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Baker photos



(above) Bishop John Iffert extends his arms as he addresses youth in attendance for the SUMMIT 23 retreat. Bishop Iffert was this year's first keynote speaker.

(right) Angie Poat, diocesan Youth Minister, at the SUMMIT 23 Eucharistic Retreat.

(left) A young man wearing a hat printed with "Be Not Afraid" attends SUMMIT 23.

(below) Youth at SUMMIT 23 talk and laugh with one another in small groups, instructed to share facts about themselves with one another, such as their favorite movie and relationship with Jesus.



The Eucharist is a kind of respiration, the source and summit of Christian life, said Bishop Iffert at SUMMIT 23

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

High school youth around the diocese were invited to participate in SUMMIT 23, a Eucharistic retreat for youth, Oct. 6-8. The three-day retreat, this year hosted at Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, brings youth together for song, solidarity and prayer — and includes Mass, Eucharistic adoration and keynote speakers all intended to help foster a Eucharistic encounter for youth.

Such keynote speakers were featured every night during the three days the retreat was active, with Bishop John Iffert invited to speak to the youth on the first night, Oct. 6.

Bishop Iffert began his presentation simply — by breathing. Breathing in for four seconds, holding for another four, and then exhaling — he invited all present to do the same.

"We started that way in part because deep breathing is always a great way to begin a time of prayer," said Bishop Iffert. "It clears your head and centers you. It reminds you that there's something different and dedicated about the time you're about to enter into."

Bishop Iffert continued, saying that he also wanted to begin with the example of breathing in and breathing out because the topic he'd be asked to talk about tonight was the Eucharist, and specifically the Eucharist as the "source and summit of the Christian life."

"To say that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our life as Catholics, is to say it's a kind of respiration. It's a kind of being filled, and then emptying ourselves," said Bishop Iffert.

During his presentation, Bishop Iffert shared how he held Mass at a nursing home. "There was a woman there who is in the memory

care unit," for people who have dementia and Alzheimer's, "When I met this woman in the ward, her Alzheimer's were so advanced that she was really non-communicative. You couldn't engage her, if you tried to greet her she couldn't respond. She couldn't talk ... but I knew her because I recognized her from Mass," said Bishop Iffert. "I was presiding there at the altar, and I began to say the words of institution, 'Do this in memory of me.' As I began to say these words, this woman, who could not speak later when I greeted her on her own floor, she began to say them right along with me. So deep was her identification with Christ ... when she no longer had the power to speak in conversation, the words of the Eucharist lived in her."

"It's a powerful thing, you see it all the time," Bishop Iffert continued. "The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life because the Eucharist is Jesus Christ's own self-giving."

Near the end of his presentation, Bishop John Iffert spoke about Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, a Vincentian.

"A few days ago I was praying with the Vincentians and I ran across this quote. He said, 'every day I receive the gift of himself that Jesus gives me in the Eucharist, I return to my own poor way by visiting the poor in their homes.' That's what the Eucharist does for us," he said.

"Pope Francis said in the 2020 homily that the Eucharist raises us from our comfortable and lazy lifestyle and reminds us that we are not only mouths to be fed, but also his hands to be used to help others ... and when we are tired, we return and the Lord nourishes us and sends us back out into the world and we expend ourselves until we are elated or exhausted and Jesus calls us back for respiration."

St. Timothy School ‘Thunder Builders’ celebrate completion of expansion, gymnasium



Keener photos

(above) In gratitude for his support of the parish and school, St. Timothy Parish presented Bishop John Iffert with a gift — a wooden map of the Diocese. (right) A kindergartener explains to Bishop Iffert the class jobs posted in his classroom.



(above, left) Bishop Iffert visited each of the 10 new classrooms and circumnavigated the gymnasium sprinkling the new spaces and the people in them with holy water. (above, right) Students gathered with (adults from, right) Father Michael Elmlinger, parochial vicar; Deb Geers, principal; Bishop Iffert and Father Richard Bolte, pastor, for a photo at the entrance to the new gymnasium.

Laura Keener
Editor

The Thunder Builders at St. Timothy School, Union, celebrated as Bishop John Iffert blessed its new school addition, Oct. 8. The new building doubles the number of classrooms — from 9 to 19 — and includes a gymnasium. Bishop Iffert celebrated 11:30 a.m. Mass at the parish with concelebrants Father Richard Bolte, pastor and Father Michael Elmlinger, parochial vicar. Deacon Steve

Alley assisted. After Mass, the assembly gathered at the school for the blessing and a reception. Thunder Builders is an adaptation of the name of the school’s mascot, the Thundering Bison. The tenacity, strength and speed the mascot conjures is apropos for the pace in which the school has grown. It was only six years ago, Aug. 13, 2017, when the diocese celebrated the opening of St. Timothy School — its first new school in 55 years. Enrollment in the K-8 school that first year was 125 stu-


dents; today’s enrollment is 376 students. The growing pains teachers and students experienced as the \$6.4 million expansion was being planned, financed and built included teachers eating in the hallways and students exercising next to desks when inclement weather kept them indoors for gym and recess. They also “added two modular buildings, which have four classrooms in them,” said Deb Geers, principal. “This is the first time in probably four years that we’ve all been under one roof,” she said about the expansion. Mrs. Greer said that the gymnasium also has a stage “so that we can not only grow our athletic programs but also grow our theater and our music programs as well.” The gymnasium is also large enough for the entire school to gather for community building. “Other than when we go to Mass we’ve never been able to gather as a whole school. It will be great for us to have pep rallies and educational opportunities in there for parents as well as for students. It is a win-win for all of us.” After construction was completed faculty, staff and parents worked around the clock to decorate and equip the classrooms for St. Timothy School’s first Ready, Set, Go Night in its newly expanded building. Mrs. Geers said that the school “is especially blessed” with the support and presence of Father Bolte and Father Elmlinger who greet the students every day. “It’s been a real faith-building experience for us as teachers, as students, as a faith community. There were so many people that wanted to be involved,” said Mrs. Geers.

“It was great to see the faces of the students as they walked in and saw this huge hallway that they could walk down. The faith is really blossoming here and it’s great to be a part of.” In his remarks after Mass, Father Bolte thanked parishioners for their financial support of St. Timothy School, singling out “those people who contribute to the school even though they don’t have any family members in the school, really seeing it as simply a gift for giving an education to children in the faith.” Father Bolte also recognized Mrs. Geers for her work not only in leading the school during a time when “we’ve been kind of packed to the gills” but also for the successful capital campaign. Instead of hiring a consultant, Father Bolte and Mrs. Geers managed the fundraising. He also thanked Bishop Iffert for his support and encouragement. “We’ve been blessed by how many times he’s come out to be with us,” Father Bolte said. In his closing remarks Bishop Iffert offered words of gratitude, “Thank you to Father Rick and to all of those who have assisted” in making this day possible.

