping along with our plight.

"For weeks now, it has been evening," the pope began, carrying on the theme of this dark moment in our history. We notice the darkness even in the air, he said. "We notice it in people's gestures, their glances give them away."

I thought of my furtive forays to the grocery store, where the usual Midwestern friendliness has been replaced by serious demeanors and, yes, quick glances to decide how best to negotiate around each other so we don't come too close.

Pope Francis spoke of Jesus standing in the stern, "the part of the boat that sinks first." Jesus, courageous, offering hope and connectivity.

"No one reaches salvation by themselves," Pope Francis reminded us.

But he also spoke of our connection to the Earth.

"We were not shaken awake by wars or injustice across the world, nor did we listen to the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet."

We lived, the pope reminded us, "thinking we would stay healthy in a world that is sick."

Many nights, when I have trouble sleeping, I join Jesus in the boat, the only time in Scripture, said Pope Francis, when we see him sleep. I have tried to find peace and consolation in his calming presence. When all of this is over, I pray that Jesus will help us do better at choosing what really matters.

(Effie Caldarola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

## That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

## Let us honor what is true and good in other religions

Last month, I wrote about the celebration of Passover (April 8-16). I noted as well the concurrent Christian celebration of



Holy Week and the Great Three Days (April 5-12). As you read this, Passover has ended. The Easter season is unfolding until its conclusion on Pentecost (May 31).

Quickly coming upon the heels of Passover and

overlapping our Easter season are two other religious observances of major worldwide religions: Ramadan and Vesakh.

The Muslim month of Ramadan will commence on April 24 and extend to May 23. This annual observance from dawn to sunset the entire month will witness Muslims refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sexual relations. They will also work hard to refrain from any sinful behavior such as lying, cursing, false speech and negative emotions like anger.

As I noted last year, these practices are to teach the true meaning of perseverance and tolerance. In addition, generous support of the poor marks this period. It is believed that the rewards of all Good Deeds (praying, giving charity) are increased during the month of Ramadan.

Ramadan concludes with Eid al-Fitr. This festival's first day begins during the evening of Saturday, May 23, and ends during the evening of Sunday, May 24. Muslims are not permitted to fast on this day. The festival extends for three days. On these days, Muslims share in Eid prayers, charity, social gatherings, festive meals and gift-giving. Perhaps one of your Muslim friends will invite you to a festive meal!

Vesakh, or Vesak, is a major festival among Buddhists. It recalls the birth, enlightenment and death of Gautama Buddha (also known as Siddhartha), the founder of Buddhism. Tradition says that all three events happened on the same day of the calendar throughout his life. The festival is observed usually on a Sunday during the first full moon of May.

Buddhists live all over the world. Regionally, there are Buddhist temples, centers and monasteries in Indianapolis, Bloomington, Louisville, Cincinnati and Dayton. But the majority live in southeast Asia.

As one can imagine, how this variety of cultures observe Vesak varies. Yet, there are commonalities. Typically, Buddhists gather in their temples at the break of dawn on Vesak. While there, they meditate on all the religious precepts of Buddhism: embracing celibacy, speaking wisely, honoring life and showing generosity to their fellow citizens.

Over the three days of Vesak, offerings of candles and flowers are often made. These gifts show that life is fleeting. In many places, the people hang and give away flags of Buddha. The lighting of lanterns and releasing them into the sky is another common practice. Similarly, the setting free of caged birds takes place.

Other religious practices bring happiness to other people: the ceremonial washing of a Buddha statue, paying homage to Buddha and giving to the poor or underprivileged.

These practices, in part, reflect the great respect that Buddhism encourages its adherents to have for humanity and nature.

We Roman Catholics share this respect for life in nature. Pope Francis has named this a priority for us ("Laudato Si", on Care for Our Common Home"). We ourselves have a day—on Sept. 1—when we are in solidarity with our Orthodox brothers and sisters in praying for creation.

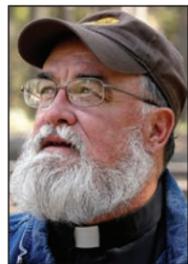
We honor what is true and good in all religions. Perhaps our getting to know more about Buddhism can provide us a link to others who love what God has made.

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan office of ecumenism and interreligious affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.) †

## Guest Column/Fr. Richard Malloy, S.J.

## 'Spiritual Communion' reminds us God's love is present

"Sacraments are those signs that achieve in human hearts and lives what they signify to human minds," University of Notre



Dame theologian Jesuit Father Brian Daley once said.

At this time of the coronavirus pandemic, most are unable to receive physically the Eucharist, the sacrament of holy Communion at Mass.

Some want to know what is meant by "spiritual Communion."

Let's start at the beginning. God loves us. God constantly and continually creates and sustains us. God wants to be with us on the journey of life, wants to save us from sin and wants to bring us to the fullness of peace and joy where we will be with him and our loved ones for all eternity.

St. Athanasius put it best in the fourth century: "For the Son of God became man so that we might become God."

Baptism starts off this lifelong process. Other sacraments accompany us on life's journey. The Eucharist is the primary way Jesus instituted that connects us with the

reality of God's active love in our lives.

That divine love transforms us interiorly and that divine love is present in and through our loving relationships with others. We open ourselves to awareness of God's transformative love when we pray.

