Inside this issue

Ways to help:
In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Diocese of Columbus Office of Development and Planning has set up an online giving platform, "A Time for Extreme Charity," through the diocesan website, Page 2.

'School at home':
Students, parents and teachers at Columbus St. Timothy and other diocesan schools are adapting to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Page 3.

Grow closer to Jesus:

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Students, parents and teachers at Columbus St. Timothy and other diocesan schools are adapting to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Page 3.

Grow closer to Jesus:

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Pages 4, 6-7, 11
Online giving possible through diocesan website

Catholics in the Diocese of Columbus wishing to support diocesan programs, schools or individual parishes during the coronavirus pandemic can now do so by going directly to the diocesan website, even if their parish does not have a way to accept contributions online.

In response to the pandemic, the diocesan Office of Development and Planning has set up an online giving platform titled “A Time of Extreme Charity,” using a phrase from Bishop Robert Brennan’s homily at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on Sunday, March 22, the first Sunday when all of Ohio’s Catholic churches were closed because of the virus.

Through its secure online vendor Faith Direct, the diocese is offering parishioners a chance to make weekly, monthly or one-time payments, using their debit/credit cards or bank accounts, to the diocese itself, to the tuition assistance fund for diocesan schools, or to any one of the diocese’s 111 churches, 42 elementary schools or 11 high schools.

Anyone wishing to provide support in this manner may go to www.columbuscatholic.org/make-a-gift-now and follow the instructions.

“This program was established to promote continued assistance for parishes and schools at a time when the usual methods of support, such as offertory collections and fund drives, are unable to take place,” said Andrea Pannell, diocesan development and planning director.

“Some diocesan parishes do not have a platform for online giving. The development department decided that instead of having them take up the challenge of establishing such a program, we would provide it for them. We expanded it to the schools as well.

“We know that this is a time of great uncertainty and fear, and we hear from others and live ourselves with the frustration of not being able to attend Mass or fellowship with our parish communities at a time when we need both more than ever,” she said. “And while our priests are learning how to livestream Masses and are continuing to be here for each of us spiritually in new ways, there are ongoing financial needs of churches and schools that must be met.

“The ‘A Time of Extreme Charity’ platform will allow the faithful of the diocese to help each other to discover new opportunities, during this time of COVID-19, to continue to embrace stewardship as a way of life as we continue to offer not only our finances but also our time and talents to live our Catholic faith fully.”

Pannell also urged Catholics to regularly check the websites of their parishes and schools and the diocese to learn how the Church is meeting needs resulting from the virus.

If you have questions about the “A Time of Extreme Charity” platform, go to the diocesan website or call Faith Direct at (866) 507-8757.

ODU wellness videos respond to COVID-19 concerns

Staff members of Ohio Dominican University’s wellness center have produced a series of 13 videos that address a range of physical and mental health concerns and needs that people may experience during the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis.

Eleven videos that highlight mental health needs and strategies feature licensed professional counselors Anne Lombardi, director of the wellness center, and Kate Levine. Counseling interns Aryn Levine, Monica Spadaro and Elena McCarley also provided content.

“The videos are designed to help ODU students and faculty and their families,” said Lombardi, who is the counselor and director of counseling and career services at ODU.

Lombardi said the videos are available on the ODU Wellness Facebook page.

“COVID-19 is causing a lot of stress and anxiety,” she said. “These videos are designed to address that.”

Donation to GV St. Mary School benefits families

Thanks to an extremely generous benefactor, St. Mary School in Columbus’ German Village neighborhood was able to provide $40,000 worth of gift cards to all of its families in need. This will help them provide food for the next nine weeks. A Facebook post about the donation may be found at the “Saint Mary School German Village” Facebook page.

In addition, the school is working with the Mid-Ohio Food Collaborative to provide food for school families who need another outlet for fresh food.
Students, teachers adjusting to ‘school at home’

By Tim Puet
Catholic Times Reporter

It has been a little more than a month since the coronavirus pandemic resulted in the shutdown until at least May 1 of the diocese’s elementary and secondary schools and all other schools across Ohio.

“It hasn’t been that long, yet right now it seems like centuries ago,” said Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School principal Dan Garrick.

The schools may be closed, but education is continuing at students’ homes. Technological tools such as the Zoom videoconferencing system and various Google apps are allowing students and teachers to stay in contact with each other despite being separated physically, providing them with a learning experience they never could have anticipated a few weeks ago.

“We’re set up so students can have a school day at home that’s as close as possible to what they would be doing in the classroom,” said George Mosholder, principal of Columbus St. Timothy School.

“Along with many other diocesan schools, we have an internal website known as SchoolSpeak, and that plays a big role in what we do. Teachers make videos in which they talk to students and show the work that needs to be done, just as they would be doing in a regular classroom, and students submit their work in whatever way works best for them.

“One thing that’s been very helpful to us has been an interactive whiteboard app called Show Me. Teachers also are making use of videos on YouTube, National Geographic and other sites, and we have sent parents suggestions on supplementing what their children are learning.

“When other teachers, staff members and me started hearing reports in early January of the impact of the coronavirus in China, we began planning for the possibility that the virus might reach the U.S.,” Mosholder said. “We met regularly with teachers to make plans for potentially having to do distance learning, so we stayed ahead of the curve and were prepared for what has happened.

“We have to be as flexible as we can about how students submit their work. Some do it by phone, some verbally, some visually. Some pick it up and drop it off. Most of our students have between one and five siblings, so you also have to take it into account that they will be turning in work at all sorts of times.