While the St. Timothy School takes a moment to celebrate its achievements so far, growth continues. Mrs. Geers said that St. Timothy School is holding on to those modular units. One of the rooms will now be used as a library, the second room, a skills lab that can be used for after school tutoring and the third an adult learning classroom. Mrs. Geers and her faculty are discussing some cool ideas for the fourth room — stay tuned.

Diocesan Pro-life Mass
Oct. 17, 7 p.m.
Rosary at 6:30 p.m.
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington
All are invited to gather in prayer and celebration of life

Cemetery Visitations
Families and friends of our beloved dead are invited to join Bishop John Iffert for a prayer service, Saturday, Oct. 21, at the following diocesan cemeteries:
10 a.m., St. John Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell
11 a.m., St. Mary Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell
12:30 p.m., St. Stephen Cemetery, Ft. Thomas
At each cemetery, the names of those interred from October 2022 through September 2023 will be proclaimed.
“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.”



You’re invited
Join the Diocese for the 2023 Seminary Ball!
An evening of drinks, dinner and dancing in support of our seminarians.
Oct. 27, 6–11 p.m.
Northern Kentucky Convention Center, Covington
RSVP’s available at <https://covdio.org/seminaryball/>.

Newport Central Catholic High School achieves \$13m milestone in ‘Looking Up Capital Campaign’

Laura Keener
Editor

Newport Central Catholic High School (NCC) marks a historic milestone as its “Looking Up Capital Campaign” achieves its \$13 million goal. This achievement was fueled by the dedication and commitment of its community.

“It has been truly humbling to see the people come forward,” said Ken Collopy, principal, NCC, in an interview with the *Messenger* Oct. 6. “They’ve been inspired by our strategic plan that we put together. It was a collaborative effort. We brought a lot of people into that process, including those who took part in our feasibility study and created a direction for the school. I think people could get behind that and felt inspired to help us with our mission.”

The mission of the school is to form Catholic men and women as missionary disciples of Christ by focusing on five pillars: faith, family, academic excellence, character development and community service. The \$13m capital campaign will help achieve its mission by:

- eliminating a \$1.2 million school debt in April 2023.
- creating a state-of-the-art Science Learning Center, which is scheduled to open in January 2024, which, Mr. Collopy said, will “improve NCC’s ability to teach and graduate the strongest science students in its history.”
- providing infrastructure upgrades such as HVAC systems, roofing and the main entryway. These projects are anticipated to start in Spring of 2024.

— and, in the Spring of 2024, the groundbreaking of a long-awaited multi-purpose athletic complex. Construction of the athletic complex will begin once 50 percent of the funds are in hand.

“I’ve never worked with such sincere people before as far as their love for the school,” said Linda Klare, Lead Gift Committee Family Chair for the campaign. “And I just really feel like it’s a necessity to have a Catholic high school in northern Campbell County,” she said noting the housing development at the former Beverly Hills property in Southgate. “Our faith is so beautiful and so deep and I

just cherish my Catholic education. I can’t say enough about what it’s done for my life. I really like Kenny Collopy, he’s got a lot to offer the school.”

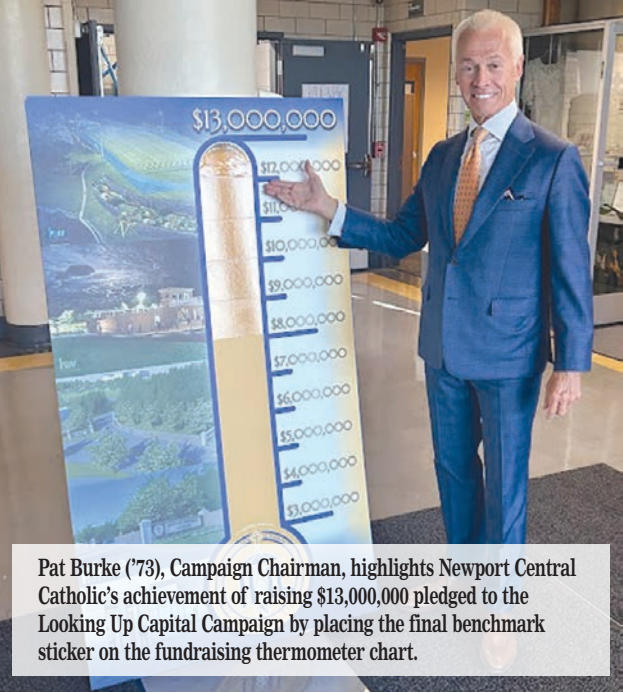
Mr. Collopy said that students are excited to see the improvements already happening on campus. “We actually have seniors who are trying to change their class schedule to make sure they have a class on the (newly renovated) third floor,” which houses the new Science lab. “It’s great to be able to look them in the eyes and to finally say, ‘You’re going to be able to take advantage of this. There are people here supporting you. We are so blessed to have that.’” Mr. Collopy said.

Mr. Collopy said that throughout the campaign the priority has been on academics, which is why the renovated third floor was Phase 1. He believes that the community has shown its support for these priorities because enrollment increased this year by 10 percent. “That’s been a reverse in trend,” Mr. Collopy said, as enrollment had been decreasing over the last few decades.

And, he said, the reputation of NCC is rippling beyond the traditional geographic areas of the community and capturing the attention of those from northern and southern Campbell County and across the Licking and Ohio Rivers. This campaign is also monumental, he said, as it includes six of the largest gifts in the school’s history.

The campaign’s impact on the school has been transformative said Mr. Collopy as he expressed his gratitude. “We are so grateful to Bishop John Iffert for his dedication to this campaign and to those who have supported the future of our school by improving our programs, resources, and facilities,” said Mr. Collopy. “The experience of our students, staff and alumni will be improved for decades to come.”

While celebrating this significant achievement, Mr. Collopy noted that the work is not yet complete. The school has identified \$17m of need in its master plan. The committee will continue to solicit gifts to its capital campaign, stretching beyond the \$13m the feasibility study anticipat-



Pat Burke (’73), Campaign Chairman, highlights Newport Central Catholic’s achievement of raising \$13,000,000 pledged to the Looking Up Capital Campaign by placing the final benchmark sticker on the fundraising thermometer chart.

ed the school community could raise and reaching for total completion of its master plan.

