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## News Briefs

### Pope: Paul VI will be declared a saint

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis told pastors in the Diocese of Rome that Blessed Paul VI would be canonized this year.

The pope's announcement came at the end of a recent question and answer session with the priests.

Archbishop Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar for Rome, had told the priests that they would be receiving a book of "meditations" about priesthood drawn from speeches from each pope, from Blessed Paul VI to Pope Francis.

That prompted Pope Francis to comment, "There are two (recent) bishops of Rome who already are saints," Sts. John XXIII and John Paul II. "Paul VI will be a saint this year."

The sainthood cause of Pope John Paul I is open, he noted, before adding, "Benedict (XVI) and I are on the waiting list; pray for us."

The cardinals and bishops who are members of the Congregation for Saints' Causes reportedly voted Feb. 6 to recognize as a miracle the healing of an unborn baby and helping her reach full term.

The baby's mother, who was told she had a very high risk of miscarrying the baby, had prayed for Blessed Paul's intercession a few days after his beatification by Pope Francis in 2014.

The theological commission of the Congregation for Saints' Causes had voted in December to recognize the intercession of Blessed Paul in the healing.

Although Pope Francis announced the upcoming canonization, he still has not formally signed the decree recognizing the miracle needed for the celebration to take place nor held a consistory — a meeting of cardinals — to set the date for the ceremony.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state reported that Pope Francis will celebrate the canonization Mass in October, during the meeting of the world Synod of Bishops on youth and discernment.

Blessed Paul, who was born Giovanni Battista Montini, was pope from 1963 to 1978.

### Pope Francis to visit Switzerland

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis will visit Geneva in June, Swiss authorities confirmed.

Andre Simonazzi, spokesman for the Swiss Federal Council, confirmed the visit Feb. 28 and said the pope will be welcomed by Swiss President Alain Berset when he arrives June 21, the Associated Press reported.

While no details were given regarding his schedule, Pope Francis is expected to visit the headquarters of the World Council of Churches. His visit would coincide with the 70th anniversary of the council's founding.

Established in 1948, the WCC is an international organization of Christian churches and has the goal of fostering unity in fellowship, service and mission. Its members are spread across 348 churches of the Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Old Catholic traditions.

The Roman Catholic Church is not a member, but has an official dialogue with the council and cooperates with it in various programs.

## Bishop welcomes soon-to-be church members



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton joins catechumens and candidates as well as their sponsors at the rite of election, St. Agnes Church, Mingo Junction. (Photo by Orsatti)

By Dino Orsatti  
Editor

MINGO JUNCTION — The journey for one hundred-sixteen soon to be church members in the Diocese of Steubenville took a major step last month, a journey shared by tens of thousands in dioceses across the United States and around the world. The process will culminate at the Easter Vigil at their respective parishes.

For catechumens, people not yet baptized, the final stage of the process began with a rite of election. For candidates, who are baptized Christians, the start of Lent was a Call to Continuing conversion. Catechumens will receive baptism, confirmation and first Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Candidates will enter full communion with the church by receiving confirmation and first Eucharist.

To Page 12

## Bishop Monforton speaks at conference in Poland



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, as a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, spoke during a three-and-a-half day Human Resources Conference in Warsaw, Poland. Pictured in the left photo are Bishop Monforton, along with bishops and guests from both Central and Eastern Europe attending the conference. At right, Bishop Monforton joins Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz, Archbishop of Warsaw, for lunch during the conference. During his visit, Bishop Monforton wrote blogs on the diocesan website about his visit. (Photos provided)

# Franciscan University welcomes Jim Caviezel, star of upcoming film

By Dino Orsatti  
Editor

STEUBENVILLE — More than 1,500 people packed Finnegan Fieldhouse on the campus of Franciscan University of Steubenville, March 4, to see Jim Caviezel, the actor who rose to prominence with his portrayal of Jesus in the 2004 film, "The Passion of the Christ."

I got to sit down and talk with the actor and Eric Groth, a 1993 Franciscan University alumnus and executive producer of their upcoming film, "Paul, Apostle of Christ."

The panel discussion at the fieldhouse was led by EWTN anchor Raymond Arroyo, alongside Franciscan theology professor Scott Hahn, Caviezel and Groth.

Caviezel is at a point in his career where he can choose what film and TV projects he wants to pursue.

After six seasons on CBS' "Person of Interest," he decided to take on yet another biblical role as St. Luke in the soon to be released movie "Paul."

"You don't go by genre, you go by the script," said Caviezel. But, when it came to "Paul," "Andrew Hyatt wrote a great script," Caviezel said, adding, "Who played Paul was a big part. When they got James Faulkner, I knew they'll be calling him Paul in the street just like they called me Jesus in the street" after "The Passion."



Dino Orsatti, diocesan director of communications, right, interviews Eric Groth, producer, left and Jim Caviezel, actor, center. (Photo provided)

Caviezel liked the script so much, in fact, he became one of the executive producers of "Paul," in addition to Groth. He said the relationship between Luke, the religious zealot, who showed the Lord to Paul, the pagan, sent a very important message. "It's very easy to love people who love you back, but it's difficult to treat people that have different views with love and respect," said the actor.

Groth said working with Caviezel on "Paul" was exciting, and "it was not only great to work with a man of such strong Catholic faith, but Jim was able to bring the human qualities of Luke out in the film."

Caviezel said he doesn't worry about being typecast as someone wedded to the biblical film genre, although he had turned down "many, many" offers after "The Passion" for similar roles.

He said he always wanted to act in movies with "roles that are redeemable." "In "Paul, Apostle of Christ," he added, "it goes deeply into what I think is one

of the greatest controversies. That's forgiveness at all cost. Meeting evil face to face." Caviezel said we have to confront evil today as Christians are persecuted in many places around the world.

Making "The Passion," he said, took a lot out of him physically. "It nearly killed me. Not many people get struck by lightning; I did. I had to have two heart surgeries, including open-heart surgery, because of that film.

"Going out in the cold, at night, and the wind chill, was tremendous. I had a dislocated left shoulder. On top of that I had pneumonia," he recalled. "But if we had shot that film in a studio, you wouldn't have seen that performance. Was it worth it? Absolutely." He said the movie strengthened his relationship with God.

Caviezel, whose initials are JC, was 33 years old when he was chosen for the role, the same initials and the same age as Jesus.

He said he received thousands of letters of conversions from people who watched the "Passion" and "that means more to me than anything."

Careful viewers of "Paul" will get a glimpse of Christ in one scene. There's no mention in the cast list as to who plays the part. Was it Caviezel reprising the role? His answer: "No, it was not me."

As far as what message he wants to send to Catholics in the Diocese of Steubenville, Caviezel said, "Put God in your lives and give love to others. And pray from the heart and not the head."



More than 1,500 people pack Finnegan Fieldhouse, Franciscan University, for a panel discussion of Jim Caviezel's upcoming film. (Photo provided)

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# Three rosary congresses set this year in diocese



**Students at Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School attend eucharistic adoration at Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 2017. (Photo provided)**

STEUBENVILLE — Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton has given the approval for the rosary congress to be held in the diocese this year from Oct. 6-12. The diocesan rosary congress will again be held in three locations: Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville; Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta; and St. Joseph Church, Ironton.

The rosary congresses will provide continuous adoration with the rosary prayed every hour for specific intentions for our diocese, special Masses each evening, a Marian and eucharistic procession, conferences, as well as extra hours for confessions.

The rosary congresses are part of a movement of prayer spreading across the country that organizers say is designed to encourage Catholics to pray for life and peace in our cities, our country and our world.

The first rosary congress was held in Poland in 1979,

to end the governmental impasse of Pope John Paul II's visit to his homeland. The participants of this first rosary congress called it a Seige of Jericho as they felt their prayers "were destroying the walls of satanic darkness ... overcoming the gates of hell ... fighting the princes and rulers of darkness." On the very last day of the congress the Communist government unexpectedly lifted all its restrictions on the Holy Father's visit and he was able to travel freely for nine days throughout his homeland, beginning the long hoped for fall of Communism.

In June of 1988, the rosary congress made its debut in the United States at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., where hundreds of people from around the country came to participate in the weeklong event.

The rosary congresses are making a comeback with the passing of the 100th anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima in 2017. Eighteen rosary congresses were held in the United States last year, including the three in the Diocese of Steubenville. Organizers said Our Lady's warnings and requests at Fatima to pray the rosary daily, to pray and sacrifice for sinners, and to keep the five first Saturdays, were not just for 100 years, but were meant to honor until in the end her "Immaculate Heart will triumph!" That is what organizers say the rosary congresses seek to accomplish, to carry out her requests on a diocesan level.