“I’m just coming back from picking up packets of work from one family’s home. Most of our families have computers at home, but for those who didn’t, we loaned them some of the school’s Apple Macbooks. I contacted the families of all our 235 students to say we could set up the technology needed to make their home a wireless hotspot, but no one has asked for that kind of help.”

Because each of the 875 students at St. Francis DeSales High has a school-supplied iPad, the school is able to conduct classes on its regular daily schedule, beginning with prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance and opening announcements at 8 a.m. and concluding with closing announcements at 3:10 p.m.

“A situation like this makes us realize how blessed we are to have a program that enables students and teachers to be together in real time,” Garrick said. “We’ve had technology in classrooms for some time.

“When we had to make the transition to learning from home, it wasn’t without bumps, but it wasn’t as difficult as it could have been. Some students had to have us set up wi-fi hotspots in their homes, but most had that capability.

“The way daily instruction is delivered varies from class to class. Mostly it’s through Zoom, but some use Google Meet or Classroom. One nice thing about Classroom is that it allows for seamless transition of material from teachers to students and back again.

“I teach a U.S. History class and through Zoom (which allows each participant in a class or conference to be seen), I can see my students and they can see me. That’s kind of cool.

“This format has a chat setup on which one student can post questions, and what’s interesting about this is that some of the students who have been quiet in class seem to be more willing to speak up in a chat room.”

Garrick said many DeSales students are taking part in one of three all-school service projects related to the pandemic. One group is making face masks. Another is putting together snack trays and distributing them to people in the front lines of fighting the virus, such as nurses, emergency room personnel and first responders. A third group is sending letters of hope to residents of the Mohun Health Care Center in Columbus, which the Dominican Sisters of Peace operate for retired priests and religious.

Columbus Bishop Ready High School does class scheduling in a different manner, so it’s not attempting DeSales’ program of duplicating the school day, but the school’s online class format enables its 425 students to attend classes for about the same number of hours as they would if school were open, said Ready assistant principal Rocco Fumi.

“We’ve been doing distance learning for a few years in which we connect with other schools, so some teachers here are used to the idea of talking to a class without having any-one else in the room,” he said.

Fumi teaches eighth-grade algebra to students at Columbus Trinity and St. Cecilia schools from a Ready classroom that’s set up for distance learning. The classroom also is used for classes by Ready teachers in geometry, Spanish and the Chinese language of Mandarin that are viewed live by students in other diocesan schools.

“I use something called a virtual chalkboard, on which I can write much as I would on a blackboard when connected with other classrooms,” Fumi said. “I can’t write on it in the same way when the material is sent to students using iPads, home computers or phones. Instead, I have

See SCHOOL AT HOME, Page 9
When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust without fear. (Psalm 56:3-4)

I doubt there is anyone whose world has not been flipped on its head over the last few weeks. When I first settled into my work-from-home routine in mid-March, I never dreamed I would still be here on Divine Mercy Sunday, waiting for the downside of the Coronavirus curve. Yet here I am, hunkered down in isolation, trying each day to embrace this new normal until the old normal, or something vaguely resembling it, is normal once again.

The word that keeps coming to me, while pondering what good God intends to make from this bad situation, is “trust.” How fitting it is on this Divine Mercy Sunday, considering that Jesus’ message to St. Faustina was that, more than anything, He wanted us to trust in His Divine Mercy. When He described to her the image of Divine Mercy that He wanted to be painted, He requested that the words, “Jesus, I trust in you” be inscribed under the image.

In His infinite wisdom, Jesus spelled everything out for us precisely. The day this was to be celebrated, the prayers of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, what He wanted the image to look like, and the phrase that He wanted us to repeat so frequently that it would become engraved in our hearts. With such crystal clear instructions, we should have no reason to get it wrong.

By contrast, in the Gospel reading this weekend, we hear the familiar story of Christ’s appearance after the resurrection to the apostles in the upper room. Thomas, who told the others he would need to touch Jesus’ wounds in order to believe, resonates with me more than I care to admit. Despite a growing devotion to Divine Mercy, I have to wonder … is it acceptable for me to say both “Jesus, I trust in you,” and “Help my unbelief,” in the same breath?

In our human weakness, trust does not come easily. Even in the best of times, it is difficult to trust in that which we cannot see. We say we trust in God’s providence, but when it seems that our prayers are unheard or unanswered, we wonder exactly what He plans to provide. We say we trust in His perfect timing, but we grow impatient, wishing that His schedule would align with ours. We say that with God all things are possible, but we wonder exactly how He will achieve something that seems impossible in the context of our own world. We say that we trust in His mercy, but we question why He would ever want to forgive us for doing the same dumb things time and time again.

In these times of uncertainty, I am reminded that my Catholic faith is not just an invitation to which I respond; it is also a gift from God. As with any gift, I can think of three things that a good Christian steward should do with that gift of faith. First, thank God for it, embracing it with the humble gratitude of someone who has received something she does not deserve. Second, give it my attention, because faith is like any other relationship; I need to spend time with it, grow deeper in it, allow myself to be vulnerable within it, and let it make my friendship with God become fruitful. Third and finally, share it with others, with the hope and confidence that it will take root in those around me and flourish.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely; In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
As I write this column, it is Tuesday of Holy Week, the closing days of an unusually long Lent, punctuated by the deprivations, separations, and unique fasting opportunities that only a global pandemic can provide. We are walking with Our Lord on the journey to Calvary and the cross. But when this piece is published, we will be gazing at the empty tomb, amazed at the stories of so many witnesses that have seen Him, and who tell us that He is alive, that Jesus has truly risen from the dead, just as He said He would. Lent, then, is a practice opportunity, a preparation for your journey and mine, through the cross to the fullness of life on the other side.