There is a tangible concreteness and comforting reality to Jesus the Christ, Lord and Savior, brother and companion, really present in the consecrated body and blood under the forms of bread and wine.

And the reality of that presence is known even when we cannot be physically present at Mass, and maybe most witness and pray along with the Mass while viewing television. We can prayerfully trust the faith fact that Jesus wants to enter into our minds and hearts and achieve in our lives the reality of love, in much the same way as when we can receive the reality physically.

We also know that Christ is really present in four ways during the eucharistic liturgy: 1) in the word proclaimed; 2) in the people gathered; 3) in the consecrated bread and wine; and 4) in the person of the presider. So Mass via TV or Internet leaves us with three of the four!

We often love across time and space.

Just think. A spouse away on a trip loves across time and space. Parents who have died and gone before us are loved and love us across time and space. From the depths of the reality that is heaven, we are loved.

At Mass, we are deeply connected with all our loved ones, and with all with whom we are in communion through all history. That's what we mean by the communion of the saints.

Spiritual Communion is a trust and an awareness, a prayer and an acceptance, that God's love is really present when we accept Jesus as we witness the sacramental reality of holy Communion, even when we can only be as present as our television screen allows.

God's grace can work through and transcend electronic communication. Through our spiritual Communion, the reality of Jesus and the Father's transformative love, in and through the Holy Spirit, is operative and present in our minds and hearts.

(Jesuit Father Richard Malloy is director of mission and ministry at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Baltimore. He is author of the book Being on Fire: The Top Ten Essentials of Catholic Faith.) †

Divine Mercy Sunday/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 19, 2020

- Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47
- 1 Peter 1:3-9
- John 20:19-31

As almost always in the Easter season, the Acts of the Apostles furnishes the Eucharist with its first reading.



Acts claims to be, and scholars assume it indeed to be, the work of the Evangelist who wrote St. Luke's Gospel. This book, therefore, may properly be regarded as a continuation of the story presented in Luke's Gospel, which

close with the ascension of Jesus. Acts then begins at this point.

As it progresses, Acts traces for some years the development of the infant Church, describing the plight and behavior of its first members. It provides a fascinating insight into the formation of the Church's structure, as well as a powerful lesson in the basic beliefs of the early Christians.

Acts also gives great examples of unequalled faith and of human ignorance and treachery.

In this weekend's reading, the teachings of the Apostles and love for the Lord and adherence to him were central to the lives of the first Christians. They met for the "breaking of the bread," an ancient term for the Eucharist (Acts 2:46).

Love for others, in the model of Jesus, was more than a platitude or vague ideal. The first Christians assisted the poor so fervently that they sold their property and donated the proceeds to help the needy.

The first Christians revered the Apostles because Jesus had personally called them and commissioned them to continue the work of salvation. They had literally seen and heard the Risen Lord.

The first Epistle of St. Peter supplies the second reading, defining what being a Christian means.

Through Christ, God has given us a "new birth" and reason for hope

(1 Pt 1:3). Considering our human limitations and the consequences of our sins, it is a most wonderful gift.

Each believer, however, must receive and confirm this gift by loving Jesus completely, by trusting and being faithful to him.

The epistle is frank. Even many of the first Christians never saw Jesus in the flesh. We have not. We must ask for strong faith.

The Gospel reading for this weekend is from St. John. It is a resurrection narrative, a story with which most Christians are quite familiar, recalling the dismay among the followers of Jesus when they found the empty tomb. Where had the body of the Lord been taken?

This reading answers the question. The body of the Lord has been taken nowhere. Jesus lives! The encounter with the doubting, demanding Thomas affirms this fact.

Resurrection from the dead is stunning, but Jesus further acts as God by conferring the very power of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, granting them the authority to forgive sins. He sends them to the four corners of the world to bring redemption to all humanity.

Passing through locked doors as if they were thin air, Jesus greeted the Apostles with "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:21, 26). Jesus makes clear that peace only is in God.

## Reflection

This weekend, the Church calls its people to have faith and to rejoice. Resurrection and redemption in Jesus refer not to memories of times long ago, but living realities for us to experience here and now.

It is time for us now to find consolation and strength in Jesus, the crucified and risen, living still.

We observe Divine Mercy Sunday on this Second Sunday of Easter. Divine Mercy is with us in and through Jesus, the Risen, the Son of God. It gives us hope, purpose and strength.

While sin and human limitation present obstacles, often considerable, in our progress toward God the Lord left us the Apostles and their successors in the Church. The Lord lives! He lives today, where we are, for us all, and for each of us individually. †

## Daily Readings

Monday, April 20

Acts 4:23-31

Psalm 2:1-9

John 3:1-8

Tuesday, April 21

St. Anselm, bishop and doctor of the Church

Acts 4:32-37

Psalm 93:1-2, 5

John 3:7b-15

Wednesday, April 22

Acts 5:17-26

Psalm 34:2-9

John 3:16-21

Thursday, April 23

St. George, martyr

St. Adalbert, bishop and martyr

Acts 5:27-33

Psalm 34:2, 9, 17-20

John 3:31-36

Friday, April 24

St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, priest and martyr

Acts 5:34-42

Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14

John 6:1-15

Saturday, April 25

St. Mark, Evangelist

1 Peter 5:5b-14

Psalm 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17

Mark 16:15-20

Sunday, April 26

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14, 22-33

Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-11

1 Peter 1:17-21

Luke 24:13-35

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

### The sacrament of the anointing of the sick cannot be delegated to a medical worker

**Q**I am a recent convert to the Catholic Church. I am also a registered nurse and have held many patients as they



passed on to eternity. I am concerned over the issue of priests being "barred" from hospitals during the current coronavirus epidemic; I have heard many Catholics bemoan the fact that, as a result, the sick and dying are being

denied the sacrament of the sick.