Anyone interested in getting involved in one of the diocesan locations this year can email Peggy Downs at [rcstaff@rosarycongressusa.org](mailto:rcstaff@rosarycongressusa.org) for Steubenville; Shelly Medley at [shellymedley@aol.com](mailto:shellymedley@aol.com) for Marietta; and Father David L. Huffman, pastor of St. Joseph Parish and St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish, Ironton, and administrator of St. Mary Mission, Pine Grove, at [dhuffman@diosteub.org](mailto:dhuffman@diosteub.org) for Ironton.

For additional information about the rosary congress, visit [www.rosarycongressusa.org](http://www.rosarycongressusa.org).

## Bishop Monforton's Schedule

- March 12 "Vocations Tour 2018," Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, 1:30 p.m.
- 13 St. Vincent Seminary Board of Regents meeting, St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, 10:30 a.m.
- 14 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 8:30 a.m.  
Radio segment WDEO 990 AM, 10:15 a.m.  
Diocesan Tournament of Truth, St. Mary Central School, St. Clairsville, 1 p.m.  
Priest Personnel Board meeting, St. Mary Church Marian Hall, St. Clairsville, 2:15 p.m.
- 15 Mass, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 7:45 a.m.  
"Vocations Tour 2018," St. Joseph Central High School, Ironton, 1 p.m.  
Diocesan Information Systems Conference Board meeting, phone conference call, 3:30 p.m.
- 16 Mass, St. Joseph Church, Ironton, 8 a.m.  
Vocations Tour 2018," St. Benedict School, Cambridge, 1 p.m.
- 17 Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Lenten Day of Spirituality, St. Mary Church, St. Clairsville, 10 a.m.
- 18 Mass and Blessing of Baptismal Font, St. Ambrose Church, Little Hocking, 11 a.m.
- 19 "Vocations Tour 2018," St. Mary Central School, St. Clairsville, 1 p.m.  
AIM Women's Center banquet, St. Florian Hall, Wintersville, 7 p.m.
- 20 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 7 a.m.
- 21 Diocesan Finance Council meeting, Steubenville, 9:30 a.m.  
Mass, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 12:05 p.m.
- 22 "Misa con Hermanas," Mass with Spanish Sisters, Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Oratory, Lovers Lane, Steubenville, 9 a.m.  
Theology on Tap, Froehlich's Classic Corner, Steubenville, 7 p.m.
- 23 Lenten retreat for diocesan staff, Franciscan Sisters Third Order Regular of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother Motherhouse, Toronto, 9:30 a.m.
- 24 Mass and Reception of Candidacy, Holy Family Church, Steubenville, 8:30 a.m.

## "Junior High Bash" planned in Steubenville

STEUBENVILLE — The Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools will sponsor a "Junior High Bash," from 5:30-9 p.m., March 20, at Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School, 100 Etta Ave.

Maggie Craig, a graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville with a master's degree in theology and a bachelor's degree in catechetics, will be the keynote speaker at the event.

Craig was born in New Jersey and lived in Ohio. Currently residing in Denver, Colorado, Craig travels across the United States as a speaker.

The event is open to sixth- through eighth-grade students. Youth must be accompanied by a chaperone; parents can attend the event.

The cost to attend is free and registration is required



(Photo provided)

**Maggie Craig**

by March 16. To register, visit <https://jrhighbash18n.eventbrite.com>. Registration after the deadline costs \$5.

For additional information about the "Junior High Bash," telephone Alyson Radford, Diocese of Steubenville coordinator of youth and young adult ministry, diocesan Office of Christian Formation and Schools, at the chancery, 422 Washington St., Steubenville, at (740) 282-3631 or email [aradford@diosteub.org](mailto:aradford@diosteub.org).

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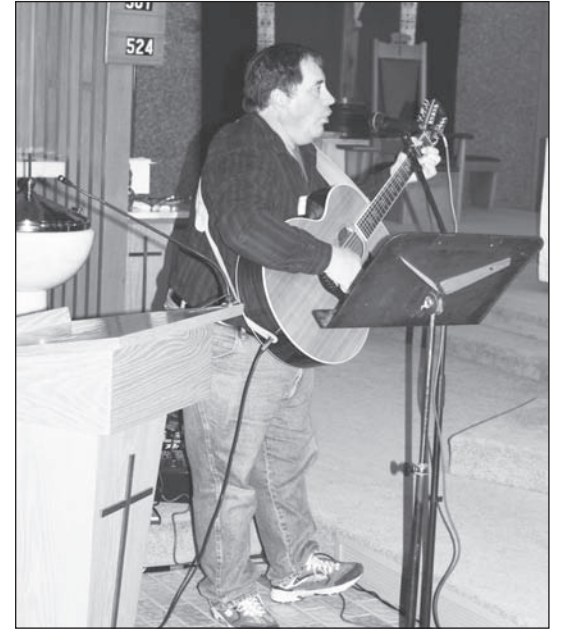
# Nearly 200 men attend Diocese of Steubenville Men's Day of Renewal



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton is flanked by Knights of Columbus prior to Mass.



Planners for the ninth annual Diocese of Steubenville Men's Day of Renewal include, front row, from left, Father Timothy J. Shannon, pastor, St. Henry Parish, Harriettsville, and Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Lowell, Ralph Maloney, Jim Hartlage and Joe Loizzo; second row, from left, Jim Birong and Ron Saling; third row, from left, Art Chavez and Paul Sebastian; and fourth row, from left, Roger Huck and Don Coen. The theme of this year's Lenten retreat, which was held March 3, at St. Stephen Church, Caldwell, was titled "Being a Cloud of Witnesses." Organizers say the Men's Day of Renewal 2019 is set for March 23, and will also be held at St. Stephen Church. (Photos by Orsatti)



Greg Strauss provides music for the annual Men's Day of Renewal.



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton celebrates Mass at the conclusion of the diocesan Men's Day of Renewal at St. Stephen Church, Caldwell.



Featured speaker Mike Aquilina talks to participants about his published books during lunch.



Knights of Columbus members process into Mass, which is celebrated at St. Stephen Church, Caldwell.



Men gather for lunch at midday in the church hall.

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# US leaders pay tribute to the Rev. Billy Graham at US Capitol ceremony

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Donald Trump and congressional leaders paid tribute to the Rev. Billy Graham Feb. 28 in a brief ceremony before the public paid respects to the evangelist while he laid in honor at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda.

“Today we give thanks for this extraordinary life. And it’s very fitting that we do so right here in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol, where the memory of the American people is enshrined. Here in this room we remember America is a nation sustained by prayer,” said Trump.

Graham, who died at age 99 Feb. 21 at his home in Montreat, North Carolina, was known as “America’s pastor” and was a spiritual adviser to 13 U.S. presidents, from Harry S. Truman to Trump.

He is the fourth person to lie in honor at the Capitol. The last person to have this honor was civil rights icon Rosa Parks in 2005. U.S. Capitol Police officers Jacob Joseph and John Michael Gibson, who were killed in the line of duty in 1998, also received the honor.

Members of Congress and Cabinet members attended the private ceremony, along with Graham’s family. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, and



The Rev. Billy Graham and St. John Paul II pictured at the Vatican in 1990. (CNS photo)

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, received the casket when it arrived at the Capitol.

Trump told the assembled group that he heard Graham address a crowd at Yankee Stadium because his father, Fred

Trump, “who was a big fan,” wanted the family to attend.

Paul Ryan, who is Catholic, said Graham’s message to presidents, leaders and ordinary people alike “never diminished” and said the well-known preacher was “made great not by who he was, but by who he served, with all of his heart and all of his soul, and all of his mind.”

“When our country was on its knees he reminded us, he convinced us, that is exactly when we find our grace and our strength,” he added.

McConnell said Graham was more than a personal success story noting that the evangelist’s life was always focused on preaching the gospel.

And this preaching is how he was best known and will likely be remembered. The stadium events where he preached around the world were called Billy Graham crusades. At these venues, including a 16-week run at New York’s Madison Square Garden in 1957, he spoke to the crowds about Jesus and invited people to accept Jesus as their lord and savior.

He also reached at least 210 million people through his personal appearances and through his radio and television ministries.

Graham’s body was returned to North Carolina for his private funeral March 2 at the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte.

## Adoration, confessions held March 9 at churches in Wintersville and Marietta

STEUBENVILLE — In his message for Lent, Pope Francis announced that the “24 Hours for the Lord” initiative would be repeated March 9 and March 10, for the fifth year. The pope has asked each diocese throughout the world to designate a church for 24 hours of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and confessions.