“We are building a stronger NCC that will serve students and families for the next 100 years,” he stated. “All of this and so much more are now realized, but we still have work to do. Our alumni, parents, and friends’ financial support are needed now more than ever. We are hopeful that our loyal NewCath family will continue to support the Looking Up Campaign. We are counting on our community to take us to the next level.”

For information on or to support the Looking Up Capital Campaign visit www.ncchs.com.

St. Joseph Parish welcomes all to parish mission featuring Missionary of Mercy

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

St. Joseph, Cold Spring welcomes one and all to its parish mission, “60 Minutes for Jesus,” with Father Jim Sichko, a priest of the diocese of Lexington and a full-time Papal Missionary of Mercy.

“Back in 2015, the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis appointed 1,000 priests around the world to be Missionaries of Mercy,” said Father Andrew Young, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, “where he gave them a task to go around the world and create acts of kindness, and be his evangelizers around the world,” he said. “Father Sichko was picked to do that, back then, and when that year ended, things had gone well, so the pope offered to extend his service as a Missionary of Mercy indefinitely.”

As of today, Father Sichko is one of the few priests still carrying out this mission of mercy.

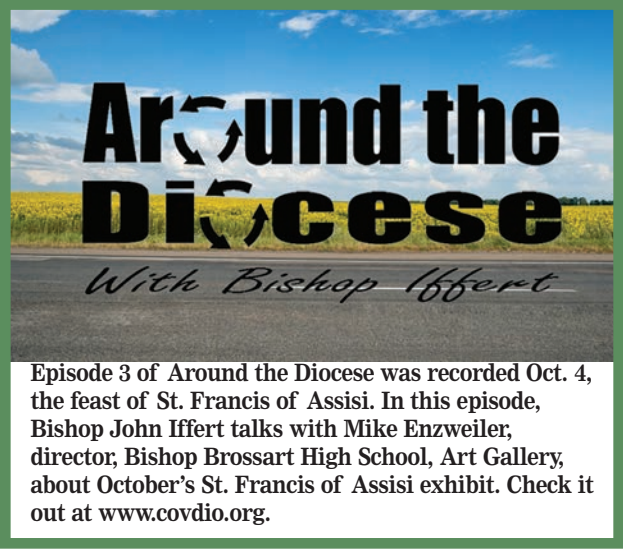
“Essentially,” said Father Young, “he has a budget from

the Vatican to go around the world to do kind things for people and help people when he sees opportunities. A big way that he funds that, too, is through these missions.”

The mission will be three days long, extending from Oct. 22 to Oct. 24, with a different theme each day. The event will start at 7 p.m. every night in St. Joseph Church. Themes include kindness, trust and leadership.

A big part of the mission is the stories Father Sichko shares about his life and experiences in the ministry as a Missionary of Mercy, said Father Young. “There’s some really inspiring stories, and he’s got a very dynamic kind of personality.”

“He’s entertaining to listen to, but always manages to bring some good, heartfelt messages through his own life experience, which kind of shows that if we’re open to God’s will, then these incredible things can happen to any of us — it’s a very inspiring message.”



Episode 3 of Around the Diocese was recorded Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. In this episode, Bishop John Iffert talks with Mike Enzweiler, director, Bishop Brossart High School, Art Gallery, about October’s St. Francis of Assisi exhibit. Check it out at www.covdio.org.



Bishop’s
Schedule

40 Hour Devotion

This year, the three-year Eucharistic Revival is in its parish phase. To help unite parishes around the Eucharist, Bishop John Iffert, at the request of the diocesan Worship Committee, has asked pastors to host 40 Hours of continual Eucharistic adoration.

These 40 Hours will be scheduled sometime during the year, from now until July 2024, when the revival culminates with a Eucharistic Congress, July 17–21, 2024, at Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis. Discounted tickets for the Congress are available through the diocesan Office of Worship and Liturgy; an application is online at covdio.org.

Upcoming 40 Hour Devotions

- Oct. 13, 2023, St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana
 - Oct. 20, 2023, St. Augustine Parish, Augusta
 - Oct. 27, 2023, St. John Parish, Carrollton
 - Nov. 3, 2023, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington
 - Nov. 17, 2023, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring
 - May 3, 2024, St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs
- (The schedule will be updated as needed.)

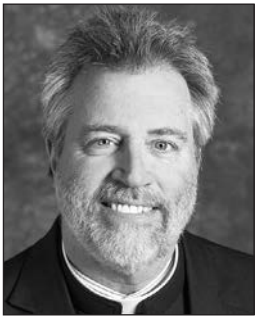
- Oct. 17**
Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- Diocesan Finance Council meeting, 2 p.m.
- Pro-Life Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 19**
Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- Priest Holy Hour, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 3 p.m.

- Oct. 21**
St. John Cemetery Visitation, 10 a.m.
- St. Mary Cemetery Visitation, 11 a.m.
- St. Stephen Cemetery Visitation, 12:30 p.m.
- Oct. 22**
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 10 a.m.

Rely on God in all seasons

The readings for the twenty-eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time — Cycle A — are: **Isaiah 25:6-10a; Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20 and Matthew 22:1-14.**

GO AND GLORIFY



Father Stephen Bankemper

Here is one of those Master/Disciple stories: Every day, the disciples would ask their Master, “Master, how are you?” and the Master would respond, “I am OK.” One day one of the disciples asked him, “Master, every day we ask you how you are, and every day you respond, ‘I am OK.’ How can you be OK every day?” The Master responded, “On good days, I am OK, and on bad days, I am OK.”

How many of us are this grounded? Our moods and feeling of well-being are so tied to outside

things that sometimes the simplest thing — someone cutting us off on the road, or the weather — can leave us angry for hours or even ruin our day. This story reminds us that if the outside circumstances of our lives are affecting our inner well-being, then something is wrong: either we have built our lives to some degree on outside things, or we have temporarily lost sight of what is truly important.

Paul seems to have figured this out. “I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance,” he wrote to the Philippians (this Sunday’s second reading). “I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need.”

What was the secret he learned? “I can do all things in

him who strengthens me.” Paul did not rely on money, food, other people, being free or chained, not even on himself; Paul relied on God.

How did Paul learn this secret? We do not know from any one direct statement from Paul, but in reading Paul’s letters, and about him in the Acts of the Apostles, it is a pretty good guess that Paul learned it from experience. Paul knew the secret to living in want or abundance because he lived through both, and God brought him through both.