So, my question is: Can this sacrament be done by intention? It seems to me that we could somehow comfort people—those who are denied the sacrament through the inaccessibility of priests—that Jesus can heal simply through his grace and the person's faith. (Florida)

**A**Your perspective is right on target: Jesus can forgive and heal based on a person's intention. In fact, in late March 2020, the chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Divine Worship made that same point.

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair of Hartford, Conn., explained that what the Vatican had said the previous week about the sacrament of penance can be applied analogously to the anointing of the sick. The Vatican's Apostolic Penitentiary had said: "Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness [that which the penitent is at present able to express] and accompanied by 'votum confessionis,' that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones."

Interestingly, Archbishop Blair issued his statement to clarify and correct a "solution" that had been proposed earlier that same week by another New England bishop. In an e-mail to priests of his diocese, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski of Springfield, Mass., had said, "I am allowing the assigned Catholic hospital chaplains, standing outside a patient's room or

away from their bedside, to dab a cotton swab with holy oil and then allow a nurse to enter the patient's room and administer the oil."

Speaking to the U.S. bishops, after conferring with the Vatican, Archbishop Blair said, "With regard to the anointing of the sick, it is not possible for the anointing with oil to be delegated to someone else, such as a nurse or doctor." Bishop Rozanski immediately rescinded the permission he had granted earlier.

This brings us back to the questioner's valuable insight: In a circumstance where a physical anointing is impossible, God knows a person's soul and can provide spiritual comfort and strength.

**Q**I am 80 years old, a "cradle Catholic," a product of Catholic elementary and secondary schools and a Catholic university. I have a question that I think others of my generation might ask: When did bowing become acceptable, versus genuflecting, before a tabernacle with a lighted sanctuary lamp? (Kansas)

**A**The act of genuflecting—bending the right knee to the ground—is a sign of adoration and is meant to honor the Blessed Sacrament. Therefore, upon arriving in church, if there is a tabernacle containing the consecrated hosts, one should genuflect toward it. (This assumes that one is able physically to do so.)

If, instead, the Eucharist is reserved in a side chapel, it would be proper simply to bow toward the altar. The "General Instruction of the Roman Missal" notes that, when the tabernacle is present in the sanctuary, the priest genuflects when he arrives at the altar and departs from it, and three times during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. "Otherwise," says the general instruction, "all who pass before the most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession" (#274). Ministers carrying the processional cross, candles or the Book of the Gospels bow their heads instead of genuflecting.

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

## My Journey to God

### You Never Left Me

By Greg Hublar

When I chose to ignore your calling, and direction for my life  
You Never Left Me

When I purposefully chose the world, and all its empty promises  
You Never Left Me

When I felt as though you had abandoned me, and that you couldn't be trusted  
You Never Left Me

When I wrongly blamed you for all the struggles, and the trials throughout my life  
You Never Left Me

When through my thoughts and actions, I placed myself over others  
You Never Left Me

When I allowed my mind to wander through sinful pleasures  
You Never Left Me

When I didn't believe you would provide for me or my family  
You Never Left Me

When I failed to trust you with my finances, and the blessings you had given me  
You Never Left Me

When I looked for meaning and fulfillment in life, outside of you  
You Never Left Me

As I look back over the days I have lived, I can now clearly see  
You Never Left Me

Going forward with each remaining day, Jesus help me to always remember  
You Never Left Me, and You Never Will!

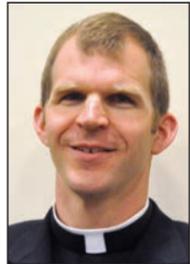
(Greg Hublar is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.)

# Priest-coach advises high school students to be game changers

By John Shaughnessy

Tears filled the eyes of Father Jonathan Meyer as he talked to the high school students.

The pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County knows the disappointment and even the pain that many teenagers are experiencing since the April 2 announcement by Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb that school buildings throughout the state would be closed through the end of the 2019-20 academic year.



Fr. Jonathan Meyer

As a track and cross country coach at East Central High School in St. Leon, Father Meyer has come to know many of the students there, and he knows the loss they are

experiencing by not being able to participate in spring sports, theater productions and other activities—including just being able to see their friends and classmates.

So Father Meyer set up a video talk with them to share his thoughts and advice about dealing with the disappointment and making the most of the reality they face.

While his talk is directed toward the Trojans of East Central, it's a message that also has meaning for high school students across the archdiocese and the state. Here are some edited versions of the main points of his talk.

## Cling to what you know, who are you

"First and foremost, be not afraid," Father Meyer counseled. "This is an hour when there is a lot of fear—fear of sickness, fear of the unknowns. The more there is uncertainty

in our lives, the more there is anxiety. And the more you take away the uncertainty, the more that there is peace.