Early in my time with the Diocese, I attended the Columbus Leadership Prayer Breakfast, a gathering to pray and unite in common purpose for the good of the city. One of the featured speakers was Baptist minister, speaker and writer Tony Cam polo. He related the story that he had been invited to a conference of Baptist ministers that included a “preach-off.” He felt exceptionally well prepared for the competition and was buoyed by the

Catholics urged to vote, be counted despite challenging times

These are challenging times because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The diocesan Office for Social Concerns says that in the midst of the tragedy, it is hopeful to hear about the increase of prayer and the stories of Catholics working on the front lines in health care, grocery stores, social services and other essential services, and of everyday Catholics in the diocese who are finding creative ways to respond to needs in a safe way.

For an updated listing of ways you can get help, provide help, or strengthen your spiritual life, visit www.columbuscatholic.org/coronavirus-response.

During this time, two ways to live out faithful citizenship are offered: voting in the Ohio primary election and taking part in the U.S. Census.

The pandemic forced cancellation of in-person voting on March 17, the scheduled day of the primary. Eligible Ohioans are offered the chance to vote by mail. In-person voting will be limited to people with disabilities or who lack a home address by Tuesday, April 28.

Step 1: Voters who did not already cast a vote in the 2020 primary election should visit the website www.voteohio.gov (or your county board of elections) to request a mail-in ballot. A printable application to request a mail-in ballot may be found on this website.

Step 2: Once you have completed your application, mail it to your county board of elections (the address may be found at www.voteohio.gov). Applications for ballots must be received by Saturday, April 25. The county board of elections will then send you an absentee ballot in the mail.

Step 3: Pray, Reflect, Vote.

Step 4: After completing your ballot, mail it to your county board of elections. Ballots must be postmarked by Monday, April 27 to be counted.

Data from the U.S. Census helps direct more than $800 billion annually to key programs designed to advance the common good, strengthen families and reduce poverty. The Catholic Church and other service providers rely on the census to provide an accurate count so they may effectively serve those in need.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) urges all people to be counted in the census, regardless of citizenship. This includes populations living at the margins – including the elderly, the homeless and immigrants. To learn more about the census, visit www.2020Census.gov.

The USCCB has reissued its document Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship in English and Spanish, with a new Introductory note at www.faithfulcitizenship.org. This statement is the USCCB’s teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics. It represents guidance for Catholics in the exercise of their rights and duties as participants in our democracy.

On the way to Sunday

FAITH IN ACTION

Mark Huddy

Mark Huddy is the Episcopal Moderator for Catholic Charities and the Office for Social Concerns in the Diocese of Columbus.

“Amens,” “Preach it, brother,” and hand waving that erupted from the crowd listening to his sermon. He was the second to last to preach. Exulting in the thrill of his nearness to victory, he sat down. The next preacher spoke only six words, and repeated them throughout his sermon. He began slowly and softly and eventually came to a crescendo with his proclamation that brought everyone to their feet. What were those six words that so spoke to the hearts of his listeners and believers? They were, “It’s Friday, but Sunday’s a comin’.”

I do not know whether the coronavirus will have peaked by the time that you read this column. More than likely there are more troubles ahead, more job losses, more confirmed cases, and more deaths. But I do know that the Holy Week we have experienced united with the Holy Week that Jesus experienced 2,000 years ago was and is definitive. Sin and death have been conquered and hold no more sway over us. In that spirit, let us look again at the beautiful Apostolic Exhortation that Pope Francis gave us on the feast of the Annunciation last year, Christus vivit, Christ is Alive. w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papafrancesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.pdf

Let us find ways to proclaim that truth, not only with our words but with our lives, especially in the way that we care for one another, as Christ has loved and cared for us. Take some time and review opportunities to share that love and care with others impacted by the coronavirus at www.columbuscatholic.org/love-provide-help-covid-19. In this way, we will know that even if it is still Friday, Sunday’s a comin’.

The Catholic Foundation’s Responsive Grants application period has moved from the Fall to MAY 1 - MAY 29

For the complete grant guidelines and eligibility, please visit www.catholic-foundation.org/grants
Divine Mercy: an ocean of peace in tumultuous times

By Michele Faehnle

As I was watching a livestreaming Mass from the Carmelite monastery in Munster, Indiana, I couldn’t help but be drawn to the large image of Divine Mercy that hung to the left of the altar. The pale red rays that poured out of the pierced heart of Christ seemed to extend out of my tablet screen right into my heart, and the words Jesu Ufam Tobie (“Jesus, I Trust in You” in Polish) were prominently fixed before my eyes.

The world as we know it is temporarily on pause, with everyone mandated to stay home. There are no public Masses or other church services and the fear and anxiety over the COVID-19 pandemic is palpable. Yet all I could think of as Mass continued were the words I knew I needed to repeat over and over again: “Jesus, I trust in You. Jesus, I trust in You.”

For me, trust in Jesus is a concept that is easier said than done. As a type-A personality, I like my life to be organized, thought out and according to plan. Yet time and time again, God has shown that I am really not in control, and no matter how much I plan, life can change in the blink of an eye. However, I have learned through experience that if we ask Jesus for this grace to trust Him, He will give it to us in abundance – enough to share with others. In the Diary of St. Faustina, Jesus tells St. Faustina, “When a soul approaches me with trust, I fill it with such an abundance of graces that it cannot contain them within itself, but radiates them to other souls” (Diary 1074).