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton named two locations in the Steubenville Diocese, including Blessed Sacrament Church, Wintersville, and the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta.

Adoration at Blessed Sacrament Church will begin at 8:30 a.m., March 9, and conclude with Benediction at 8 a.m., March 10. Confessions will be heard throughout that time.

At the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, a 12-hour adoration before the Blessed Sacrament will begin March 9 at 8:15 a.m., and will conclude with Benediction at 7:45 p.m. that evening. Following adoration, Stations of the Cross will be prayed and confessions will be heard.



Seventy participants from 13 churches in Washington County gather for a World Day of Prayer service at St. Ambrose Church, Little Hocking, March 2. The ecumenical event, which was prepared internationally by women of Suriname (South America), was themed “All God’s Creation Is Very Good.” During the offertory, monetary donations totaling \$453 were collected, which were sent to World Day of Prayer’s main office in New York, to help with projects around the world. (Photo by Sue Anstatt)

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## St. John Paul II The Spirit and the Sacraments

By Diocese of Steubenville  
Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

St. John Paul offers some thoughts on the sacraments at this point. This series, of course is on the creed, which does not explicitly speak of the sacraments. Since we are considering the role of the Holy Spirit at this time, his part in the sacraments should be mentioned. The pope explains: "We do not intend to explain the nature and scope of the sacraments to which we will devote, God willing, other future catechesis. But, we can always turn to the simple, concise formula of the old catechism according to which 'the sacraments are means of grace, instituted by Jesus Christ for our salvation.' We can repeat again that the Holy Spirit is the author, dispenser and almost the breath of God's grace in us. In this catechesis, we shall see how, according to Gospel texts, this connection can be found in the individual sacraments." Another way to put it is that the Holy Spirit is the "delivery system" for all of God's gifts, especially those of a supernatural nature. This follows from the fact that gifts are – in the last analysis – a giving or sharing of *self*. The Spirit is the abiding reality of divine love and of the gifts that follow from it. What God offers is nothing less than his own existence – his own life – in a created form – given first to his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, and through him to the rest of us.

***"Another way to put it is that the Holy Spirit is the 'delivery system' for all of God's gifts, especially those of a supernatural nature. This follows from the fact that gifts are – in the last analysis – a giving or sharing of self."***

John Paul then proceeds to point out references in the New Testament that refer to the various sacraments. Most are familiar to most of us. However, the pope's purpose is not to show that the sacraments are indicated in sacred Scripture, but to indicate the relationship between the sacraments and the Holy Spirit. Some references are very explicit, others are less so. All are confirmed by the interpretation of the early fathers and theologians, as well as by liturgical practice itself.

Speaking of baptism, Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:5). John

the Baptist, speaking of Jesus, said, "(B)ut the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'on whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit'" (Jn 1:33). St. Peter told the crowds on Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized ... in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

In a text that is associated with the sacrament of confirmation, we read that samaritans had been received into the church through baptism. The apostles, Peter and John, were sent for because these people had not yet received the Holy Spirit. "Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:14-17).

The sacrament of reconciliation is clearly associated with the Holy Spirit in the oft-quoted passage about Our Lord's appearance to the apostles on the evening of the resurrection. He said to them: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (Jn 20:20-23).

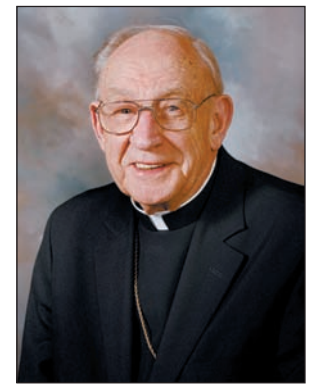
The sacrament of anointing of the sick (formerly called "extreme unction") is suggested in the Letter of St. James, in which we are directed to call in the priests of the church to those who are sick. They, in turn, will pray over the sick and lay hands on them (Jas 5:14-15). The pope observes that this was "an initial form of the sacrament," the effect of which Christian tradition attributes to the work of the Holy Spirit.

The most extensive scriptural reference to the Eucharist is found in the sixth chapter of the Fourth Gospel, in which Jesus tells the crowd, after speaking of the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood: "It is the Spirit which gives life, while the flesh is of no avail. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (Jn 6: 63). John Paul points out that this connection of the Spirit with the Eucharist is expressed in the Mass, in which the priest extends his hands over the bread and wine, invoking the Holy Spirit upon the offerings before pronouncing the words of consecration. Thus liturgical action is called the "epiclesis" ("calling down").

The sacrament of holy orders is referred to by St. Paul when he tells his protegee, Timothy: "Do not neglect the gift you have which was conferred on you through the prophetic word and the imposition of hands" (1 Tim 4:14). And, again: "I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands" (2 Tim 1:6). Here again we have the notions of "gift" and "flame," both associated with the Holy Spirit.

John Paul says: "Finally, I want to recall the sacrament of matrimony, 'this great mystery ... in reference to Christ and the church' (Eph 5:32). In marriage, in Christ's name and through him, a covenant is established between two people, a man and a woman, a life-giving community of love. This sacrament is the human participation in that divine love, which has been 'poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit' (Rom 5:5). ... The third person of the blessed Trinity in God ... is the 'consubstantial communion' ... of the Father and the Son. Through the sacrament of matrimony, the Spirit forms the human communion of persons between a man and a woman."

The pope continues: "In concluding this catechesis in which we at least give a rough outline of the truth of the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the church's sacramental life, as we see from Scripture, tradition and especially from the sacramental liturgy, we cannot fail to emphasize the necessity of a continual deepening of our knowledge of this wonderful doctrine. Nor can we fail to recommend to everyone a sacramental practice which is ever more consciously docile and faithful to the Holy Spirit, who, especially through the 'means of salvation instituted by Jesus Christ' brings to fulfillment the mission entrusted to the church to work for universal redemption."



Bishop Sheldon

## Nicodemus – Searching for the Light Fourth Sunday of Lent, Cycle B

By Father Paul J. Walker

As a little boy, one of my fears was that of darkness. We lived in a big house with any number of dark places, but the scariest was my bedroom with the lights out. I recall one night seeing a shape set off from the foot of the bed. I began yelling for my mother to come to my room. She turned on the light and I could see that shadowy form that was frightening me was only my clothes piled on top of a chair. The light brought a revelation that I had nothing to fear.



Father Walker

The Gospel story for this Sunday, March 11, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, B Cycle, focuses on light and introduces us to a truly remarkable person, Nicodemus (see, John, Chapter 3, Verses 1-3). The story helps us understand how conversion of heart takes place.

We are in John's

Gospel, so right away we know the need to be alert, to be aware on a level not required by synoptic writers (Mark, Matthew and Luke). In the Fourth Gospel *life, dark, light, Jews, night, world, truth*, do not operate on a linear line of interpretation ("what you see is what you get"). Rather, they admit to various shades and nuances that take us beyond their common referent and pull together other levels of experience, bringing them to play in identifying those places on our own faith journey where God meets and walks with us. This faith journey is a life-long experience – no overnight conversions, just a gradual, even timid, movement – lured toward the Light.

Nicodemus can be a model, perhaps even an archetype, of this coming-to-faith experience. We first meet him in John, Chapter 3, Verse 2. He came "by night" to the Light of the world. As I mentioned before, "night" need not only refer to the time of day, but also to the time of faith. Faith can dispel darkness, the night. This pull or tension between darkness and light threads through John's Gospel as it threads through the Christian's faith journey.

Nicodemus is me, is all of us lured gradually, not overwhelmed, by the Light. We meet Nicodemus three times in John's Gospel (beginning, middle and end). In John,

Chapter 3, Verse 2, he, a Pharisee, comes by cover of night to engage Jesus in questions about eternal life.

To Page 8

### The Steubenville Register

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P.O. Box 160, 422 Washington St.  
Steubenville, OH 43952-5160  
email: register@diosteub.org

Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, publisher

Dino Orsatti, editor  
dorsatti@diosteub.org  
Janice M. Ward, circulation/advertising  
jward@diosteub.org  
Matthew A. DiCenzo,  
staff writer, social media coordinator  
mdicenzo@diosteub.org

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## Bishop Monforton Reflects on Lenten Season Events

By Diocese of Steubenville  
Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton

*“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thes 5:16-18).*

In his Lenten message for 2018, Pope Francis instructs that this season is a season for us to be one of joy in the truth. In other words, we focus our eyes on Jesus Christ this seasonal pilgrimage, drawn to the new fire of Easter, ignited at the very Easter Vigil at each one of our parishes. In doing so, we also recognize God’s enduring love and compassion, as our Holy Father has instructed all dioceses to celebrate a 24-hour period in a parish where both eucharistic adoration and the celebration of the sacrament of penance will take place.