"You need to name the things you know. You know that you are loved. You know that you are alive. You know you have gifts and talents and abilities. You know that there are teachers and coaches that are mourning right now over your loss. Cling to what you know. Cling to who you are. No one can take that away from you."

## Be creative

"God didn't give you talents and abilities to bury them in darkness, in depression, in doubt, in fear. God gave you your talents and abilities so you can use them and to shine. You need to be like him. You need to be creative. Allow your imagination to say, 'How can I use these gifts? How can I use these talents?'"

## Be a game changer

"Sure there are experiences you may never have now. But there are all the more experiences and possibilities that can happen. And the game changer in life is what we do with our obstacles, what we do with our struggles. You have to admit that where you are right now is not what you wanted. But you need to get back up.

"Those who give up never win. But those who choose to put the obstacles and struggles behind them, those are the ones [who succeed]. Choose to get up. You've done it before. Your perseverance, your hard work and your diligence are real."

## Share your thoughts with someone

"I need you to talk to people. I need you to talk to your mom and dad. I need you to share with them what's

going on inside. If you can't do it with them, get a hold of a teacher, a fellow athlete, a coach, a mentor, a friend, a neighbor, a grandparent.

"You can't do this alone. You need to surround yourself with people who will encourage you. Don't surround yourself with negative people. They are not the people you need to hear."

## Reach out to others

"You've got to be aware of your classmates. You've got to reach out to them. I particularly want you to think of the kids in your school who are really quiet. You can change their life. You can possibly *save* their life by reaching out to them.

"In this dark hour, we need heroes, and that's what you're called to be. You know that some of your classmates don't like being at home. Their mom or dad may be an alcoholic. There might be abuse. Who's going to be their friend right now? The strength and the character and the virtue you have, they need now more than ever."

## Remember who God has called you to be

"You are called to be light. You are not called to be darkness. You are called to be hope. You are not called to be despair. You are called to be life. You are not called to be death. And you are called to do it today. Not tomorrow. Not next week. You're called to do it now.

"Everything we have taught you as teachers, as coaches, as guidance counselors, as administrators, as staff, it all comes to right now. This is the test. Who are you? Who are you inside? And who will you be to your neighbor?"

(View Father Meyer's video talk, at [bit.ly/PriestCoach](http://bit.ly/PriestCoach).) †

## SENIORS

continued from page 1

in Indianapolis. "I wonder why this is happening, why my senior year? But I've come to realize everything happens for a reason. I believe that.

"It's an interesting relationship I have with God now. It's a time when I feel distant from God, but I also feel closer to God. I talk to him a lot more."

Zoe Libs knows these feelings. As the coronavirus crisis continues to have a dramatic impact on the world, it has also left its mark on the world of the senior at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

## A prayer amid the pain

"This pandemic has definitely pushed me to rely on my faith," says Zoe, a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County. "This is because without having faith in God that things can and will get better, we'd lose all hope. In these times, all we have is hope.



Zoe Libs

"My prayer has definitely increased, and my family prays the rosary almost every day for the victims and those fighting the virus."

Zoe's prayer includes the wish that Easter brought "a little happiness to everyone."

The news of her school's closing brought pain and sadness to her.

"I was devastated when I found out that I wouldn't be returning to school," she says. "I wanted more than anything to finish out the year—and to have all the senior experiences."

The 18-year-old youth looked forward to prom, the senior awards ceremony, the senior/mother luncheon, the senior farewell, the Baccalaureate Mass and graduation.

"The fact that I probably won't experience them is extremely disappointing," she says. "Providence is a very important place to me, and I'd really hoped to finish my time there. I was also disappointed that the rest of my cheerleading season was canceled because that was another huge aspect of my life."

The crisis has also created challenges for Zoe's classmate Sam Bowles.

## The friendships of a four-year journey

"It has made me more anxious to go outside and go to public places," says Sam, who is a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. "I have not been to a public place in a while now. It has also made me even more aware of the news."



Sam Bowles

The 17-year-old youth is also conscious of how the crisis has affected his faith.

"I already heavily rely on my faith, and I pray about the COVID-19 crisis just about every day," Sam says. "It has limited me from going to Mass on Sundays, but we continue to watch Mass at home. Nothing can limit the power of God and our relationship with him."

That word—"relationship"—is at the heart of the emotions and experiences that many youths have in the spring of their senior year in high school.

It includes their relationship with God, their ties to their parents and their bonds with their teachers and coaches. But it's most strongly present in the peer friendships they've made during this four-year journey. And the absence of an everyday connection to these friends is one of the great losses for high school seniors this spring.

"It's been really hard for me to not be able to interact with my friends," Zoe says. "I'm a very social person, and I enjoy being around the people that I love."

The same is true for Eliza Leffler, Luke's twin. "All my friends have decided we'd much rather go through the long eight-hour days of school [instead of taking classes at home by e-learning]," she says. "We're upset about this. We want to get to see each other."

Eliza has filled that void with more interaction with her family, more walks with the family dog Carlos, and more time on her relationship with God.

That connection with God has helped her as she tries to deal with the coronavirus crisis.

"I feel like this has made my faith stronger," she says. "I've resorted to praying that my friends and family are going to be OK. I feel like I've been turning more to my faith for help—that God will help us through this."