Paul was sometimes well fed and sometimes hungry, and God brought him through both of those things as well. In abundance Paul relied on God and in want Paul relied on God; free Paul relied on God and in chains Paul relied on God; on “good” days Paul relied on God, and on “bad” days Paul relied on God, and discovered that when he relied on God, he was always OK. Paul could do all things, as long as he remained in God through Christ.

Actually, this is a lesson one can only learn through experience. We learn to depend on God by depending on God. We learn to trust God by trusting God. It is that simple, and yet difficult to do.

David seems to have learned this, also. No one has the confidence to say, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want,” without living through times when she has walked through the dark valley and depended on God to get her through.

There are modern examples, too, of people who knew that their peace was in God, in good times and in bad. Perhaps you have heard of Horatio Spafford, an attorney and real estate investor who lived in the 19th century. He was very successful, but lost his fortune in the great Chicago fire of 1871, and around the same time his four-year-old son died of scarlet fever.

Thinking a vacation would do his family some good, he sent his wife and four daughters to England. He planned to join them after he finished some pressing busi-

ness at home, but the ship sank after a collision in the Atlantic Ocean. Spafford’s wife survived, but his four daughters did not. He immediately set sail for England, and as he passed over the spot where the shipwreck occurred, Spafford thought of his daughters. He later said that, instead of being filled with grief, words of comfort and hope filled his heart. He wrote those words down, giving us a hymn that St. Paul would have been happy to sing:

*When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll,
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

We can learn from Paul, David, Horatio Spafford and others from their examples, but their words can be an even bigger help. We have the expression “Fake it ‘til you make it”; when things are going well it is good to pray, “The Lord is my shepherd;” but an even better time to pray it is when it seems the Lord has left us to wander by ourselves. “It is well, my soul,” is a wonderful thing to say to ourselves when it seems to be so, but an even better time to say it is when life is difficult; that is when we need to remind ourselves that our souls “are in the hands of God, and no torment shall touch them.” (Wisdom 3:1)

It is when we face what seems to be an insurmountable barrier or unsolvable problem that we need to profess, “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.” The use of these words will not be fake; they will profess where we wish to be spiritually, and will actually lead us to that place.

Why not add one more, best used when God’s ways seem incomprehensible and our prayers seem to be going unanswered? “Jesus, I trust in you.”

Father Stephen Bankemper is pastor, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, Ky.

An October garden dedicated to the Holy Angels

“I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand and serve before the Glory of the Lord,” announced Raphael to Tobiah (Tb 12:15).

Our Blessed Mother is Our Lady of the Rosary and the Queen of Angels. October is devoted to the Holy Rosary and, less formally, the Holy Angels that guard and guide us on earth and into our eternity.

Angels are a significant part of God’s arsenal for us against evil. Not only can we petition the Archangels for help but we also each have our own personal guardians and all we need to do is be prayerfully mindful of their gentle but always attentive nudges.

There are seven archangels in our history; Roman Catholics name and honor three — St. Michael (God’s power), St. Gabriel (God’s voice) St. Raphael (God’s healing) — and recognize the other four whose names and spellings vary within traditions yet emphasize additional qualities of the Almighty — God’s light, beauty, righteousness and peace.

You can easily create a prayer garden dedicated to the archangels, whose feast day we celebrate on Sept. 29, or to your own guardian angel who we celebrate on Oct. 2.

The three archangels have their own symbolism and colors in Christian iconography:

St. Michael, hero of God, is often symbolized by a spear, and the colors gold, orange or red.

St. Gabriel, messenger of God, is depicted with lilies or a scroll, and his colors are often white, silver or blue.

St. Raphael, healer of God, is represented with a fish and the colors of green, yellow or gray.

Our gardens are beginning to wind down in most regions, but now is a good time to think about next year; why not plant flowers that represent the archangels? The Michaelmas daisy, “Aster novae-angliae,” flowers when daylight hours are shorter; usually near these feast days depending on which zone you live in. In the States, one of its common names is the New England Aster; it is a sturdy perennial running from pale pinks to saturated purples and growing 3’-5’ tall.

St. Michael is the hero and defender of God and as much as the iris and the gladiolus are both known as sword lilies both are appropriate symbols for this archangel. There are over 300 species of iris growing in a wide range of environments and hardiness zones, and just as many gladioli to choose from. The shield fern genus “Polystichum” — also called a “shield fern” — would also be appropriate in this garden.

For St. Gabriel, who sought Mary’s fiat at the Annunciation, plant the Madonna lily (“Lilium candidum”), or any white Asiatic or Oriental style trumpet lily. As Gabriel, our Blessed Mother shared the color blue in their symbolism, any flowers in this hue can be used.

St. Raphael is known as “God’s Healing” or “God’s Remedy.” The healing herb Garden Angelica, “Angelica archangelica,” is an appropriate plant though it grows quite large for a home garden. Its healing nature was

revealed during the terrible Black Death of the Middle Ages. The legend goes that one of the archangels, proba-

bly Raphael, revealed the curative properties of this plant to a Benedictine monk who began using it in preparations to heal the sick. Better choices for the smaller garden are St. John’s Wort or any yellow flowering plants, or plants with silver leaves.

You could also create small shrines to add to your garden. Purchase unfinished birdhouses, disassemble them and discard the front and bottom. With the back panel, using outdoor paint (or seal acrylic paint with outdoor polyurethane) create an image of the angel with the tunic painted in its color; you could also decoupage a picture of the angel or archangel. Paint the other panels a solid color: light blue or soft yellow for the inside surfaces, brown or deep red on

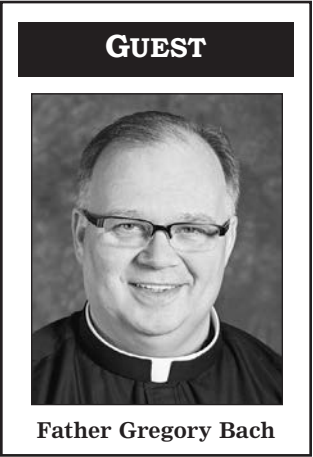
the outside. Reassemble the birdhouse (remember, no bottom or front) and attach it to tree trunks, fences, or posts in your garden, for a year-round shrine.

Margaret Rose Realy is a Benedictine Oblate and the author of “A Garden Catechism: 100 Plants in Christian Tradition and How to Grow Them” (OSV, 2022)

Death is never easy

When I was first ordained, I received a call asking if I could do a funeral service for a child. I didn't ask questions regarding the age of the child or the circumstance as to how the child died.