In the Diocese of Steubenville, we are going to celebrate this at Blessed Sacrament Church this Friday, March 9, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and concluding on Saturday at 8 a.m. A 12-hour celebration will also take place at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption in Marietta, beginning at 8:15 a.m. and concluding with Benediction at 7:45 p.m., followed by Stations of the Cross and the sacrament of confession.

As we continue our spiritual journey, milestones have been, and will be, encountered along the way:

### Diocesan Men’s Day of Renewal

On March 3, I had the privilege to celebrate the sacrament of penance with the men of our diocese, as well as to attend a presentation and to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass to bring our day to a conclusion. The theme of the day was, “Be a Cloud of Witnesses,” in which our brothers recognized that by their baptismal calling, they have been vested as ambassadors of Jesus Christ to share his good news and to do so with the compassionate heart of the heavenly Father as directed us in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

For just a few hours we had the opportunity to recognize our brotherhood in Jesus Christ as he invited our men of

faith to embrace his Sacred Heart as we shared the merciful and compassionate love of our heavenly Father. Please pray for the men of our diocese that they be strengthened as men of faith.

### Women’s Lenten Day of Spirituality

On March 17 (yes, this also happens to be St. Patrick’s Day), I will gather with the Catholic women throughout the diocese as we celebrate the Women’s Lenten Day of Spirituality. Each one of our sisters endeavors to encounter our Lord Jesus Christ in a more profound way, thus embracing the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our patroness. I am grateful, too, for our Council of Catholic Women for their counsel and leadership to draw more of our brothers and sisters to the Lord through the intercession of Our Lady.

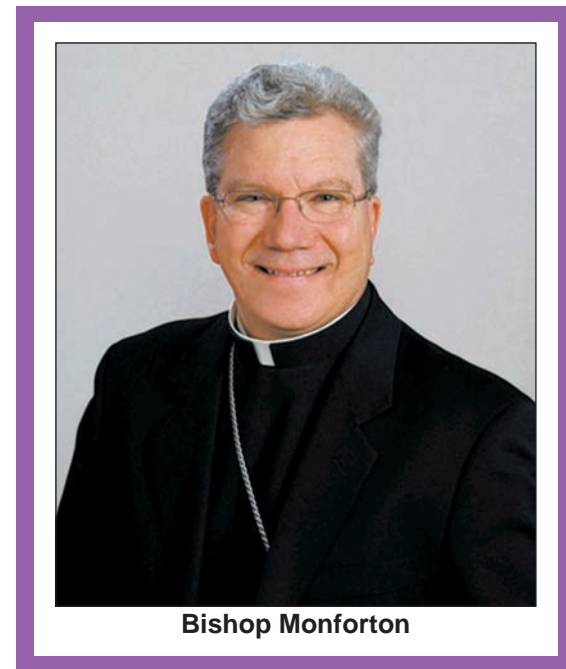
This Saturday celebration is another way in which we strengthen our resolve to follow the Lord this Lenten season. Please pray for our fellow sisters in faith as they pray together, strengthening one another to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Both days of celebration, for the women of our diocese, as well as the men, are a call to action – a call to holiness.

### 2018 Vocations Tours

In 2017, Father Michael Gossett (vocations director for the Diocese of Steubenville), fellow consecrated women and men, permanent deacons, as well as myself, had the opportunity to visit a number of locations throughout our diocese promoting church vocations.

This year we have changed the venue to our Catholic schools. As we have embarked on visits so far to St. John Central School, Bellaire, as well as St. Mary School, Marietta, more visits are on the calendar for the coming weeks, as our young brothers and sisters recognize that life in the church in an ecclesial vocation can very much be a reality for them.

There is a basketball challenge between one or two students and myself at each venue, of which most likely at the end of all of the vocation visits, my record will probably be similar to the Cleveland Browns at the end of this NFL season.



Bishop Monforton

### “Placuit Deo”

In the recent letter that was sent to the bishops of the Catholic Church “Placuit Deo,” or “It Pleas’d God,” was released from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In the midst of an ever-changing culture, we are reminded that we cannot save ourselves. Salvation is found only in Jesus Christ and the world was created to be good and has meaning.

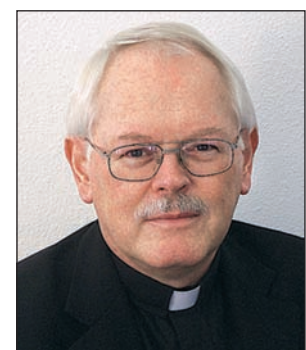
This Lenten season you and I can keep the fire of the Gospel within our hearts, as we train our eyes on the face of Jesus Christ. This is not a time for us to mope around or to regret the penance we have chosen, but instead to praise the Lord with joy-filled hearts. The “end of the line” of this Lenten season is the very victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death. We celebrate this season with grateful and humble hearts, for our Lord and God loves us more deeply than we can imagine.

*May you and your family continue to have a blessed Lenten season.*

## Our Ache for Earthly Immortality

By Father Ron Rolheiser

We share the world with more than seven and a half billion people and each of us has the irrepressible, innate sense that we are special and uniquely destined. This isn’t surprising since each one of us is indeed unique and special. But, how does one feel special among seven and half billion others?



Father Rolheiser

We try to stand out. Generally we don’t succeed, and so, as Allan Jones puts it, “We nurse within our hearts the hope that we are different, that we are special, that we are extraordinary. We long for the assurance that our birth was no accident, that a god had a hand in our coming to be, that we exist by divine fiat. We ache for a cure for the ultimate

disease of mortality. Our madness comes when the pressure is too great and we fabricate a vital lie to cover up the fact that we are mediocre, accidental, mortal. We fail to see the glory of the good news. The vital lie is unnecessary because all the things we truly long for have been freely given us.”

All of us know what those words mean: We sense that we are extraordinary, precious and significant, irrespective of our practical fortunes in life. Deep down we have the feeling that we are uniquely loved and specially called to a life of meaning and significance. We know, too, though more in faith than in feeling, that we are precious not on the basis of what we accomplish, but rather on the basis of having been created and loved by God.

But this intuition, however deep in our souls, invariably wilts in the face of trying to live a life that’s unique and special in a world in which billions of others are also trying to do the same thing. And so we can be overwhelmed by a sense of our own mediocrity, anonymity and mortality and begin to fear that we’re not precious, but are merely another among many, nobody special, one of billions, living among billions.

When we feel like this, we are tempted to believe that

we are precious and unique only when we accomplish something which precisely sets us apart and ensures that we will be remembered. For most of us, the task of our lives then becomes that of guaranteeing our own preciousness, meaning and immortality because, at the end of the day, we believe that this is contingent upon our own accomplishments, on creating our own specialness.

And so we struggle to be content with ordinary lives of anonymity, hidden in God. Rather we try to stand out, to leave a mark, to accomplish something extraordinary, and so ensure that we will be recognized and remembered. Few things impede our peace and happiness as does this effort. We set for ourselves the impossible, frustrating task of assuring for ourselves something which only God can give us, significance and immortality. Ordinary life then never seems enough for us, and we live restless, competitive, driven lives. Why isn’t ordinary life enough for us? Why do our lives always seem too small and not exciting enough? Why do we habitually feel dissatisfied at not being special?

Why our need to leave a mark? Why does our own

To Page 8

## Nicodemus

From Page 6

The next time we meet Nicodemus is in John, Chapter 7, Verses 50-52. Now not so fearful or hesitant, he pleads Jesus' case before the Council, urging them to remember that the Law provides a hearing before a guilty verdict is rendered. We finally see Nicodemus at the end of John's Gospel (see, John, Chapter 19, Verse 39) carrying a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes for the burial anointing of Jesus' body. The author notes, that "Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus *by night* ..." thus "frames" the Fourth Gospel with this man's (a Pharisee) gradual coming-to-faith.

This is our own story as well. Life is a constant choice between steps into the

darkness or into the light. Still timid and hesitant, I suppose, Nicodemus tries to persuade the Council to adopt a "wait and see" attitude. Finally, perhaps most boldly, he struggles under a hundred pounds of spices to preserve Jesus' body for burial. Hesitant steps bring deeper insight, deeper insight overcomes fear that can narrow my perceptions of the parameters of God's mercy and grace. It was the world that God so loved (see, John, Chapter 3, Verse 16). It was not a nation, religion, culture or the people who loved him in return. It was the world: the unlovable; the lonely who have no one else to love them; those who love God and those who never think of him; those who rest in his love and those

who spurn it – all are included in this vast inclusive love that is God's!