## With the loss are the memories of the blessings

Besides drawing closer to God, Eliza has also spent more time developing her artistic interest.

"My main hobby is drawing," she says. "I'm going to college for art education. I've been doing a lot more sketching. I'm using more of my creativity."

Drawing also helps to distract her from thoughts of not being able to play softball for Sccecina. To prepare for this season, she joined a summer-league team last year. She also took weekly hitting lessons from the end of November to the beginning of March, even as she played on the girls' basketball team.

"That's the one thing that hits the hardest," she says, thinking of her softball teammates and the opportunity to play her final season with them.

Luke has also felt the pain of lost opportunities. "A lot of things happen at the end of the senior year," he says. "You want to be able to do them with your friends before you go away to college. Now, it's all taken away. I haven't seen my friends in forever.

"There's a saying, 'You never know how much you love something until you lose it.' I never thought the small things like hanging out with your friends would mean so much. Now, I understand it. I would have taken it all in more and appreciated it all more."

As he tries to absorb what he has lost, there are also times when he thinks about how much he has gained during his four years in a Catholic high school.

"I've tried to look on the bright side of things. It's good to reflect on all the things I've been exposed to, and that I've had in my life. Going to a Catholic school, it's really a privilege I've had. That close feeling, and all the things it's opened me up to—and meeting all the great people I've met."

## Pope prays for women, especially those facing domestic violence amidst pandemic lockdowns

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis highlighted the many ways women are caring for others during the coronavirus pandemic, but he also offered prayers for those facing an increased risk of domestic violence during the lockdowns.

At midday on April 13, after reciting the "*Regina Coeli*" prayer livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis turned to the day's Gospel reading and its account of the contrast between the faith of the women disciples, who were certain Jesus rose from the dead, and the uncertainty of the men, who doubted their words.

"Today," he said, "I want to remember with you how much many women do—including in this time of a health emergency—to care for others: women doctors, nurses, law enforcement and prison officers, clerks in stores selling basic necessities and all the moms, sisters and grandmothers who find themselves closed in their homes with the whole family,

with children, the elderly, those with disabilities.

"Sometimes," the pope said, "they risk being subjected to violence because of a living situation in which they bear too great a burden. We pray for them that the Lord would give them strength and that our communities would support them together with their families.

"May the Lord give us the courage of women to always go forward," he added.

Pope Francis also expressed his "closeness and affection" for every country "strongly impacted by the coronavirus—some with very large numbers of people infected and deceased."

The pope said he was thinking especially of "Italy, the United States, Spain, France—the list is long. I pray for all of them."

Looking directly in the camera, he added, "Don't forget that the pope prays for you. He is near." †

### Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

For more information, please log on to [www.archindy.org/layministry](http://www.archindy.org/layministry)



### REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**  
Confidential, Online Reporting  
[www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[carlahill@archindy.org](mailto:carlahill@archindy.org)

# Priests, laity saddened by absence of chrism Mass, look forward to coming together again as community

By Sean Gallagher

The chrism Mass of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is a hallmark liturgy each year for the Church in central and southern Indiana.

Gathered with the archbishop in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis are priests, deacons and religious ministering in the archdiocese and lay Catholics from its parishes. Priests renew the promises they made at their ordination.

The archbishop blesses oils used in several sacraments, in the anointing of altars and dedication of Church buildings. Representatives from parishes across the archdiocese receive those oils and take them back to their faith communities.

This liturgy has ordinarily been celebrated on Tuesday of Holy Week in the archdiocese. But because of the coronavirus pandemic, it has been postponed indefinitely.

Cindi Voegelé, a member of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, has participated in the chrism Mass.



Cindi Voegelé

“Not being part of it was just huge,” said Voegelé of missing the chrism Mass during Holy Week this year. “You see all the parishes of the archdiocese coming together to celebrate the priests who give us the Eucharist and to bless those oils that we use for baptism, anointings and confirmations. It’s very poignant and [shows] who we are as a faithful Church.”

In a letter sent to priests serving in the archdiocese on April 7, the day on which the chrism Mass was to have been celebrated, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson said that it was “especially painful” that they were unable to gather for the special liturgy.

“Though physically separated from our people and one another, we remain united in and through our great high priest, Jesus Christ,” Archbishop Thompson said. “We are particularly united with one another through him by means of our daily celebration of Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours.

“Eucharistic adoration, the rosary and other devotions further enhance that unity

that we share with one another and those we serve. In this time of ‘social distancing’ and ‘stay in place,’ we need to hold one another in prayer more than ever.”

Father Vincent Gilmore, associate pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood



Father Vincent Gilmore

Parish in Greenwood, was looking forward in a special way to the chrism Mass. Since he was ordained a priest last June, this would have been the first time he would have renewed his ordination promises with other priests serving in the archdiocese.

“There’s a certain sweetness in the sacrifice, I’ve come to find,” said Father Gilmore of the postponement of the liturgy. “It’s like Mother Teresa said, ‘Give us the grace, Lord, to give what you take and to take what you give with a big smile.’”

While he can’t participate in the chrism Mass, Father Gilmore has shown his continued commitment to priestly life and ministry as he reaches out to the members of his parish.