The Divine Mercy message and devotion have been a source of consolation and peace in my daily life, whether times were good or trying. During this difficult time, this devotion, which encourages complete surrender to the will of God, is more important than ever.

So how can this devotion bring you peace during a worldwide pandemic? Here are some simple recommendations:

Place an image of Divine Mercy in your home in a visible place

This beautiful image is more than a picture. It is a vessel for grace for your family. Jesus directed St. Faustina to have the image of Divine Mercy painted and venerated around the world. He promised, “By means of this Image I shall be granting many graces to souls” (Diary 570).

St. Faustina’s spiritual director, Father Sopocko, recalled that Jesus said, “Let everyone procure for their homes this image because there will yet come trials. And those homes, and entire families, and everyone individually who will hold this image of mercy in deep reverence, I will preserve from every sort of misfortune. The time will come when all those who do so will give witness to the miraculous efficacy and to the special protection of mercy flowing from this image.”

Father Chris Alar, MIC, a priest with the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception (the religious community entrusted with spreading the message and devotion of Divine Mercy), is encouraging all Catholics to “seal their doorposts” by placing an image of Divine Mercy on their front door. As the Israelites sealed their doors with the blood of the Lamb before fleeing from Egypt, he asked that we mark our doors with the Precious Blood of Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb of God.

Father Chris explains that “while this act of faith may not guarantee your family won’t be physically affected by the virus, it will guarantee that, by your trust in Jesus, you will obtain His promises of love and mercy, which will surround you and remain in you forever.”

Pray Chaplet of Divine Mercy

While St. Faustina was praying, she heard Jesus asking her to pray specific prayers on the beads of a rosary. The most repeated prayer is “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world” (Diary 476).

Jesus told St. Faustina, “Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My Will” (Diary 1731) and “Oh, what great graces I will grant to souls who say this Chaplet” (Diary 848).

This simple, rhythmic prayer is not only beautiful meditation on the Passion of Our Lord, but an opportunity to beg for “mercy on us and on the whole world.” What a powerful work of mercy we can offer to all those who are suffering by praying not only for our families and ourselves, but also for mercy on the entire world. Jesus specifically asks that we pause at the 3 o’clock hour to meditate on his passion. Many parishes are streaming the chaplet live on their Facebook page, or you can pray with the Marians of the Immaculate Conception at the National Shrine of Divine Mercy at 3 p.m. on the official Divine Mercy Facebook page. However, if 3 o’clock passes and you haven’t been able to say the Chaplet, pause and pray anyway, as I was once reminded by a bumper sticker that said, “It’s 3 o’clock somewhere, pray the Chaplet.”

Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday

Jesus told St. Faustina, “I desire there to be a Feast of Mercy” (Diary 699).

Divine Mercy Sunday, the Sunday after Easter, is a Catholic dream. Jesus promised a “whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of My mercy” on this day. Jesus offers a very special grace to those who go to confession and receive Holy Communion – complete forgiveness of sins and punishment (Diary 699).

Typically, to celebrate this great feast day is actually pretty easy: however, this year during the quarantine, what are we to do? Father Chris assured me, “The Church has made it clear we can still receive the graces from Divine Mercy Sunday. If confession is not available, in lieu of going to confession, we can make an Act of Contrition, say we are sorry for our sins and try our best to sin no more.

“If Mass is not available and we cannot physically receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we can make a spiritual communion and ask Him to give us the graces as if we did receive Him sacramentally. When the Church is unable to provide the sacraments for us, remember, Jesus is not constrained. He continues to offer us this special grace.”

You also can participate in the Divine Mercy Sunday celebration at the National Shrine of Divine Mercy, broadcast on EWTN.

Read the Diary of St. Faustina

Although this rather large tome may seem daunting, it is filled with the beautiful reflections written by St. Faustina and the words Jesus spoke to her. Through her writings, you will find Jesus not only is talking to her, but also wants to speak to each of us and to lead us to holiness. Millions of people have been impacted by her writings and the messages are a beacon of light, love and truth in a dark world. Here are some of my favorite consoling quotes:

If you are lonely – “Do not fear. I will not leave you alone” (Diary 881).
If you are hurting – “Tell me all, My child, hide nothing from Me, because My loving Heart, the Heart of your Best Friend, is listening to you” (Diary 1486).
If you are anxious – “Be at peace, My child, I am with you” (Diary 1674).
If you are suffering – “My daughter, do not be afraid of sufferings; I am with you” (Diary 151).

Jesus wants to be our best friend. He wants us to grow in prayer, love and faith so we can enter more deeply into His most precious Heart. May this difficult time teach us to trust and bring us closer to Jesus, whose mercy is endless.

Michele Faehnle is the co-author of “Divine Mercy for Moms: The Friendship Project” and “Our Friend Faustina: Life Lessons in Divine Mercy.” She is also the co-director of the Columbus Catholic Women’s Conference and the school nurse at Columbus St. Andrew School.
Celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday while churches are not open

By Tim McAndrew

The following consists of quotations from the Diary of St. Faustina Kowalska with paragraph references (printed in italics) and the author’s reflections:

“The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sin and punishment” (699).

Since I can’t go to confession and receive Holy Communion, will I still receive the grace of complete pardon of all sin and punishment for Divine Mercy Sunday?