It is also a love that brings judgment, for it brings my refusal to love into the light. My unloving deeds and ways are exposed and I must turn again to the one whom poet Francis Thompson calls "The Hound of Heaven." I know that many times on my walk of faith I wander; I stray from the path; at times I even become, like the Prodigal Son, lost in the far country. I walk in shadow not in the light. Yet there can be no shadow without light. As Nicodemus moves haltingly toward the light, so do I – lured by the God who is ahead of me, pursued by the God who can never lose sight of me.

*Halts by me that footfall:  
Is my gloom, after all,  
Shade of his hand,  
outstretched caressingly?  
"Ah, fondest blindest, weakest, I am  
he whom thou seekest!"*

"The Hound of Heaven"  
Francis Thompson

**Father Walker is a Diocese of Steubenville priest and a former director of the diocesan Office of Worship. Retired from active parish ministry, he continues to reside in his hometown, McConnelsville, where he often celebrates Mass at St. James Church.**

## Pope adds feast of Mary, Mother of the Church to universal calendar

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has decreed that Latin-rite Catholics around the world will mark the feast of "the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church" on the Monday after Pentecost each year.

The Gospel reading for the feast, which technically is called a "memorial," is John Chapter 19, Verses 25-31, which recounts how from the cross Jesus entrusted Mary to his disciples as their mother and entrusted his disciples to Mary as her children.

The decree announcing the addition to the church calendar was released March 3 by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

Pope Francis approved the decree after "having attentively considered how greatly the promotion of this devotion might encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety," the decree said.

Cardinal Robert Sarah, prefect of the congregation, noted in a brief commentary published the same day, that Blessed Paul

VI in 1964 had formally bestowed the title of "mother of the church" on Mary, but that recognition of her maternal care for the church and for believers had already spanned centuries.

"The feeling of Christian people through two millennia of history has cultivated the filial bond which inseparably binds the disciples of Christ to his Blessed Mother in various ways," the cardinal said.

The church calendars of Poland, Argentina, St. Peter's Basilica and some religious orders already set aside the Monday after Pentecost as the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church.

Honoring Mary as mother of the church on the day after Pentecost also highlights for Catholics that Mary was present with the disciples on Pentecost, praying with them as the Holy Spirit descended. Cardinal Sarah said that Mary, "from the awaiting of the Spirit at Pentecost, has never ceased to take motherly care of the pilgrim church on earth."

Along with the decree and his comments, Cardinal Sarah also published in Latin the specific liturgical texts for use on the memorial at Mass and in the



**Pope Francis venerates a Marian image outside the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome. (CNS photo)**

Liturgy of the Hours.

Bishops' conferences "will approve the translation of the texts they need and, after

receiving their confirmation, will publish them in the liturgical books for their jurisdiction," the cardinal said.

## Our Ache

From Page 7

situation often feel so suffocating? Why can't we more easily embrace each other as sisters and brothers and rejoice in each other's gifts and each other's existence? Why the perennial feeling that the other is a rival? Why the need for masks, for pretense, to project a certain image about ourselves?

The answer: We do all of these things to try to set ourselves apart because we are trying to give ourselves something that only God can give us, significance and immortality.

Scripture tells us that "faith alone saves." That simple line reveals the secret: Only God gives eternal life. Preciousness, meaning, significance and immortality are free gifts from God, and we would be a whole lot more restful, peaceful, humble, grateful, happy and less competitive if we could believe that. A humble, ordinary life, shared with billions of others, would then contain enough to give us a sense of our preciousness, meaning and significance.

Thomas Merton, on one of his less rest-

less days wrote: "It is enough to be, in an ordinary human mode, with one's hunger and sleep, one's cold and warmth, rising and going to bed. Putting on blankets and taking them off, making coffee and then drinking it. Defrosting the refrigerator, reading, meditating, working, praying. I live as my fathers have lived on this earth, until eventually I die. Amen. There is no need to make an assertion of my life, especially so about it as mine, though doubtless it is not somebody else's. I must learn to live so as to gradually forget program and artifice."

Ordinary life is enough. There isn't any need to make an assertion with our lives. Our preciousness and meaning lie within the preciousness and meaning of life itself, not in having to accomplish something special.

**Father Rolheiser, a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest, is president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio. Additional information about Father Rolheiser's ministry is available on his website at [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com).**

## Letter to the Editor

I started getting a subscription to The (Steubenville) Register six months ago. Prior to that, I very rarely ran across your editions.

It does not matter to me when the post office gets around to deliver the paper to my mailbox, since I seldom get to the Diocese of Steubenville to partake of events, as scheduled.

I also get the papers from Youngstown, Ohio, my home diocese, and from Cleveland and Erie, Pennsylvania. Cleveland stopped publishing the (Catholic) Universe Bulletin, and now puts out something in magazine format less often.

And, just a week ago, the Erie FaithLife sent me a notice that it will cease publication in June and have the editor put out a magazine. But, magazines are not able to make the contact that the newspaper does.

Your Register newspaper warms me with the material it covers from around the Steubenville Diocese, and with other Catholic incidents.

My reason for writing is to tell you that you do more for me to feel that the

Catholic universe is welcoming than any other media.

The local material connects the various personalities and parishes. Too often, the material elsewhere says, looks at us, but, your material says, join us.

Other church publications tell me they have stopped publishing the bishop's schedule because he changes it so much, but, yours is more extensive and seems conclusive.

Items from out of the area do not just say this is what is going on, but seem to relate the southeastern Ohioan to how the chronicled item fits him.

I feel that most parish mentions are inviting the reader to join in future events. A report of how many people are attending church and giving a collection never was something I read before, but you had a graphic list of all regional churches.

Thank you for putting out a peoples' edition each time.

**Frank Swiderski  
Ashtabula, Ohio**



# Coping with school shootings: surreal part of US students' routine

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Students in schools across the country have to navigate their way around classes, exams, relationships, cliques, cafeteria food and crowded hallways.

They also have to think about what they would do if someone with a gun came into their school, which seems all the more possible after the Feb. 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

The students there now enter brand-new terrain that only students from schools where mass shootings have taken place have any idea about. When classes resumed at Stoneman Douglas, they faced all their usual routines and challenges as well as those horrific memories of the deadly shooting.

At first, many of these students channeled their raw grief into gun control activism. They gave speeches at vigils and numerous television interviews; they marched and planned bigger marches. They challenged political leaders and businesses associated with the National Rifle Association to do more to stop the carnage they had witnessed. They coined a movement name — #NeverAgain — and spread its message on social media.

But these students — for all their passion and eloquence on camera also have admitted to reporters that they have a hard time sleeping, or don't want to be alone or are afraid of sudden noises.

And all of that and more is straight out of books and studies on post-traumatic stress symptoms after what they just experienced.

"What these students have gone through is unfathomable. I think it will be incredibly difficult to cope and move on," said Rachel Annunziato, an associate professor of psychology at Jesuit-run Fordham University in New York. She said each student will have to find the support they need and to try different coping strategies. For now, she said: "the activism they are showing is heroic and may well help with coping as it could decrease a sense of helplessness and it also strengthens their support network."

The high school has provided grief counselors to students



**A woman prays at a memorial where well-wishers placed mementos as hundreds of students and parents arrive for campus orientation Feb. 25 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida (CNS photo/Angel Valentin, Reuters)**

and families since the shooting took place and Annunziato said that will need to continue.

"Some people, miraculously, are very resilient," she said, but others can have a harder time and need help to connect with others to find healing.

She also told Catholic News Service that the impact of this shooting extends far beyond Parkland, as also was proven by research after the 9/11 terrorist attacks when those impacted by the events were not just the people who directly experienced it. For example, her own 7-year-old sons in New York have talked about the school shooting in Florida and said the students are scared.

Marco Clark, president and CEO of Bishop McNamara High School in Forestville, Maryland, just outside of Washington, said his students had "heightened anxiety" after the Parkland shooting and were talking with teachers about what they should do in a similar situation.

The day after the shooting, the National Catholic Educational Association issued a statement with a link to a prayer service in response to a school shooting and articles about how to talk to kids about these events and turning to God in times of tragedy.

As students nationwide — and particularly in Parkland — consider moving forward, there is one person with particular insight into this situation.

Frank DeAngelis, principal at Columbine High School from 1996 to 2014, was principal at the Littleton, Colorado, school during the 1999 school shooting that killed 12 students and one teacher. Recently retired, he is now an international speaker about school violence and its impact on communities.