He, Father Todd Goodson, Our Lady of the Greenwood’s pastor, and the parish staff have been making phone calls to the more than 2,400 households of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community “just to check in to see how they’re doing, what they’re struggling with, if they have any prayer requests or need any assistance from us.”

“A couple of them broke down and cried as they picked up the phone—and it wasn’t just because they had to speak with me,” Father Gilmore said with a laugh. “Just the gesture of a phone call like that made a big difference.”

He said the purpose of the calls were “just to check in to see how they’re doing, what they’re struggling with, if they have any prayer requests or need any assistance from us.

“Most importantly, we’re just letting them know that we care,” Father Gilmore said.

Voegelé has seen how the members of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County care for their faith as they have shared photos of how they’ve decorated places in their homes where they gather to pray with

livestreamed liturgies from one of the four campuses of the Batesville Deanery faith community.

“They’ve created altars, places with candles and statues,” said Voegelé, who is liturgical musician and cantor in the parish. “This is an opportunity. We know what our churches look like. We can build a domestic church in our homes. Creating sacred spaces give people a great experience [of faith]. I don’t think God has abandoned us. He has opened up an opportunity to create that at home.”

Voegelé, 67, has been involved in liturgical music since she was 8. So her Catholic faith means a lot to her, especially at this time when she can’t gather for worship with her brothers and sisters in Christ.

“This is who I am,” she said. “This is my life. It truly is.”

Beth Van Der Bergt similarly missed coming to the cathedral for the chrism Mass. A volunteer sacristan for the St. Andrew campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, Van Der Bergt has received the blessed oils for the Connersville Deanery faith community for



Beth Van Der Bergt

more than a decade along with sacristans from its other two campuses.

“It’s an honor to be able to receive the oils for our parish,” she said. “I find it such a beautiful and uplifting celebration of our faith.”

So, when Tuesday of Holy Week came around this year, it felt like “a big void” to Van Der Bergt.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and some 140 priests serving in central and southern Indiana process on April 16, 2019, into SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis at the start of the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass. This year’s chrism Mass was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

“It was just like another day,” she said. “In the past, it would have been a whole-day event for us, coming from Richmond. It was something I really looked forward to doing.”

Voegelé and Van Der Bergt have vivid images in their hearts and minds of what it will be like for them when the chrism Mass is able to be celebrated.

“I think there will be a tremendous joy, a tremendous appreciation for what we have through the priesthood,” Voegelé said. “The cathedral will be packed. Maybe it will be standing-room-only. I can’t imagine people not wanting to be part of that when they see their mother church open and ready to celebrate that occasion. That’s what I hope to see.”

“It will just be overwhelming to be in a full church, worshipping with fellow Catholics from around our archdiocese,” Van Der Bergt said. “Some of us will be moved to tears. Not being able to worship together, you really realize how we experience worship as a community as Catholics. Being part of the body of Christ is more than just receiving the body of Christ.” †

## HOEFER

continued from page 4

you a future with hope” (Jer 29:11).

The third stream of this call to trust that we’re now encountering will take place on April 19. It’s the fruit of several tasks Christ assigned to St. Faustina.

One task was to establish “the first Sunday after Easter [to] be the Feast of Mercy” (*Diary*, 299). On April 30,

2000, on the same day he canonized St. Faustina, St. John Paul II established this feast in the Church’s liturgical calendar for the Sunday following Easter.

Christ also presented her an image to have painted and promoted. It depicts Christ stepping out of the darkness with one hand in blessing and the other pulling aside his tunic at the chest to reveal two streams of red and luminescent white issuing from his Sacred Heart.

“The two rays denote blood and water.”

is a point, present or future, that we know it instantly. Our eyes light up. An epiphany jumps through our soul. The keys work backward through time—and forward—to make sense of the senseless and redeem what we thought was lost.

A young man, unconfident in himself but excited by knowledge, finds just enough self-assurance to keep going. The moment snowballs—a life is formed.

And, as times require, when he doubts himself, that hidden lock turns once more and he finds conviction blooming in the midst of adversity, delivered by a voice from another age who sets him firmly on the path of the golden keys.

(*Sight Unseen is an occasional column that explores God and the world. Brandon A. Evans is the online editor and graphic designer of The Criterion and a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield.*) †

Christ told her. “The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls ...” (*Diary*, 299).

“Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You. ... I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish” (*Diary*, 47, 48).

Now that’s not a free ticket to sin without sorrow and still slide safely through the pearly gates. Sin damages and can even kill our relationship with God. But when we do sin, God desires us to seek his mercy with a repentant heart, no matter how grave the sin.

Calling upon his mercy is the “A” of the “ABCs” of the message Christ asked St. Faustina to spread: always ask for God’s mercy; be merciful to others; and

completely trust in Jesus.

The feast, the image and the message of Divine Mercy are for all times. But what better time than during this pandemic to come to trust in God’s infinite mercy and in the goodness of his plans for us. And what better time to start than this Divine Mercy Sunday.

Like school students missing foundational knowledge, we won’t be able to move forward in our faith journey until we learn this lesson of trust in God.

The same is true of the world—as Christ told St. Faustina, “Mankind will not have peace until it turns [to God] with trust ...” (*Diary*, 300).

(Natalie Hoefler is a reporter for The Criterion.) †

## EVANS

continued from page 4

with each step I took along the way.