As I walked into the funeral home, I heard people crying and a mother in distress as she knelt by the side of her son's small casket. Parents are not supposed to bury their children, or that's the way it should be.



Father Gregory Bach

As I began the prayers the mother was crying out, "I want my baby back." Over and over, she repeated that line throughout the service. I am not sure if anyone really paid attention to the prayers, most of the people had tears running down their cheeks. Others seemed to be staring, with their eyes focused on the open casket that was before them.

I finished the prayers and nodded to the funeral director to let him know I was finished. He came in and invited people to come forward to pay their respects to the mother and father. People lined up and most of the people couldn't find words that were appropriate, and so they spoke through the shedding of tears.

It was quite a while before everyone started to leave, to get into their cars and drive off, or wait in their cars to join the procession. The procession to the cemetery was a 30-minute drive. A good number of cars were in the procession.

When we arrived at the cemetery we were led to a chapel towards the back of the cemetery. The chapel only had 20 seats and they were filled quickly by the family, with other family members and friends standing in the doorways.

The reason we were taken to the chapel instead of the graveside was because the family didn't have the resources to pay the amount of a plot and inter the child. So, I rode to the graveside with the funeral director. The funeral director carried the small casket up to the grave. There was a gentleman from the cemetery standing next to the grave with a shovel in hand as he had just finished digging the hole.

As they were getting ready to lower the casket into the grave the father of the child came running up to the grave. By the time he got there the casket had already been lowered. The four of us stood around the grave. The father pulled something from his pocket, it was the baby's rattle and he held it up high and shook the rattle and then threw it into the grave. It was one of the saddest things I have ever seen.

Death is never easy whether it's a parent, grandparent, a sibling or a child, or a friend. It's never easy. Sometimes we are overwhelmed with grief or sadness or anger at the death of a loved one. Sometimes it is hard to get through the sadness but when we work through all the emotions that is when we can see things clearly. Hopefully we can see that God has blessed us by allowing that person's life to overlapped with ours.

If we can get to that point, we can see things in a whole new light and realize that God has been good to us by allowing people to become part of our story. We never know how long someone will be part of our lives so we should give thanks to God for the time we have.

A wise person once told me that when we are born, we cry and everyone smiles and when we die everyone cries and we smile because we have entered into the eternal life God has prepared for us.

Father Gregory Bach is assistant to the Bishop and vice-chancellor, Diocese of Covington, Ky

On a recent visit to Louisville my family attended Sunday Mass. As we waited for Mass to begin, I browsed through the liturgy program, which also contained bulletin announcements and a welcoming message to visitors. It also has the following message:



Faye Roch

"To parents with young children: may we suggest ... relax! God put the wiggle in children. Don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house. Please, sit towards the front where it is easier for your children to sit and hear what is going on at the altar. Quietly explain the parts of the Mass to them. Sing and pray with them! Children learn best by your example."

"If you have to leave Mass with your child, feel free to do so, but PLEASE COME BACK. Let them know that they have a place in God's house! To other members of the parish: the presence of children is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our parish and faith is alive! Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents!"

I was so struck with this. Yes! Parents, take your children to Mass, let them be present as we come together as a community to celebrate the Eucharist.

One of the things significantly changed by COVID has been Mass attendance. Because churches had to be closed and Mass was live streamed, many have relaxed their commitment to the obligation of attending Mass in person.

I can tell you it was not always easy to take four children to Mass, and they certainly were not little angels sitting there in their Sunday best being quiet and attentive. God certainly put extra "wiggle" in our children. They fell off pews and cried after bumping their heads, talked during inappropriate times, and as they got older they had the fine art of aggravating one another down to a science necessitating a parent to sit in between two squabbling children. But we took them to church.

Sometimes I remember leaving Mass and saying, "I think I need to go back to another Mass because all I did in Mass was focus on my children's behavior." As parents my husband and I were often embarrassed because our children may have been loud and disruptive.

Now as older parents, we love when a family with children sits near us. We love watching God's gift to the Church — children — actively participating in Mass in their own unique way.

Too often we can easily find excuses not to go to Mass, our children are wild, they have a baseball or soccer tournament or they don't get anything out of it.

Even while traveling you can find a local service. How blessed we are with our Catholic faith that we can go anywhere in the world and celebrate our beautiful liturgy, and it is the same everywhere we go. It may be in a different language, or they may have different traditions, but it is the same Mass, the same celebration of the Eucharist.

As I was thinking about writing this, I thought of the children's book, "Just Go to Bed," by Mercer Mayer, where a little child "monster" is playing and his dad is trying to get him to go to bed, and the child comes up with many excuses to delay going to bed. We too can get in that same cycle, giving ourselves excuses on why we aren't going. Think of our heavenly Father looking down on us and our families saying, "Just Go to Mass."

Faye Roch is director for the Pro-Life Office, Diocese of Covington, Ky

Just go to Mass

Each October the Catholic Church in the United States observes Respect Life Month as a time to focus on the protection of God's precious gift of human life. The theme of the month varies from year to year, but it usually concentrates our attention on the issue of abortion.

This year's theme is "Living Radical Solidarity." Bishop Michael F. Burbidge, chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, explains, "While ending legalized abortion remains our preeminent priority, the most immediate way to save babies and mothers from abortion is to thoroughly surround mothers in need with life-giving support and personal accompaniment. This is radical solidarity."

Bishop Burbidge noted, "Being in radical solidarity with women who are pregnant or raising children in difficult circumstances means putting our love for them into action and putting their needs before our own."

The bishop cited Pope Francis, who has emphasized that such radical solidarity presumes a transformation of the heart and the creation of a new mindset.

I believe that this new mindset — and our credibility as the People of Life — must arise from a profound understanding of the inviolable dignity of every single human life, through every stage of life, with special attention given to those who are the most frail or in situations of the greatest vulnerability.

Although abortion is an issue of utmost urgency, we cannot limit our pro-life enthusiasm to this issue alone. Our commitment to human life must be all-embracing, or it will not be credible at all. Pope Francis often voices this all-embracing concern for human life.

In a press conference after his recent trip to Marseille, France, the pope spoke of both the beginning and the end of life. "You don't play with life, neither at the beginning nor at the end. You don't play with it," he insisted.

Speaking of the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean the pope said, "God will bless us, if on land and at sea we know how to take care of the weakest, if we can overcome the paralysis of fear and the disinterest that, with velvet gloves, condemns others to death."

He spoke of the mindset that radical solidarity requires: "Let us, the church and civil society, start anew by listening to the poor who should be embraced, not counted, for they are faces, not numbers. The change of direction in our communities lies in treating them as brothers and sisters whose stories we know, not as troublesome problems or chasing them away, sending them home; it lies in welcoming them, not hiding them; in integrating them, not evicting them; in giving them dignity."