USA Today reported that he already has given some advice to Ty Thompson, the Stoneman Douglas principal, telling him: "It's the things you don't even think about, things that will trigger the emotions. Teachers won't know what to expect. It's a day-by-day experience."

And the day before the Florida shooting, DeAngelis, who is Catholic, gave a talk at Gregorian Court University, a school founded by the Mercy sisters in Lakeland, New Jersey.

He told students and faculty not only about the horror of the 1999 school shooting, but also of the long and difficult road to recovery afterward, even for him.

He said he struggled with survivor guilt — and still does. He wasn't even sure he would make it after the shooting, but was urged on by his pastor, Msgr. Kenneth Leone of St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Littleton.

The priest, who is now retired, told DeAngelis he had a "spiritual imperative" to rebuild the community. That inspired him at first to stay at the job until 2002, when all the students in the freshman class of 1999 graduated, but he ended up continuing as principal until 2014, when the children who were in their earliest school year in 1999, graduated.

At the New Jersey college, the retired principal said a key aspect to finding healing at the high school so marred by tragedy was reaching out to those who felt marginalized.

To illustrate that each student was "loved and included and that they were an indispensable link," he gave each one a link in a chain that they forged together.

Today, he said, the chain remains for all to see in a prominent place in the school.

## Catholics celebrate nation's newest cathedral, growth of church in South

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (CNS) — The Diocese of Knoxville dedicated the country's newest cathedral March 3 during a special Mass in which prelates and parishioners celebrated the growth of the Catholic Church in this region of the United States.

Bishop Richard F. Stika greeted the gathering of more than 1,000 with a simple phrase after the three-year building project: "Well, we made it."

Five cardinals, 21 bishops, more than 100 priests, 58 deacons, and 39 men and women religious took part in the three-hour dedication Mass along with more than 800 East Tennessee Catholics.

"Isn't it amazing what can be done with generous offerings, some buckets of paint, slabs of marble, and months of work?" Bishop Stika asked.

"This building, this house, this combination of man-made materials and nature's creation, will be a church, a home, a cathedral," the Knoxville bishop said. "Why? Because we dedicate, we consecrate, we set apart for God this space, this sacred space, dedicated under the title the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus."

"Praise be Jesus Christ," he said. "To those visiting us on this special day, welcome to East Tennessee and welcome to the Diocese of Knoxville, which comprises all of East Tennessee."

The rite of dedication was attended by religious and laity from the diocese, from around the country, and even from around the world.

Prelates present included: Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, retired archbishop of Krakow, Poland, and longtime personal secretary to St. John Paul II; Cardinal William J. Levada, retired prefect of the Vatican; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York; Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; and Cardinal Justin Rigali, retired archbishop

of Philadelphia and a Knoxville resident; and Archbishop Christophe Pierre, papal nuncio to the United States.

All seven bishops in the province of Louisville, which includes the Diocese of Knoxville, attended. Louisville Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, the second bishop of Knoxville and Bishop Stika's immediate predecessor, played a role in the Mass, as did Bishop James V. Johnston Jr. of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri. He's a Knoxville native.

Before the dedication, those in the congregation craned their necks for a look at the \$30.8 million, 28,000-square-foot structure's 144-foot-high dome, which has murals of the Twelve Apostles and 16 saints. A 25-foot portrait of Jesus with the sacred heart is the largest image in the dome.

The cathedral's art and architecture also includes a 45-foot-tall baldacchino, or canopy, over the altar, as well as a marble ciborium over the tabernacle. The 11-foot-long altar itself is made of Michelangelo Statuario marble — from the same quarry as that used for Michelangelo's "Pieta"; four pendentives at the base of the dome featuring the four Gospel writers.

"High above us we have the apostles and Mary and Joseph," Bishop Stika said of the dome. "We have images like our family photographs that remind us that saints are those like us who knew they were sinners. We call upon their assistance as they now stand before the throne of God."

Cardinal Dziwisz blessed a statue of St. John Paul, copatron of the Diocese of Knoxville, at the new cathedral's dedication. The Polish cardinal also donated two relics of the saint to the diocese, including a stole frequently worn by St. John Paul.

Archbishop Kurtz and Bishop Johnston joined Bishop Stika in blessing the people and the walls of the church with holy water.

Archbishop Pierre read the Vatican decree formally transferring the title of cathedral from the original Sacred



**Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Knoxville, Tennessee. (CNS photo)**

Heart Cathedral building to the new one.

The original Sacred Heart was built as a parish church in the 1950s. It served as a parish church until it was elevated to cathedral status in 1988 when St. John Paul established the Diocese of Knoxville.

**Caldwell** — The Noble Catholic Youth Group will mime the Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m., March 25, at St. Stephen Church.

**Cambridge** — Christ Our Light Parish CWC are taking orders for nut rolls, which will be baked and ready for pickup March 15 or March 22, between 2-4 p.m., unless other arrangements are made. All proceeds will benefit the parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society. To place an order, telephone Sandy Broom at (740) 685-6176 or email sandy.broom@yahoo.com.

Shadow Stations of the Cross, presented by St. Benedict School students, will be prayed at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m., March 26, at St. Benedict Church.

**Malvern** — Fish or shrimp dinners and spaghetti dinners will be held from 5-7 p.m., Fridays throughout Lent, at St. Francis Xavier Church social hall. For adults, fish or shrimp dinners cost \$9. Spaghetti dinners cost \$7. Dinners for children ages 12 and under cost \$5. For takeout, telephone (330) 863-0760.

A communal Lenten penance service will be held at St. Francis Xavier Church at 7 p.m., March 20.

**Malvern/Minerva** — "The Mystery of the Cross: Praying the Stations with Pope Francis," will be prayed at 7 p.m., Mondays throughout Lent, at St. Francis Xavier Church, Malvern, and St. Gabriel Church, Minerva; alternating churches each week. Stations will be prayed at St. Francis Xavier March 12 and March 26 and at St. Gabriel March 19. A discussion group for adults will follow. The discussion, which will be held until 9 p.m., will be based on "Creating Sabbath Space in our Lives," a video retreat by Father Ron Rolheiser, a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest and president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio. Father Rolheiser is also an author and columnist.

St. Francis Xavier and St. Gabriel parishes have established a memorial fund for Denise Laubacher, who was the parishes' parish school of religion coordinator. Donations for the fund can be mailed to the parish office, P.O. Box 275, Minerva, OH 44657.

**Marietta** — Vespers and a formal reception of the relic of St. Teresa of Calcutta will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m., March 11, at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption.

**Martins Ferry** — A Lenten penance service will be held at 2 p.m., March 11, at St. Mary Church.

**Martins Ferry** — St. Mary Central School will hold an open house from 5:30-7:30 p.m., March 14, at the school, 24 N. Fourth St. For additional information, telephone the school office at (740) 633-5424.

**Minerva** — Fish fry dinners will be held from 4:30-7 p.m., Fridays throughout Lent, at St. Gabriel Church hall. Adult fish dinners cost \$9, rigatoni dinners, \$5; fish dinners for children, ages 6-12, cost \$4, rigatoni dinners, \$3. Children under the age of 6 eat for free. For additional information, telephone Ralph Halter at (330) 205-5958 or Dave Cinson, (330) 205-1324.

**Mingo Junction** — A Lenten ecumenical service will be held at 7 p.m., March 14, at St. Agnes Church. After the service, refreshments will follow in the church hall.

**Steubenville** — Mass will be celebrated in Latin at noon, March 25, at St. Peter Church. Franciscan University of Steubenville's a cappella group "Beatus" will provide music. For additional information, email Rose McGrath at rose.mcgrath777@gmail.com.

The St. Peter Parish Book Club will meet at 10 a.m., March 17, in the former school building, to discuss Missionaries of the Most Holy Eucharist Father Barry Braum's book titled "That I May See: Journeying From Spiritual Confusion and Blindness to the Radiance of the Eucharist." All can attend. For additional information, telephone the parish office at (740) 282-7612.