For those rusted gears of timidity which lay silent in me one day sprang to life. They turned suddenly and all together, urged on by that golden key from my grandfather which entered my life from the edge of memory, piercing through defense, navigating depths and, at a place only one thing can reach, turned the tumblers of a lock beyond my waking knowledge.

I found a new measure of confidence, and surety: strength when I needed it.

That golden key was something only I could see and notice and appreciate. Like a hidden glyph decipherable in just one language, it was a thing custom-made to fit within my life.

When a golden key comes to us there

## Classified Directory

Call  
317-236-1585  
TO ADVERTISE IN  
The Criterion

### Special Care



Trusted and Compassionate Care

Serving people with Autism & Developmental Disabilities

- Medicaid Waiver ( CIH & FSW)
- Residential, Community, Respite and PAC Services
- Staff screened and trained

Kathy and Terry Huser  
(317) 255-5700

www.HuserSpecialCare.com  
Career Opportunities Available

# Spirit of Hope Award winners help give hope and change lives

By Natalie Hoefler

Each spring, St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany honors two people with the Spirit of Hope Award, the agency's highest recognition. This year's winners are Joan Cahill and Paula Robinson.

Typically around this time of year, the honorees would receive their awards at the organization's largest fundraiser, its annual "Giving Hope—Changing Lives" gala.

Like so many events, the gala has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

While Cahill and Robinson will receive their awards when the event is rescheduled, *The Criterion* felt now was an appropriate time to celebrate those honored for something so needed in today's challenging times: a spirit of hope.

## Paula Robinson: 'A perfect model of giving'

Robinson, 73, recalls a time when she and her late husband lived just down



Paula Robinson

the street from what was then called St. Elizabeth Maternity Home.

When asked if she'd been told then that she would one day receive the organization's highest honor, "I would have said no way," she responds. "I wasn't

volunteering at that time—I was too busy raising a family and working."

She and her husband later moved to Florida. After her husband died several years ago, Robinson returned to southern Indiana to be close to her family.

She recalls visiting with the agency's then-development director, who told her about the 2005 merging of the maternity home with Catholic Charities.

"I went to their gala and immediately got interested," says Robinson, 73. "Once you go to the gala and listen to all the programs and things going on, it touches your heart. I knew this was an area I could give to, and it would really make a difference."

She began volunteering for St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities around 2008—and made a difference herself.

Among her efforts for the organization, Robinson served on its advisory council from 2010-13. During that time, from 2011-13, she also chaired the committee for the gala that had first sparked her desire to contribute to the agency.

The member of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton "offered great leadership while serving on the St. Elizabeth advisory council," says agency director Mark Casper. "She was a leading advocate for St. Elizabeth's entry into offering an affordable housing program.

"She demonstrated great vision in a period where decision and leadership were key. It was during her term on the council that St. Elizabeth experienced great growth, and Paula was instrumental in this happening."

Casper describes Robinson as "a perfect model of giving her time, talent and treasure, and all with the utmost humility and a what-can-I-do-to-help attitude."

That willingness to roll up her sleeves and help is still visible today, and not just in the affordable housing units.

"I did lots of painting—lots of painting!" Robinson shares with a laugh. It was during her time on the council that the organization not only added the new housing units, but also converted the former Holy Trinity Parish's rectory into its administration and social services building and renovated its transitional living home.

"I painted rooms and trim and fences—whatever was needed when we moved into the new office and re-did the new transition home," she says. "I think I've retired from painting if I can get away with it," she adds with a laugh.

Receiving the Spirit of Hope Award is "an honor," says Robinson. "I'm thankful I'm in a position where I can give of my time. I feel like I've been blessed in my life with what I have and my family, and I need to give back to my community"—and the organization through which two of her nephews were adopted, she adds.

Robinson says devoting time to family curtailed her availability to help the

organization for a while, but she still volunteers "as needed, and I hope to get back into it more."

Casper refers to her "humble" and one who "often prefers to stay in the background."

But make no mistake, he adds: "Paula has been instrumental in bringing St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities to the next level" of giving hope and changing lives.

## Joan Cahill: 'She loved those girls!'

When Cahill learned she was selected to receive one of this year's Spirit of



Joan Cahill

Hope awards, "I just couldn't believe it," she says. "I thought, 'All I was doing was my job,' and I couldn't have done it without my wonderful staff."

But Cahill's job was no small task. She began working in 1989 as the newly

established St. Elizabeth Maternity Home's first social services director, a role she held until retiring in 2005.

"She spent 16 years pouring her heart and soul into creating programs that would provide help and create hope for those in need," states a press release announcing Cahill's award. "Joan worked tirelessly to offer services that filled gaps that other funding and government assistance did not."

Cahill—who at first claimed to be "39 and holding" but later admitted to being 83—says her job "was a dream come true."

"It was fantastic to know you were doing good and helping those young ladies, and helping change their lives around. It was just a great feeling, very rewarding."

Cahill, who with her husband Joe is a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, admits it was "hard not to get too attached" to the young pregnant women she helped in the maternity home.

"She never went home without talking to all the residents," says St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities development director Dawn Bennett, noting the home could provide housing for up to seven women

**'It was great to see her get her life turned around and have a good future. It was always wonderful to see them make something out of their life.'**

—Joan Cahill, St. Elizabeth Maternity Home's first social services director

at the time. "She would go back on nights and weekends if there was ever an issue."