The real social evil in our world today, the pope observed, is not so much the increase of problems, but the decrease of care. "Who nowadays becomes a neighbor to the young people left to themselves, who are easy prey for crime and prostitution? ... Who is close to people enslaved by work that should make them freer? Who cares for the frightened families, afraid of the future and of bringing children into the world? Who listens to the groaning of our isolated elderly brothers and sisters, who, instead of being appreciated, are pushed aside, under the false pretenses of a supposedly dignified and 'sweet' death that is more 'salty' than the waters of the sea? Who thinks of the unborn children, rejected in the name of a false right to progress, which is instead a retreat into the selfish needs of the individual?"

These forceful words of Pope Francis present many fields of action calling out for our pro-life convictions and engagement.

It is in involving ourselves in the full breadth of situations in need of our care and commitment that a credible and truly radical solidarity will emerge.

Each member of the Body of Christ has unique gifts and abilities, different interests and convictions. Each of us has an unrepeatable, God-given mission — but we are all called to be artisans of the culture of life. Through our prayers, words and actions we are all called to proclaim that human life is always precious — it is not to be played with!

Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.

Artisans of the culture of life



Sister Constance Veit, L.S.P.

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Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.



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For more information about
Thomas More University,
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Thomas More Alumni Awards honor service, faith and
commitment

The Thomas More Alumni Awards honor outstanding community leaders who graduated from the University and use their talents and expertise to make a significant impact in their community.

This year's award celebration takes place Oct. 21, during Homecoming Weekend which lasts from Oct. 19-22, 2023. Seven alumni are to be honored for their professional achievements and continuing commitment to living the mission of the University.

"We're excited to continue a 55-year tradition of honoring our alumni and friends for the incredible work they do for the University and with the community," says Bri Agner, assistant director of alumni engagement and programming at Thomas More. "This year, we felt an immense sense of pride when nominations hit a new record, showcasing the growing influence that our alumni continue to provide in our region and beyond. These alumni and friends embody Catholic values, being a true witness to what it means to examine the ultimate meaning of life, our place in the world and our responsibility to others."

The Professional Achievement award honors two alumni whose careers exemplify a level of excellence.

Linda Robinson '87 is a seasoned national speaker and accomplished author with an impressive career spanning over 35 years in nursing. Her expertise lies in patient- and family-centered care, patient engagement technology, emergency medicine, critical care, forensic nursing, and health-care legislation. Her accolades include recognition from entities including the Greater Cincinnati Emergency Nurses Association and the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Robert "Bob" Stevens '78 is the current executive chair of board and co-founder of Bottom Line Systems, Inc. He has not only served his community as an outstanding attorney, having been listed consistently from 1991-2010 among the "Best Lawyers in America in Healthcare Law," but was also recognized among "Kentucky's Super Lawyers" (top 5 percent).

Two alumni receive the Citizenship award, recognizing the significant impact they have played on the welfare of their communities through service and leadership.

Shannon Culp '99/'22, receives this award in recognition of her commitment to public safety within the cyber security space. She volunteers her talents, as a co-founder of the American Red Cross' Business Emergency Planning Association and has been a member of the FBI Cincinnati Citizens Alumni Association Board since 2005, helping to fundraise for survivors of human trafficking.

Andrew Kulina '87 was nominated for his family's dedication to serving those in need. The Kulinas welcomed more people into their home, hosting a Ukrainian family of three who were seeking refuge after the start of the Russian invasion. The Kulinas are also active in creating awareness about Phelan-McDermid Syndrome, an under-diagnosed chromosomal deletion condition which their oldest

daughter suffers from. Raising awareness serves to promote further research, understanding and intervention.

Continuing the recognition of service, the Thomas More Service award goes to Patricia Borne '81, honoring the time, energy, and expertise she has provided and continues to provide to the University. She worked in the Benedictine Library for many years and contributed to the launch and teaching of adult learning programs.

Professor Emeritus Thomas Gilday '75 receives the Lasting Influence award for the positive and lasting impact he made on the lives of Thomas More students in the 40 years that he taught in the accountancy department.

The final category, the Emerging Leader award, honors recent alumna Caroline Trennepohl '21, in recognition of excellence in post-collegiate life. She holds the position of campaign manager at the E.W. Scripps Company in Cincinnati, Ohio, also serving as the chair of community service for the Scripps Women's Network and chair of talent acquisition for the Women in Tech Program.

Complete profiles and photos of each honoree can be found at tmuky.us/2023awardwinners. A list of previous honorees can be found at tmuky.us/pastawards. If you would like to nominate a Thomas More alumnus for a future award, please visit tmuky.us/alumniawards.



SERVICE

Patricia Borne '81

CITIZENSHIP

Shannon Culp '99/'22

CITIZENSHIP

Andrew Kulina '87



PROFESSIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT

Linda Robinson '87

PROFESSIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT

Robert Stevens '78

EMERGING
LEADER

Caroline Trennepohl '21

LASTING
INFLUENCE

Tom Gilday '75

TMU Homecoming

Saturday, Oct. 21

Morefest-Saints Sampling Event, Saints Center Lawn
Event Time: 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Homecoming Football Game, Republic Bank Field
Thomas More University Thomas More Saints vs. Hillsdale College Chargers
Kick-Off: 12 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 22

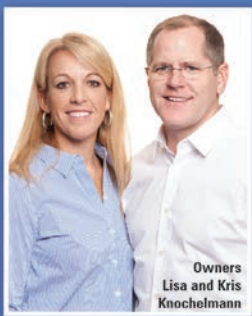
Alumni Mass, Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel, Thomas More University
Begins: 8 p.m.

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Incense — a vision of Heaven

Father Luke Spannagel
USCCB

According to the “Catholic Source Book,” “Frankincense ... is the main ingredient in the incense used in today’s liturgies. A resin produced by a family of desert trees that grow in southern Arabia, it is derived from a sap that dries, forming crystalline lumps of an amber/gold color. For Christians, it has a rich prayer and purification symbolism. From the earliest Christian days, it has been associated with Christ, beginning with the Magi’s gift (Matt 2:10–11). Even before that, the Jews regarded its rich spicy scent as a pure offering, pleasing to God” (p. 307). Charles Belmonte adds, “Incense is a resinous substance which, when placed upon glowing charcoal, gives off a balsamic odor as it burns. It had a place in Israelite worship; in fact, the psalmist compares our prayers to the smoke of incense, rising up to heaven. In the Book of Revelation, it is seen as a symbol of the prayers of the saints” (*Understanding the Mass*, p. 50).