**St. John Central Grade and High School, Bellaire, is sponsoring fish fries throughout Lent, on Fridays, from 9 a.m.-6 p.m., in St. John Church hall, Tallman Avenue. Among those working the fish fry, from left, are Samantha McAfee, Ava Watson, Francesca Moore, Erin Savage and Debbie Respole. In the back row, from left, are Rosalind Fitch, Barb Warnock, David McAfee, Barb Boston and Rob Grendel. Watson, Moore and Savage are students at St. John Central High School who volunteer for their community service project hours. Other volunteers include Joe DeGenova, Bea Gillespie, Joyce Montag, Joe Marchisio, Gary Kosky, Charlie Flowers, Craig Rosen, Anthony DeGenova, Mary Ann Young, Will Hall, Sharon Anastasia, Sandy Evans, Ken Timko, Lynne DeVendra, Dom Moscato, Bill Johnson and Andrea Nutter. The menu includes Coleman fish sandwiches, Coleman fish dinners with two sides, "pirogi" or gnocchi dinners with one side, and cabbage and noodle dinners with one side. Sides for the dinners include coleslaw, fries, sweet potato fries, macaroni and cheese, "pirogi," gnocchi, and cabbage and noodles. Takeout dinners will be available; eat in after 12:30 p.m. Orders can also be taken by telephoning (740) 676-0051 (orders will be taken beginning at 8:30 a.m.) for delivery or pickup. Delivery is by Knights of Columbus Council 1246, and is free and available for businesses and homes located in Wheeling, Benwood, Glen Dale, Moundsville, Warwood and Tridelpia, West Virginia; Bellaire, Shadyside, Neffs, Bridgeport, St. Clairsville, Yorkville and Tiltonsville. All proceeds benefit St. John Central Grade and High School. (Photo provided)**

**Toronto** — Stations of the Cross will be prayed at St. Joseph Church, Fridays throughout Lent, at 6 p.m.; confessions will follow.

Vespers and Benediction will be prayed at 6 p.m., Sundays throughout Lent, at St. Francis of Assisi Church.

**Wintersville** — GriefShare sessions will be held

at Blessed Sacrament Church Lower Sargus Hall, Saturdays, from 10 a.m.-noon, through June 2. The sessions will include a video seminar, support group discussions and personal study and reflections. For additional information, telephone (740) 317-0367 or email BLSOLLgriefshare@yahoo.com.

## Around and About

**Caldwell** — A quarter auction, sponsored by Habitat for Humanity, will be held March 18 at the Noble County Community Center, County Road 56. Advance tickets cost \$5; \$7 at the door. Soups, sandwiches and desserts will be available to purchase. For additional information, telephone Ruth Nau at (740) 732-4790 or Colleen Smith at (740) 305-5082. Proceeds will benefit Southeastern Ohio Habitat for Humanity Noble County.

**Cambridge** — The Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity will hold a "Discernment Day" for young adult women from 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., March 24, at the convent, 319 N. Seventh St. Lunch will be provided. To register, visit fscc-calledtobe.org. For additional information, telephone (740) 432-5853 or (920) 323-9632.

**Dillonvale** — Dillonvale Presbyterian Church, 52 Liberty St., will sponsor a pork and sauerkraut luncheon from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., March 18. Sauerkraut, pork, dumplings, creamed chicken/pork sandwiches and pasta salad will be sold. Bake sale items will be available. For takeout orders or for additional information, telephone (740) 769-2820.

**Huntington, W.Va.** — A one day retreat for men

and women, sponsored by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Bishop Donahue 784, will be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., March 17, at Sacred Heart Parish Hall, 2015 Adams Ave. Cost is \$10, which includes lunch. For additional information or to register, telephone (304) 416-2587.

**Lowell** — An "American Red Cross Blood Drive" will be held March 12, from 1-6:30 p.m., at the Lowell Volunteer Fire Department, 223 Lock St. For additional information or to make an appointment to donate, telephone Linda Miller at (740) 896-2843.

**Martins Ferry** — A community Lenten service will be held at 4 p.m., March 11, at the First Presbyterian Church, 400 Walnut St.

**Steubenville** — A "Lenten Morning of Reflection" at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Oratory, 700 Lovers Lane, will be held from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., March 10. The day will include the celebration of Mass, adoration, confession, rosary and a talk. Babysitting will be provided by the sisters. For additional information or to register, telephone (740) 346-2625.

## Around and About

From Page 10

**Steubenville** — A “Toward an Authentically Catholic Cinema” lecture will be presented at 3 p.m., April 6, in the Tony and Nina Gentile Gallery, in the J.C. Williams Center, on the campus of Franciscan University of Steubenville. Barbara Nicolosi Harrington, a screenwriter and associate professor at Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, California, will speak at the lecture. Admission is free.

A “Media and Faith Conference,” themed “Communicating Truth,” will be held April 6-7 at Franciscan University of Steubenville. Topics for discussion will include digital broadcasting, public relations, news, church communication, television and film, and social media. All events for the conference will be held in Sts. Cosmas and Damian Hall, with the exception of the opening keynote, closing keynote and dinner, which will be held in the Tony and

Nina Gentile Gallery in the J.C. Williams Center, at the university Admission to the conference is free; a \$15 fee for the closing keynote and dinner is required. Attendees can register at [franciscan.edu/events/media-faith-conf](http://franciscan.edu/events/media-faith-conf).

**Wheeling, W.Va.** — An annual “St. Maron Lebanese Dinner” will be held at Our Lady of Lebanon Church, 2216 Eoff St., from 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The menu consists of baked kibbe, stuffed grape

leaves, hummus, chicken and rice, vegetable, salad, pita bread, yogurt, dessert and beverage. Takeout is available. If tickets are purchased by March 11, cost for adults is \$15 and \$7 for children under 12 years of age; price at the door is \$17 for adults and \$8 for children under 12 years of age. The event will also include a bake sale, 50/50 raffle and gift basket drawing. For additional information, telephone (304) 233-1688.

## Adult faith formation seminar in Athens planned for April 14

STEUBENVILLE — Catechists and Catholic school teachers in the Diocese of Steubenville can earn credit toward their initial or ongoing catechist’s certification and Catholic identity contact hours during a faith formation seminar at Christ the King University Parish, Athens, April 14.

The topics that will be discussed in the seminar will be Christian anthropology and Christian morality.

Kevin Miller, a theology professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville, will speak during the seminar.

The day begins with the celebration of Mass at 8 a.m. The discussions will be held in the Holy Family Center, 75

Stewart St., which is located at Christ the King University Parish.

The first discussion titled, “Christian Anthropology I,” will begin at 8:45 a.m.

The second discussion, “Christian Morality I,” will begin at 9:45 a.m. A brunch break for the participants will begin at 10:45 a.m. The final discussion, titled “Christian Morality II,” will begin at 11:15 a.m.

For additional information about the faith formation seminar or to make reservations, email Permanent Deacon Paul D. Ward, director, Office of Christian Formation and Schools, at [dward@diosteub.org](mailto:dward@diosteub.org) or telephone (740) 282-3631, extension 156.



**Baci Carpico, standing left, presents \$500 checks to Steubenville Catholic Central High School students, from left, Richard Terry III and Lucas Terry, who are joined by their father, Richard Terry, Principal Thomas J. Costello, and Assistant Principal Jude Lucas. The students are rewarded with the tuition assistance for their involvement in school, church and community and academic excellence, said Carpico. During the 2017-18 school year, the Knights presented 46 scholarships totaling \$43,000 to parochial high school students. Since the inception of the scholarship program in 1997, the Knights have provided more than \$700,000 to students in Catholic high schools in Ohio, Carpico stated. (Photo by DiCenzo)**

## ‘Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice’ honoree dies

STEUBENVILLE — Edward H. Pestian — recipient of the Cross “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice,” a papal award — died Feb. 26. He was 88 years old.

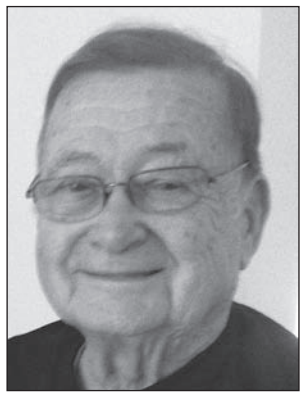
The Steubenville resident was honored with the “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice” award at Holy Name Cathedral, Steubenville, Dec. 16, 1990, which was presented by then Bishop Albert H. Ottenweller. The award was granted by St. John Paul II and translates to “For the Church and the Pontiff.” It is given to individuals who demonstrate outstanding service to the church.

Pestian was born Sept. 23, 1929, in Youngstown, Ohio, a son of Fred and Mina Pestian. He was a 1947 graduate of Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, and was a member of St. Peter Parish, Steubenville.

As an entrepreneur, Pestian founded

Vapor Jet Professional Cleaning and Restoration, located in Steubenville.

Pestian is preceded in death by his wife, Dolores Casey Pestian (who was also a “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice” award



(Photo provided)  
**Edward Pestian**

recipient), his son Edward J., two granddaughters, Maria Hope Pestian and Michelle McKinstry; his brother Fred, and his sisters, Elsie and Amelia.

He is survived by his four sons, Timothy of Toronto, a committee member of the Diocese of Steubenville Building Commission; Kevin and Michael, of Sarasota, Florida; Dr. John

of Cincinnati, and his daughter, Monica McKinstry of Steubenville. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was celebrated March 2 at St. Peter Church.