Cahill recalls going to the ceremony when one of the young women she helped graduated from the University of Louisville.

"It was great to see her get her life turned around and have a good future," she says. "It was always wonderful to see them make something out of their life."

The press release notes that Cahill "served all clients with passion and professionalism, setting a standard of excellence that agency staff endeavor to uphold even today. Joan's work has made a lasting impact on maternity home residents, adoptive families and staff alike."

Casper enthusiastically agrees.

"St. Elizabeth's was her life," he says. "For her it was a real passion, never just a job. ... She loved those girls!"

"Joan set the tone when there was no St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities. She had the vision, and she left behind the culture and passion that makes St. Elizabeth's special to this day."

For Cahill, it comes down to hope.

"When they come here, those young women don't have hope at all," she says. "But here, they pick up the pieces and get on with their life."

*(For more information on its services or to donate to St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany, go to [www.stecharities.org](http://www.stecharities.org) or call 812-949-7305. For updated information on the Giving Hope – Changing Lives gala, go to the above website and select "Events.")* †

# Religious communities in archdiocese refocus on prayer during pandemic

By Sean Gallagher

Like all other residents who are living under Gov. Eric Holcomb's March 24 stay-at-home order, religious across central and southern Indiana have had their lives significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

They're taking special measures to protect the health of their many older members, who are especially vulnerable to the virus. This includes isolating those who live in infirmaries or health care facilities from the rest of their communities, keeping the number of lay people working on their campuses to a minimum and closing their campuses to all visitors.

Some communities also operate centers that offer retreats and other programs. All these offerings have been cancelled until further notice.

These sisters, brothers and priests also look to the spiritualities of their order and its founders to help them endure during this difficult time.



Sr. Delouise Menges, O.S.F.

"Like our founder, Mother Theresa Hackelmeier, the community has approached this new reality with courage and trust," said Franciscan Sister Delouise Menges, a member of the leadership team for the Oldenburg

Franciscans. "Many have commented on this as a call to prayer, to go deeper

in their own spirituality, and to extend spiritual support for persons so strongly affected."

Conventual Franciscan Father Wayne Hellman, who leads the Our Lady of Consolation Province, which is based in Mount St. Francis in the New Albany Deanery, looks to his order's founder for encouragement.



Fr. Wayne Hellman, O.F.M. Conv.

"St. Francis of Assisi reminded his brothers and all of us: 'We are what we are before God, that we are,

and nothing more,'" said Father Wayne. "Now we clearly experience that we are all vulnerable and among us there are no exceptions. So, Francis calls his brothers 'to rejoice among those who live by the wayside.'"



Sr. Jennifer Mechtild Horner, O.S.B.

Like leaders of other religious communities in the archdiocese, Benedictine Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner, prioress of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, said she and other sisters there have made prayer their "top priority."

"It is stronger than any virus and dictates our every action," she said. "The best thing we can do is

continue our unceasing prayer, and let others know we are praying for them. Morning, noon and night, we gather in our chapel for prayer. As we call on God and listen with the ear of our heart, we believe that God is the one who walks with us through this dark valley. It is to God that we cling. We are all learning lessons that can be taught no other way so our hope is secure and our faith is solid."

Ordinarily, the Benedictine sisters at Our Lady of Grace gather for prayer at Mass and through the Liturgy of the Hours (also known as the Divine Office) with guests who come to the monastery. In the *Rule* of St. Benedict, which guides the life of the sisters, the sixth-century monastic leader calls on those who follow his guidance to receive guests as Christ himself.

But in response to the directives of state health and government leaders, the community has closed its doors to guests for the time being.

"As Benedictines, that was a difficult decision to make," Sister Jennifer Mechtild said. "It is very strange not to have others join us for Mass, the Divine Office and meals. but we are committed to doing our part to stem this tide."

Guests can join the Benedictine sisters online as they livestream Evening Prayer daily at 5:15 p.m. EDT on their Facebook page. The Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad likewise livestream their liturgies on their Facebook page.

Prayer has also been affected for the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Members of its community have passed away since coronavirus

restrictions have been put in place.

Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson, a former general superior of the



Sr. Denise Wilkinson, S.P.

community, said it was "heartbreaking" for her and her fellow sisters not to be able to gather for their funerals. "We're accepting of the why," she said, "and realize how important it is in keeping us well."

In response to the pandemic, the Sisters of Providence's leadership team has invited the community to return to a prayer practice that dates from the time of St. Theodora Guérin, who founded their community in 1840 and died in 1856. She was declared Indiana's first saint in 2006.

It is their "prayer of reunion," which the sisters and the lay Providence associates have been asked to pray aloud, wherever they are, at 3 p.m. daily:

"We unite with all our sisters and all who share the charism of Providence, wherever they may be, to praise you, our living Father, present to us in your Word, Jesus Christ, holy, wise, humble, amiable and merciful. We give, we consecrate and immolate ourselves to you and your loving service. Deign, Lord, to send your Spirit to receive, possess, purify, enlighten and sanctify our hearts. O Divine Jesus, keep us yours always. Amen."

"It is all about uniting with one another and giving ourselves to God and God's loving service," Sister Denise said. †