If you truly want this and desire this, then, yes. Jesus’ mercy is endless and He wants nothing more than to free you of all sin and punishment. Jesus never would ask for the impossible from us and, right now, it is impossible to receive the sacraments. His mercy is infinite and He always wants to extend His grace.

“Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All the works of My hands are crowned with mercy” (301). … “The loss of each soul plunges Me into mortal sadness … if sinners knew My mercy, they would not perish in such great numbers” (1396).

“Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My mercy. … Oh, how much I am hurt by a soul’s distrust! Such a soul professes His justice but does not believe in My Goodness” (300).

What do you do if you can’t go to confession?

Simply make a good act of contrition with a contrite heart, telling Jesus from the bottom of your heart how sorry you are for your sins and that you would never commit them again; Then go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation as soon as possible after it is available again.

“My mercy is greater than your sins and those of the entire world. Who can measure the extent of My goodness? … I never reject a contrite heart” (1485).

What do you do if you can’t receive Holy Communion?

There is sacramental communion and there is spiritual communion, and if you can’t receive Our Lord sacramentally on this day, then you can receive Him spiritually. In spiritual communion, you unite with Him with a desire to receive Him sacramentally. If you have such a desire and a longing to receive communion and you can’t because of the current circumstances in our world, or other circumstances which make it impossible, Christ honors this desire and the grace can be as great.

“Oh how painful it is to Me that souls so seldom unite themselves to Me in Holy Communion. I wait for souls and they are indifferent toward Me. I love them tenderly and sincerely and they distrust Me. I want to lavish my graces on them and they do not want to accept them. They treat Me as a dead object whereas My heart is full of love and mercy” (1447).

Trusting in Our Lord is the key to unlocking the mercy of Divine Mercy Sunday.

“My child, all your sins have not wounded My Heart as painfully as your present lack of trust does – that after so many efforts of My love and mercy, you should still doubt My goodness” (1486). … “Tell souls that I am giving them My mercy as a defense. I Myself am fighting for them and I am bearing the just anger of My Father” (1516).

“The graces of My mercy are drawn by means of one vessel only, and that is – trust. The more a soul trusts, the more it will receive” (1578).

All the Divine floodgates are open on this day.

“On this day all the Divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it through all eternity” (699).

“I demand the worship of My mercy through the Solemn Celebration of the Feast (Divine Mercy Sunday) and through the veneration of the image which is painted. … By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works (742). … “If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgment” (1517).

The image should be given great honor on Divine Mercy Sunday in our homes as a reminder of His love and His Sacraments and of our duty of love toward our neighbor as we put all our trust in Him.

Act of Contrition

“Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin.”

Act of Spiritual Communion

“I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as the Mercy I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works (742). … “If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgment” (1517).

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**Journey through John and grow closer to Jesus**

By Sarah Reinhard

*33 Days to Greater Glory: A Total Consecration to the Father through Jesus Based on the Gospel of John*

Father Michael E. Gaitley, MIC 2019, Marian Press $15.95

“This 33-day retreat aims to help us overcome our turmoil with the peace and joy that the world cannot give,” I read in the introduction on March 20. What is now considered a worldwide pandemic was just getting underway. “Peace” was a concept that, to be honest, seemed a bit out of touch.

When Father Michael Gaitley penned this book, the “tenor of public discourse” he’s referring to was quite different. Was that really only a year ago?

What a book for a time such as this.

But I would say that, even if I wasn’t going to be watching Easter Mass along with the rest of the nation —

from the comfort of my couch.

*33 Days to Greater Glory* follows a course that Fr. Gaitley has mapped out in previous books, though, to be honest, this one feels meatier and richer to me than the others did. Maybe that’s because he has me reading chunks of the Gospel of John as part of the readings for each day. Maybe it’s because I downloaded — as he suggested — the free Gospel of John dramatization and have been listening to that in my odd moments when I would have been listening to an audiobook. Maybe it’s because this — mercy, a deep dive into a gospel I tend to avoid, peace — is what I need right now.

“Because this book is essentially a consecration to the Father, after you’ve completed it, you may find it helpful to get to know the Father better by making a consecration to St. Joseph, who is a kind of image of God the Father,” Fr. Gaitley writes in the introduction. It’s no accident that the book I finished the day before starting this one was Total Consecration to St. Joseph.

Each day includes a portion of the Gospel of John (handily printed in the appendix) and a reflection by Fr. Gaitley and a one-sentence prayer. He has structured the book into four weeks: Week One introduces what he calls the “Opening Characters,” the major players in John’s Gospel. Week Two, “The Seven Signs,” examines the seven miracles that Jesus works in the Gospel. In Week Three, “The Upper Room,” Fr. Gaitley considers the stage — or maybe it’s back-stage? — prior to the Lord’s Passion. And Week Four, “Greater Glory” considers the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus while delving into the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

This isn’t particularly hard reading.

Fr. Gaitley has a conversational tone and I’ve found his advice about listening to the Gospel to be helpful. Hearing the drama of the Gospel helps me embrace it; instead of rolling my eyes, I’ve found myself immersed and more open to learning as Fr. Gaitley walks me through it.

As someone who doesn’t go on a lot of actual retreats, I’m finding this to be a book that is a gift in many ways. Instead of the chaos and crazy that this time of year usually brings, we’re home. We leave the house — maybe — once a week to get milk and a few other essentials from the store.

It’s like time stopped. And this book has been with me every day of this quarantine. While I know that the chaos and the crazy of family, volunteer activities, work, and life will kick back in, I also appreciate that God put this book in my hands right now. May I remember this gift, even as I struggle with all the challenges of life, both now and in the future.