## Longtime catechetical leader dies

MINERVA — Denise Reynolds Laubacher, a parishioner of St. Gabriel Parish, Minerva, died Jan. 25. She was 57 years old.

Laubacher was born June 26, 1960, the daughter of Vilma Reynolds and the late Edward Reynolds.

She was the parish catechetical leader for 20 years and was the parish school of religion coordinator for St. Gabriel Parish and St. Francis Xavier Parish, Malvern. She also coordinated vacation Bible school for the parishes.

Laubacher prepared children for first reconciliation, first Eucharist, confirmation and coordinated adult

Bible study groups.

She also served on the Diocese of Steubenville Catechesis Planning Team, which met with then Bishop R. Daniel Conlon, currently bishop of Joliet, Illinois, to discuss catechesis in the Steubenville Diocese.

She was involved with the diocesan educational leaders conferences, as well.

Laubacher is survived by her husband, Peter; a daughter, Jamie; three sons, Douglas, Michael and Mark; and a brother, James.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 29 at St. Gabriel Church.

## Obituaries

**Josephine A. Bolanz**, 74, Our Lady of Mercy, Carrollton, Feb. 22.

**Dorothy M. Rauch Brauer**, 84, St. Ambrose, Little Hocking, Feb. 27.

**Nancy E. Worwa Broz**, 84, Dillonvale, St. Adalbert, Feb. 20.

**Joseph K. Ceculski**, 82, Dillonvale, St. Casimir, Adena, Feb. 13.

**Douglas F. Chappell**, 35, Barnesville,

St. John the Baptist, Miltonsburg, Feb. 16.

**Joseph Gaudio**, 83, St. Lucy, Yorkville, Jan. 27.

**Edith G. Heiss Lauer**, 86, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, Feb. 20.

**William O. Lollini**, 93, St. Joseph, Tiltonville, Jan. 21.

**Betty Lovell**, 84, St. Joseph, Tiltonville, Feb. 14.

**Luanne Moore Martin**, 61, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, Feb. 13.

**William C. Rebres**, 82, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, Feb. 18.

**Dolly Lou Ceconi Slivinski**, 80, Dillonvale, St. Adalbert, Feb. 18.

**Rose Mary Zifzal Spontaneo**, 82, Piney

Fork, St. Adalbert, Dillonvale, Feb. 14.

**Rose Mary Swinger**, 87, St. Gabriel, Minerva, Feb. 15.

**Judith Twardoski**, 73, St. Joseph, Tiltonville, Feb. 2.

**Mary L. Wadsworth**, 87, St. Gabriel, Minerva, Feb. 13.

**Anna Wisneski**, 98, St. Lucy, Yorkville, Feb. 17.



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton welcomes a future church member at St. Agnes Church, Mingo Junction. (Photo by Orsatti)



Bishop Monforton pictured with catechumens, candidates and sponsors at the rite of election at St. Ambrose Church, Little Hocking. (Photo provided)

## Bishop welcomes

From Page 1

Prospective church members, who reside in the northern portion of the diocese, gathered with their sponsors, Feb. 18, at St. Agnes Church, Mingo Junction, for the election of catechumens and call to continuing conversion. The residents in the southern counties gathered at St. Ambrose, Little Hocking, Feb. 25, for the diocesan celebration.

Prior to the presentation of catechumens and candidates at St. Agnes, the participants dined with their parish priests and pastors, along with the bishop, and talked about their desire to become Catholics. The lunch portion of the day was canceled at St. Ambrose, because the location was a late change from the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, due to area flooding.

Catechumen Michael McGuire said a near death experience triggered his desire to become a Catholic. "I was involved in a major traffic accident last year in Pennsylvania, where I had to be flown to a hospital and almost died. Lying in that hospital bed brought me closer to God," said McGuire. McGuire said his father was brought up Catholic, which also influenced his decision.

Peter Rosaschi, head lacrosse coach at Franciscan University of Steubenville, sponsored one of his players, catechumen T. Michael Thomas, St. Peter Parish. Rosaschi said Thomas is from Aurora, Colorado, and he knew no one when he transferred to Franciscan. "He's a great young man and I knew he wanted to be-



Bishop Monforton signs Book of the Elect at St. Agnes Church, Mingo Junction. (Photo by Orsatti)

come a Catholic. I thought it was important to go through the process with him."

Thomas said he grew up as a non-denomination Christian, but wanted to explore other religions since he was in eighth grade. The seed to Catholicism was planted when he went to a Catholic high school in Aurora. That seed grew while attending Franciscan, and it became clearer to him about his decision to enter the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults team at the university. "It has brought joy and fulfillment in my life," said Thomas.

Rosaschi said he will also be Thomas' godfather, when he is baptized at the Easter Vigil. "I will now have a son and a godson playing for me on the team," Rosaschi said proudly. Rosaschi's son,

Michael, is a senior on Franciscan University's lacrosse team.

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton presided over the rites of election. "This is a reminder that you are making a bold proclamation. The grace that you receive in the sacrament of reconciliation is a reminder that God does not leave us, but fortifies us," the bishop said.

Bishop Monforton had words of praise for the pastors, parochial vicars, deacons, catechists and sponsors of the catechumens and candidates. The bishop repeated the three pillars of Lent – almsgiving, fasting and praying, and said "without prayer our spiritual life becomes dry."

Attending the rites of election were people from Christ the King University Parish

and St. Paul Parish, Athens, three catechumens and three candidates; St. John, Bellaire, one catechumen and one candidate; St. Bernard, Beverly, one catechumen and six candidates; St. Ann, Chesapeake, two catechumens and two candidates; St. John the Baptist, Churchtown, one candidate; St. Frances Cabrini, Colerain, one candidate; St. Louis, Gallipolis, one candidate; the Ironton Catholic community of St. Joseph and St. Lawrence O'Toole, Ironton, and St. Mary Mission, Pine Grove, 10 catechumens and 10 candidates; Our Lady of Mercy, Lowell, two catechumens and two candidates; St. Francis Xavier, Malvern, and St. Gabriel, Minerva, four candidates; the basilica, two catechumens and nine candidates; St. Agnes, Mingo Junction, two candidates; Noble County parishes of Corpus Christi, Belle Valley, St. Stephen, Caldwell, St. Michael, Carlisle, and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Fulda, eight catechumens and 15 candidates; St. Mary, St. Clairsville, one catechumen and six candidates; Franciscan University of Steubenville, three catechumens and three candidates; Holy Family/Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, four catechumens and six candidates; St. Francis of Assisi/St. Joseph, Toronto, two candidates; and the Wintersville Catholic community of Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady of Lourdes, three catechumens and two candidates.

To the catechumens and candidates, Bishop Monforton said, "You're on a journey. We all are. It's a common journey, but Jesus shows you and me the way."

## Pope Francis says confessional is a place of forgiveness, not threats

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Priests must be mindful that the confessional is a place where people can find forgiveness and mercy, not threats and condemnation, Pope Francis said.

God "does not want to beat us and condemn us," but rather "he always looks for a way to enter the hearts" of those who are repentant, the pope said in his homily Feb. 27 at morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

"When we priests – in the Lord's place

– hear confessions, we also must have this attitude of goodness like the Lord, who says, 'Come, let us talk, there is no problem, there is forgiveness,' and not with a threat from the beginning," he said.

Reflecting on the day's first reading from the prophet Isaiah, the pope noted God's merciful call to conversion and his willingness to forgive even "though your sins be like scarlet."

The relationship between God and his people, the pope said, is like that of the father of a teenager who has done something foolish and must be reproached.

The father "knows that if he goes with a

stick, things won't go well; he must enter with confidence. The Lord in this passage calls us like this: 'Come now. Let's grab a coffee. Let's talk. Don't be afraid, I don't want to beat you,'" Pope Francis said.

Through the sacrament of reconciliation, he added, Jesus "does not threaten, but rather calls us with kindness, having confidence in us," which allows people seeking forgiveness to take "a step forward on the path of conversion."

Recalling the example of a cardinal who, in the confessional, would not say much when someone confessed a great sin, Pope

Francis said God, also, does not dwell on sins and instead gives "a receipt of forgiveness."

The pope said he finds it helpful to see the Lord's attitude as that of "a father with a son who thinks he's big, who believes he's grown up, but instead is really just halfway there. The Lord knows that we are all halfway there and many times we need this, to hear this word: 'Come, don't be frightened, come. There is forgiveness.' And this encourages us to go to the Lord with an open heart. It is the Father who awaits us."