Besides the Book of Revelation, incense is mentioned in the Book of Numbers 7:14 as part of an offering for the dedication of the altar. Deuteronomy 33:10 makes reference to



“the smoke of sacrifice.” Exodus 30:34–38 describes blending aromatic substances with pure frankincense in equal parts, even describing how it should be ground into fine dust. In Revelation 5:8, St. John tells us the elders had “gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones.” In another reference, Revelation 8:3–4 describes an angel with a gold censer: “He was given a great quantity of incense to offer; along with the prayers of all the holy ones... The smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God...”

Hopefully, it is clear from these passages that there is a connection between incense and prayer and sacrifice. When incense is used in the Mass, there are times when it is clearly used to reverence people and things, which is especially clear when incense is used during the Offertory of the Mass. Referring to this part of the Mass, <<The General Instruction of the Roman Missal>> says, after the bread and wine are placed on the altar, “the Priest may incense the gifts placed on the altar and then incense the cross and the altar itself, so as to signify the Church’s offering and prayer rising like incense in the sight of God. Next, the Priest, because of his sacred ministry, and the people, by reason of their baptismal dignity, may be incensed by the Deacon or by another minister” (GIRM, 75). As the Diocese of Peoria teaches, “this particular incense shows a connectedness between the altar of sacrifice, those offering the sacrifice, and those uniting themselves to the sacrifice. Before being incensed we bow not only as a sign of reverence but as a sign of affirmation that, like the incense, we offer our lives to God and pray they be lifted up and transformed” (*A Study of the Mass*, p. 12).

One older priest once said to me that he loves using incense to honor holy people and holy things. As he sees the smoke rising, he is mindful that we are gathered together as God’s people in the Mass, joining Jesus in offer-

(Continued on page 12)



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PEOPLE AND EVENTS

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, offers Veneration of a relic of the True Cross, on the first Friday of every month, from noon–1 p.m. Confessions are offered concurrently. The monthly veneration is held in silence and concludes with a blessing and the opportunity for the faithful to come forward to personally venerate the True Cross relic. The monthly veneration is sponsored by the Knights and Dames of the Covington-Lexington section of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, Art Gallery presents “St. Francis of Assisi,” a display of St. Francis statues on loan from St. Mary/Bishop Brossart alumni. Statues range in size from 3 inches to 4 feet tall and represent both indoor and outdoor statues. Show dates are Sundays only, Oct. 1-29, noon-4 or by appointment (859) 630-2874.

Thomas More University’s theater program welcomes new director Phillip Webster. Originally from the Northern Kentucky area, Webster brings a fascinating and diverse background to the role. He served in the U.S. Air Force and in 2021, founded SouthBank Shakespeare in Bellevue. The first show of the season at Thomas More is Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night,” Oct. 13-15 and 20-21; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. For information, visit www.thomasmore.edu/program/theater/.

The Eva G. Farris Art Gallery at Thomas More University presents “The Secret Garden: Hidden Dreams, Quiet Screams, Whispers that Seep from the Leaves” an exhibition by Stephanie Berrie, Oct. 13-Nov. 2. Gallery talk is Nov. 2, 3:30–4 p.m., and closing reception 4–7 p.m.

St. Augustine Church, Augusta, Bingo/social, Oct. 15, 1-5 p.m., in church basement. Need to be over 18 to play bingo. Entry fee \$10, additional cards optional. Bingo, pull tabs, split-the-pot, refreshments and meal; proceeds benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Chapter of Bracken County.

The Institute for Religious Liberty welcomes Stephanie Barclay, director, Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty initiative, as the keynote speaker for its fall event, Oct. 19, 7 p.m., Steigerwald Hall in the Saints Center of Thomas More University’s campus. Guest commentators include Holly Hinckley Lesan, International Center for Law & Religion Studies at Brigham Young University (BYU) Law School and Gary Greenberg, retired principal in the Cincinnati law office of Jackson Lewis P.C. and president of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. For information visit thomasmore.edu/religiousliberty.

Save the date for Thomas More University’s fall interfaith event hosted by the Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson III ‘67 Institute for Religious Liberty on Oct. 19, 2023. The event begins at 7 p.m. with Stephanie Barclay as keynote speaker. Barclay directs Notre Dame University’s Law School’s Religious Liberty Initiative, which promotes freedom of religion or belief for all people through advocacy, student formation, and scholarship. More details to come. Visit thomasmore.edu/religiousliberty for more information.

The ninth annual Catholic Men’s Eucharistic Procession, Oct. 21, beginning with Mass celebrated by Archbishop Dennis Schnur; 8 a.m., Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains, following Mass, a two-mile procession through downtown Cincinnati; 11 a.m. benediction, Old St. Mary’s Church. For information call (513) 305-6719 or visit facebook.com/holynamecincinnati.

St. Barbara, Erlanger, Turkey Shoots, Saturdays Oct. 21, Oct. 28, Nov. 4 and Nov. 12, 12–4 p.m., 12 gauge only. Beer, soft drinks and food available. Call (859) 380-9260.

Musica Sacra Cincinnati returns to begin the 47th year of Cathedral Concerts Sunday, Oct. 29, at 3 p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. Under the baton of musical director, L. Brett Scott, this program will feature Joseph Haydn’s Mass in C Major. The pristine acoustics of the Cathedral Basilica, along with its inspiring gothic architecture and sacred art, provide lovers of music and the arts an opportunity to hear large-scale sacred choral music — in the setting for which it was originally intended. All Cathedral Concerts are open to the public with no admission charge. A freewill offering is gladly accepted. Visit www.cathedralconcertseries.org for information on this concert and the 2023-2024 season.

St. Peters COF Court #1492 annual matching funds Turkey Raffle, Nov. 4, the Social Center of Sts. Peter & Paul School, California. BINGO, raffles and plenty of food. Proceeds benefit Sts. Peter & Paul School for updating school furnishings. Call Jeanette Geiger at (859) 803-3782.

St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, PTO Craft Show accepting vendor applications for its craft show Nov. 4, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Table prices include 8-foot tables and two chairs. One table: \$30; two tables: \$50, electric available for an additional \$2.50 per table. Set up the evening before the craft show available. Contact Rebecca Stidham at fawn.stidham486@gmail.com.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. In this group, participants find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit <https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1500, ext.1592. The next session will be held on consecutive Thursdays, Oct.12 – Dec. 7, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

DCCH Children’s Home Flea Market, Ft. Mitchell, year-round, 8:30 a.m.– noon, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday; (Dec.– April, Monday, Thursday and every 3rd Saturday). Donation drop-off during Flea Market hours or at drop-off box anytime.