**Coaches, athletes come to grips with unfinished winter sports seasons**

By Doug Bean

*Catholic Times Editor*

As spring sports athletes and coaches anxiously await a decision from the Ohio High School Athletic Association on whether they’ll still have a season, the wrestlers, basketball players and others who weren’t able to complete their postseason competition in March understand their angst.

Just before the state wrestling tournament and the regional boys basketball semifinals were set to begin in mid-March, the OHSAA postponed all athletic events as the state began to go into a public lockdown stemming from the coronavirus outbreak. Two weeks later, the winter tournaments were officially cancelled.

A majority of teams and individuals in winter sports had already wrapped up their seasons, but spring sports were put on hold without their seasons getting underway. Gov. Mike DeWine extended a school closure order through May 1, but as of this writing, no decision had been announced on a return date. The OHSAA announced Wednesday, April 8, a tentative schedule for competition if students and teachers go back to the classroom, but if the school year finishes with distance learning, spring sports would be cancelled.

Especially for seniors, the loss of a season or a chance to compete at the state tournament is a bitter pill to swallow. Among the high school athletes affected from diocesan Catholic schools were wrestlers from Columbus Bishop Hartley, Columbus St. Francis DeSales and Newark Catholic, and the DeSales boys basketball team.

“To be honest, I think that everyone maybe was holding a little bit of hope inside, but I think the reality of it was, it just wasn’t going to be possible,” Hartley wrestling coach Kevin Petrella said after the decision was made public. “It’s hard to reconcile, but it was a good overall decision.”

The news hit Petrella’s twin brothers hard. Seniors Michael and Joey Petrella were looking forward to competing on the state tournament stage for a final time.

Michael, who finished seventh at state the previous two years at 106 and 113 pounds, won a district title this year and was considered one of the favorites at 113 in Division II with a 40-2 record. Joey, also a district champion, compiled a 41-4 record at 182 pounds. A third Hartley wrestler, freshman Dylan Newsome, posted a 30-7 record at 160.

“Looking at it on paper, all three of those guys could have placed at the state tournament,” Kevin Petrella said. “And I think we would have put a top 10 finish on the board. That would have been huge. We’ve never done anything like that before.”

Informing the wrestlers that there would be no tournament “was one of the hardest things I’ve had to do in my coaching career,” Petrella said. “I’m not very emotional, but that was hard to fight back some tears.”

“Michael took it really hard. He was devastated.”

The Petrella twins finished their high school careers ranked Nos. 1 and 2 in Hartley history for career wins with 167 for Michael and 142 for Joey. Michael also set a career record for winning percentage at 85.2 percent and team points with 954 and ranked second in Hartley history in pins with 77. Joey established a career mark for technical falls with 17 after accumulating a season-record 13 this year.

“You have these goals, especially for seniors, you’ve written down and put in not just one year of work but four years of work,” Kevin Petrella said. “The hard part to swallow is that it wasn’t someone better than you beat you. But, for lack of better words, it got taken away from you.”

“Every night when we prayed at our Eucharist. This isn’t particularly hard reading. It’s like time stopped. And this book has been with me every day of this quarantine. While I know that the chaos and the crazy of family, volunteer activities, work, and life will kick back in, I also appreciate that God put this book in my hands right now. May I remember this gift, even as I struggle with all the challenges of life, both now and in the future.”

We don’t have any traditional ways of wrapping this up, and we’re doing the best we can,” Murphy said. “We’re grateful for the great moments, especially for seniors, you’ve written down and put in not just one year of work but four years of work.”

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The good news for the brothers, whose family’s involvement with Hartley wrestling spans decades, is that their wrestling days are not over. Joey is headed to Division II Gannon University next fall, and Michael is going to Division III Baldwin-Wallace University, where his father, former Hartley head coach and current assistant Paul Petrella, won a national championship in 1978 as a wrestler.

“We had a lot of success this season.” Kevin Petrella said, “just with the sheer number of season records and career records that were broken.”

For DeSales basketball, the end of the season came prematurely after the Stallions won a Division II district title and were set to play in a regional semifinal on March 12 in Athens.

While the team held out hope that the tournament eventually would resume, the players and coach Pat Murphy knew in their hearts that restarting was unlikely. DeSales, led by first-team all-state standout Desmond Watson, finished with a 19-6 record.

“We don’t have any traditional ways of wrapping this up, and we’re doing the best we can,” Murphy said. “We’re grateful for the great memories we had this year. This group has a lot to be proud of. They accomplished a lot, and it will springboard us into next season.”

“We already talked about how we’re going to dedicate next season to our seniors and try to take care of some unfinished business in the post-season.”
Anointing of the sick during the coronavirus: Bow or genuflect?

Q I am a recent (fervent) convert to the Catholic Church. I am also a registered nurse and have held many patients as they passed on to eternity. I am concerned over the issue of priests being “barred” from hospitals during the current coronavirus epidemic; I have heard many Catholics bemoan the fact that, as a result, the sick and dying are being denied the sacrament of the sick.

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

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

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

Interestingly, Archbishop Blair issued his statement to clarify and correct a “solution” that had been proposed earlier that same week by another New England bishop. In an email to priests of his diocese, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski of Springfield, Massachusetts, had said, “I am allowing the assigned Catholic hospital chaplains, standing outside a patient’s room or away from their bedside, to dab a cotton swab with holy oil and then allow a nurse to enter the patient’s room and administer the oil.”

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

Which brings us back to the questioner’s valuable insight: In a circumstance where a physical anointing is impossible, God can read a person’s soul.

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

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

If, instead, the Eucharist is reserved in a side chapel, it would be proper simply to bow toward the altar. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal notes that the priest genuflects when he arrives at the altar and departs from it, and three times during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. “Otherwise,” says the general instruction, “all who pass before the most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession” (No. 274). (Ministers carrying the procession cross, candles or the Book of the Gospels bow their heads instead of genuflecting.)

SCHOOL AT HOME, continued from Page 3

to hold up a dry erase board or a piece of paper. You just adjust and do whatever you have to that might work.

“Ready also uses a learning platform called Canvas on which teachers can post assignments and links online and students can post their responses. Zoom and Canvas take care of just about everything we need and provide the kind of student-teacher conversation that make it seem like a regular classroom.”

Chillicothe Bishop Flaget School is certified by the state of Ohio as a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) school, which means it provides an education filled with hands-on opportunities that encourage creativity and problem-solving.

“This is really helping us now that our 198 students have to do learning in methods other than the traditional format of listening to a teacher talk and responding on paper, because we’re used to doing things in different ways,” principal Laura Corcoran said.

“For instance, one of the projects our first-graders did from home involved building a leprechaun trap for St. Patrick’s Day. Students did a video with their parents showing the problem-solving things we do in school involve using a particular set of supplies and a challenge that goes with them. That doesn’t work so well when you have to work from home,” Corcoran said. “Everyone’s house has different items, and few things are standard in every home. So you adapt to what’s available. We did that by challenging students to create a stained-glass window with whatever they had in the house. The results were amazing – more imaginative than I ever could have thought. We posted the results on our network connecting school families so everyone could see them.”

Reynoldsburg St. Pius X School is using at least five ways to communicate with teachers and parents of its 485 students — Zoom, Google Meet, Facebook, and apps known as Seesaw and Screencastify.

“Seesaw is our biggest blessing because it allows students and teachers to instantly communicate and even send things like videos back and forth,” assistant principal Lisa Ruth said. “Screencastify is a screen recorder for Google Chrome which can be used to send anything you can pull from the internet, like a page from a book, for example.

“Through Zoom, we’ve had events like special story times, pajama parties, prayer time, and a video with all our teachers greeting the students and sharing positive thoughts. Facebook has been for routine things like announcements, morning prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, birthdays, and a virtual art gallery of works by students.

“Our teachers have done a remarkable job of continuing to build community with the resources they have,” Ruth said. “The first two weeks of distance learning were awkward, but now everyone’s more in the groove, learning to advocate for themselves and asking more questions, particularly the students who have been shy in class.”

Even so, it’s not the same as being in a classroom and a school surrounded by other students. “We’re making the best of the situation, but it’s still traumatic for the kids,” Corcoran said.

“At first, the thought of being stuck at home and away from school was awesome. Now they realize they’re missing something important, and they just want to come back.”
**Sister Thomasine Hardesty, OP**

A memorial service will occur at a future date for Sister Thomasine Hardesty, OP, 94, who died at the Mohun Health Care Center in Columbus on Sunday, April 5. Burial will be at St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus.

She was born Ann Hardesty on April 17, 1925 to the late Frank and Agnes (Daoust) Hardesty.

She was a graduate of Columbus St. Joseph Academy and earned a Bachelor of Nursing degree from the College of St. Mary of the Springs (now Ohio Dominican University) in 1948 and a Master of Nursing Administration degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1986.

She entered the congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs (now the Dominican Sisters of Peace) in 1951 and professed her vows on July 9, 1953.

In the Diocese of Columbus, she ministered at the St. Mary of the Springs Infirmary (1953-1954) and was director of the wellness center (1994-2004) and a resident volunteer (2004-2013) at St. Mary of the Springs. She entered a life of prayer and service at the sisters’ Motherhouse in 2017 and became a resident of the Mohun center in 2019. She also served as a staff nurse in nursing administration in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and in Connecticut and New York.

She is survived by three first cousins.

**Sister Mary Joan Kane, OP**

She earned a certificate in spirituality from the Spiritual Life Center in Dover, Massachusetts, and was dedicated to retreat ministry, serving at retreat centers in New York, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Virginia. She entered the Mohun center in 2018.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, John and Joseph; and sisters, Catherine Cassidy, Helen Gehringer, Elizabeth Serrierson and Anna O’Connor. She is survived by a sister, Harriet Malin; and several nieces and nephews.

**LOCAL NEWS, continued from Page 2**

Miller and Abby Fox also contributed to the videos.

Videos on proper hand washing and telehealth feature Jamie Kemp, a certified physician assistant and director of ODU health services.

“This is an incredibly stressful and anxious time for many individuals, and it is extremely important that everyone has access to sound practices and techniques that can help them during this uncertain time,” Lombardi said. “It is our hope that people both within and beyond the ODU community see these videos as a valuable and helpful resource.”

**CLASSIFIED**

**CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF COLUMBUS**

**ANNUAL MOTHER’S DAY LAYETTE FUND DRIVE**

Please consider this opportunity to honor the special mothers in your life through the gift of a layette to a needy newborn infant provided by the Christ Child Society. A beautiful card will be sent to your special person stating your generosity in her honor. To order this wonderful gift, visit our website, christchildssociety.org and purchase a layette online for only $35.
Second Sunday of Easter, Year A

Pray for God’s Divine Mercy

Acts 2:42-47
Ps. 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

The Second Sunday of Easter, known as Divine Mercy Sunday, reminds us of the simple Truth that God is Merciful. When we refuse God’s love, He turns toward us anew, offering mercy. mercy is, then, love offered once again after it has been refused.