Blessing man’s best friends

The pets of St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, received a special blessing on the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4.

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Bishop Iffert makes first visit to Carmel Manor
Bishop John Iffert made his first visit to Carmel Manor, Ft. Thomas, Oct. 5. He began by celebrating Mass and finished with a tour of the nursing care facility run by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. In his homily he reminded the residents that at this time in their life, while they are frail and infirmed, that God has an important mission for them “to be that prayer battery for all those young mothers who don’t have time to pray. You can pray for all those busy people who are building homes and careers and families. “You are here because God loves you. You are here because the life of a bishop gets busy sometimes and I need prayer. You have a purpose. You can make a difference. You still have work to do. So get busy.”

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Incense

(Continued from page 8)

ing the perfect sacrifice to the Father. In the Mass, our prayers are joined together, and the incense gives us a visual reminder of those prayers being offered to God. He also mentioned he places one, two, or three spoons of incense (from the little container called an incense boat) onto the

burning charcoal in the censer (sometimes called a thurible). For him, one spoonful calls to mind the Oneness of God; two spoonfuls point to the two natures of Christ (human and divine); and three indicate the three persons of the Trinity. For that priest, this is a simple way to recall core truths about God as we pray together in the Mass. To summarize for us, Father Oury notes that incensing “is a mark of honor paid to the offerings that are going to

become the Body and Blood of Christ. The honor extends to all the people participating in the celebration and to their offerings, which represent their life and work. Incensing is also a kind of petition, a deeply meaningful one. Through it we pray that the Church’s offering and the Church’s prayer may mount to heaven, to the presence of God above, like a veritable cloud of incense” (The Mass, p. 87).

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National/World

Hamas attack a catastrophe of 'biblical dimensions,' says Israeli ambassador

ROME — The shock of the surprise attack by Hamas militants on Israel, in which hundreds were killed, wounded or kidnapped, has left a traumatic mark on Israeli citizens, said the country's ambassador to the Vatican. "I would say this is a catastrophe that I would describe in biblical dimensions," Ambassador Raphael Schutz, Israeli ambassador to the Holy See, told OSV News Oct. 9. "Total families were murdered — grandparents, parents and children, in villages, in kibbutzim, in the towns around Gaza. There is a feeling of a national trauma," Schutz said. The number of men, women and children who have died, he added, is on "a scale that we have not known. I would say, since the beginning of the establishment of Israel." The attack began in the early hours of the morning Oct. 7 when Hamas militants launched an attack in southern Israel, killing civilians in cars and homes, and taking hostages to Gaza.

Pope condemns terrorism, but expresses concern for Gaza civilians

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis condemned Hamas' terrorist attacks on Israel and pleaded with the militants to free their hostages unharmed, but he also expressed concern about Israel's tightening siege on Gaza and its impact on innocent civilians. "I continue to follow with sorrow and apprehension what is happening in Israel and Palestine. So many people killed, and others injured," the pope said Oct. 11 at the end of his weekly general audience. As the pope spoke, the Israeli Defense Forces website was reporting more than 1,200 Israelis killed by Hamas and more than 2,800 Israelis injured. At the same time, the Gaza Ministry of Health was reporting a death toll of more than 950 Palestinians and said 5,000 others were injured as Israel continued its airstrikes on Gaza. "I pray for

all those families that saw a day of celebration be transformed into a day of mourning” Oct. 7, the pope said. “And I ask that the hostages be released immediately,” he continued. Israeli government officials have estimated that Hamas is holding some 150 Israeli hostages. “One who is attacked has the right of self-defense,” the pope said, “but I am very concerned about the total siege under which Palestinians are living in Gaza, where there also have been many innocent victims.”

As FDA considers artificial wombs, ethicist recommends 'courage and caution'

WASHINGTON — Catholics should approach the issue of artificial wombs with both courage and caution, an ethicist stressed after U.S. Food and Drug Administration advisers met about the new technology. "Courage because this endeavor is highly complex technologically and may positively impact human lives and health at very vulnerable stages," said John F. Brehany, the executive vice president and director of institutional relations at the National Catholic Bioethics Center. "Caution because — when it is deployed — such technology will be powerful and subject to abuse." In mid-September, the FDA's Pediatric Advisory Committee met to discuss and provide recommendations on the future of artificial womb technology for extremely premature infants, or babies born before 28 weeks of pregnancy. The independent committee considered plans to establish the safety and effectiveness of the technology, including regulatory and ethical considerations for use with humans. The advisers examined artificial womb technology as an alternative to current standard-of-care management of extremely premature babies in the neonatal intensive care unit. While the technology has developed animals, it has yet to be used on humans.

Poland's 'harsh election' highlights challenges to church

WARSAW, Poland — When Polish voters choose a new parliament Oct. 15, it will follow an election campaign marked by bitter infighting in this traditionally Catholic country. In

power for eight years, the governing Law and Justice party, known by its Polish acronym PiS, will be hoping for a record third term but is unlikely to gain enough votes to form a government outright. And though widely believed to favor PiS over its rival, the Civic Coalition, Poland's predominant church has avoided taking sides and will be watching the outcome closely. "This campaign has been exceptionally harsh, with attempts to discredit opponents which have infringed human dignity," Marcin Przeciszewski, director of Poland's influential Catholic Information Agency, or KAI, told OSV News. "The church will face problems whoever wins or loses — as PiS seeks to instrumentalize it for political advantage and the Civic Coalition challenges it on key issues. While it will be hard for any party to govern, it will be even harder to heal the deep divisions which have obscured any notion of a common good," he said.

Bishops launch National Catholic Mental Health Campaign

WASHINGTON — Two U.S. bishops have launched the National Catholic Mental Health Campaign, amid a global crisis in mental health and a decline in mental health resources in the U.S. The campaign was announced Oct. 10 to coincide with World Mental Health Day, created by the World Federation for Mental Health in 1992 to highlight the importance of mental health. This year's theme focuses on mental health as a universal human right. Leading the initiative are Archbishop Borys A. Gudziak of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; and Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth. In an introductory message for the campaign, the bishops said their goals are threefold: to raise greater awareness of the issue, to remove the sense of stigma for those suffering from mental illness, and "to advocate a clear message to all: Everyone who needs help should get help." The campaign begins with an Oct. 10-18.

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