Three figures associated with this day represent particular aspects of the mercy that we celebrate on the Octave of Easter: St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Pope John Paul II, and St. Faustina Kowalska.

Thomas reminds us that faith overcomes doubts and reaches the heights of understanding. His faith carries the experience of the presence of the Risen Lord to the fullness of glory: “My Lord and my God!” Many a First Communicant has learned to say these words as an act of faith at the moment of the consecration at Mass. (I still say them in my heart every time I celebrate Mass myself as a priest.)

Pope John Paul II’s life reveals God’s mercy in a world full of confusion about truth. Having seen the devastation caused by tyranny and violence, the Holy Father who named Mercy Sunday held out to all the world the hope of mercy for all the nations and peoples.

St. Faustina, who received the Good News of God’s mercy for the whole world, shared with the Church the invitation to a practical experience of that mercy in the Divine Mercy devotions—the image, the Chaplet, the Hour of Mercy and especially the feast we observe today, Divine Mercy Sunday.

Easter points to Resurrection and new life. Divine Mercy Sunday points to the heart of the meaning of Easter: the flow of divine life and love through our human weakness. Jesus rose from death to new life. In the weeks ahead, we will learn the meaning of that life. The power of Jesus’ Resurrection in us is seen clearly in the flow of Divine Mercy.

We are invited to enter into the flow of mercy in both prayer and action. Ask the Lord to be merciful. Completely trust in God’s mercy. Say this simple prayer from your heart:

“Jesus, I trust in You.”

In the Divine Mercy Chaplet, we lay claim to the fruits of the Resurrection for the whole world: “Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly Beloved Son, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.”

“For the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole World.”

“Holy God, Holy and Mighty One, Holy and Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”

Our lives are meant to be a living witness of mercy. In this time when the whole world has had to acknowledge the frailty of human existence, let us open our eyes to our need for mercy.

The first generation of Christians learned to live as a community by sharing their devotion to the life Jesus taught them: “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.” We can continue the witness that will lead the world to Jesus if we strive to put mercy into practice.

We may not yet be able to gather for common worship, but the manner in which we live in the domestic church and the way we reach out to others will serve to make the world aware of the heart of Christ. “Although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Just as Jesus came to be with the Apostles who were locked in together in the Upper Room in Jerusalem for fear, He will make Himself present to us who are under the order to “Stay at Home” in order to protect those most vulnerable to the coronavirus. Acknowledging Jesus in our midst, we can join Thomas to acclaim that He is “My Lord and my God.” Risen Lord, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Bishop Timothy Hayes

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

Bishop celebrates Easter Sunday TV Mass

Bishop Robert Brennan celebrated an Easter Mass on Sunday, April 12 at St. Joseph Cathedral that was broadcast live by NBC4. Joining Bishop Brennan at the altar as concelebrants were Father Robert Kitsmiller (left), Father Cyrus Haddad (right) and Fathers Hilary Ike and Ryan Schmit (hidden). Photographer Rob Carnacchi was one of three camera operators at the Mass from the Columbus television station. The empty pews were a stark reminder that Masses are only available to worshippers through technology during the coronavirus pandemic.

CT photo by Ken Snow
Why a Catholic Cemetery?

Traditionally, Catholics have their family burial place in a setting which reflects their faith and devotion. Catholic cemeteries are among the greatest testimonials of our faith.

Catholic cemeteries are not mere memorials to the dead, but monuments to eternity. They are religious shrines with statues, chapels, mausoleums, and outdoor devotional settings that evoke feelings of faith and the universal hope of the resurrection.

When a Christian dies, he remains part of the community he shared. At the Catholic cemetery, Christians are united not by race or age or affluence but by unity in their belief in the resurrection and everlasting life.

The Catholic Cemeteries of Columbus Offer . . .

- **CHAPELS** – Available for Committal Services and Masses
- **MAUSOLEUMS** – Community Garden Crypts and Personal Family Crypts
- **IN-GROUND BURIAL SPACE** – Select from Monument, 8-Inch Marker and Lawn Level Marker Space
- **COLUMBARIUMS & NICHES** – Serving your cremation needs
- **MONUMENTS & MARKERS** – Direct to You Through Our Offices
- **FULL-TIME ADVISORS** – Providing You with Personal Service
- **LOW DOWN PAYMENTS** and **INTEREST-FREE PAYMENT PLANS**

Our advisors are available to help you plan for the type of cemetery service that you want. Whether it be mausoleum entombment, ground burial, cremation services, purchase of a monument or marker, or just some help with the rules and regulations, you will receive professional and courteous service along with accurate, reliable information. If you would like more information about St. Joseph, Resurrection, and Holy Cross Cemeteries call the phone numbers listed below and talk to one of your cemetery professionals today!

**St. Joseph Cemetery**
614-491-2751
6440 S. High St./Rt. 23 S.
Lockbourne, Ohio 43137

**Mt. Calvary Cemetery**
614-491-2751
518 Mt. Calvary Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43223

**Resurrection Cemetery**
614-888-1805
9571 N. High St./Rt. 23 N.
Lewis Center, Ohio 43035

**Holy Cross Cemetery**
740-927-4442
11539 National Rd. SW/Rt. 40 E.
Pataskala, Ohio 43062

OFFICE HOURS: Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sat. 8 a.m.-12 noon