Bishop ordains Rice and Welker to the diaconate

Bob Rice, left, and Michael Welker prostrate themselves before the altar. The saints are called upon them to intercede for the elect. Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton ordained the men to the permanent diaconate during the celebration of Mass, Nov. 20, at Finnegan Fieldhouse, Franciscan University of Steubenville. (Photo by DiCenzo)

By Matthew A. DiCenzo

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton ordained Bob Rice and Michael Welker to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Steubenville during the celebration of Mass, Nov. 20, at Finnegan Fieldhouse, Franciscan University of Steubenville. The ordination rite began with the election of the candidates. Rice and Welker affirmed their readiness and willingness to serve the church. After being presented, the bishop elected the candidates for their ordination to the diaconate.

Bishop Monforton said in his homily: “As deacons, that is, as ministers of Jesus Christ, who came among his disciples as one who served, do the will of God the Father from the heart, with love and joy: Serve the people in love and joy as you would the Lord” (see, homily/Page 7).

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Bishops focus on Eucharist, youth, moms in need

BALTIMORE (CNS) — The U.S. bishops spotlighted two major initiatives focused on the central role of the Eucharist Nov. 17, the second of two days of public sessions of their fall general assembly.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a 26-page statement, “The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church,” with 222 “yes” votes, and also OK’d plans for a three-year National Eucharistic Revival that will culminate with the National Eucharistic Congress 2024 in Indianapolis.

On other matters, they were invited to take a multicultural journey with young Catholics to Chicago next June; were urged to implement a framework for marriage and family

To Page 3

Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton’s Advent Message 2021

“And Mary said: ‘My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon my handmaid’s lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name’” (Lk 1:46–49).

Mary’s Humility

Christian lowliness is another way to describe Christian humility. To become small in the eyes of God is actually a tremendous form of Christian greatness in a credible Christian disciple.

Mary’s humility is counter-cultural in our day. This Advent season underscores the sublime humility of the Mother of God who also is the Mother of the Church. You and I can embrace Mary’s humility this holy season as we prepare for the holy celebration of Our Lord Jesus’ Nativity as well as gaze our spiritual eyes on his second coming.

Come Lord Jesus!
Bishop celebrates anniversaries of married couples in the diocese

By Dino Orsatti

STEUBENVILLE/MARIETTA/IRONTON — Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton recognized 128 enduring marriages of parishioners during his annual anniversary celebrations at three different diocesan locations: Nov. 20 at Holy Family Church, Steubenville; Nov. 21 at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta; and St. Lawrence O’Toole Church, Ironton.

During his homilies, Bishop Monforton reflected on his parents’ strong marriage during his childhood years when praising couples in the diocese for their lasting marriages. The bishop was born on his parents’ first wedding anniversary. Bishop Monforton said, “I learned how to be the person that I have become by witnessing the love and respect my father and mother showed each other.” The bishop added, “Marriage is a sacrament, established by Jesus. It is a symbol of Jesus’ love for his bride, the church. Marriage is a gift of grace.”

One of the prime directives God has given you is to make the other holy, he told the couples, as he asked them to continue to allow themselves to grow their talents and share their light with the world.

Bishop Monforton acknowledged couples (listed on Page 4), who are celebrating 10, 20 and every five years until 60 years of marriage, and every wedding anniversary year after 60. He handed out personally signed certificates to the couples who gathered for Mass at the three churches.

Two couples share the distinction for being married the longest in the diocese, Myron and Cynthia Law of Christ Our Light Parish, Cambridge; and Arthur and June Bodo, of Blessed Sacrament Parish, Wintersville. The Law’s and the Bodo’s are celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary, nearby church. The couple has a combined total of 118 years in the music ministry at St. Philemena/St. Stephen Parish, Caldwell; St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Fulda; and at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Lore City. Cynthia had formal piano and classical organ training. Myron worked at Cleveland Graphite Bronz in Caldwell. He later grew apples and peaches at his orchard, and he sold the fruit to Kroger and Smuckers. The family also owned and operated the Law Orchard Market in Senecaville for many years. The Laws have seven children, 19 grandchildren, and 22 great-grandchildren. Myron said, “God provided God-gle to him and his wife.” He said they “love each other in a God-given way and kiss each other every night.” Myron said he and Cynthia have never raised their voices at each other in anger. He said, “The secret to a long-lasting marriage is communication.”

June Bodo credits “faith in God” for her successful seven decades of marriage. June was born and raised in Steubenville, while Arthur was born in Lober, Pennsylvania and moved to Steubenville when he was four. June 91, and Arthur, 93, met at a Steubenville Big Red football game, when she was a junior and he was a senior. June recalls Arthur saying, “Hey girl with that big umbrella, do you need a seat?”

Myron and Cynthia Law

Myron, 90, and Cynthia Law, 89, live in Senecaville. Cynthia was born in Caldwell. They met while taking piano lessons at a couple from throughout the diocese participate in the celebration of a wedding anniversary Mass at Holy Family Church. (Photo by Orsatti)

Arthur and June Bodo

He made room for her in the stands with his friends and they watched the football game together. They went on their first date a week later (with permission from June’s parents). Arthur gave June a heart-shaped locket at the end of the date and he told her “you’re the girl I’m going to marry.” That became a reality in a few years. The wedding took place when June was 20 and Arthur was 22.

Arthur graduated from the College of Steubenville in 1958 and worked at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel as an accountant and chief planner until 1983, and then worked for the Metropolitan Housing Authority. “He was such a hard worker his entire life, a workaholic,” June said.

June worked for four years as a cashier and bookkeeper at Jenedale Meat Market in Steubenville.

The couple sang in the choir at St. Pius Church, Steubenville for nearly 40 years. The Bodos lived in Wintersville and Steubenville where they raised their five children: Artie, Mark, Brian, Sharon and Leslie. “Arthur is a great husband. We’ve had a great journey together,” said June. As far as what advice June would give to newlyweds, “Place God first in your life and everything else will follow.”

Couples from throughout the diocese participate in the celebration of a wedding anniversary Mass at Holy Family Church. (Photo by Orsatti)

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Tickets cost $65 for singles and $100 for couples and can be purchased beginning Nov. 1.

Note: Tickets sold at the door will be $85 for singles and $125 for couples.

Checks can be made payable to Columbian Club.

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Bishops

He detailed the opportunity the coronavirus pandemic had provided in his three virtual gatherings between young Catholics and bishops over the last year and a half. More than 60 bishops have joined virtual gatherings as part of a process called “Journeying Together,” he said. The gatherings have taken place online in the midst of a pandemic, under “social unrest, racial reckoning and the polarization affecting U.S. society,” he said. The process created “an opportunity for bishops, young adults, youth ministers and campus ministers, and leaders of various other ministries with young people, to engage in respectful yet honest dialogue in matters of faith, culture, racism, inclusion and the issues that affect them as young people,” he explained.

The chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth called on his fellow bishops to work “in every way possible” to implement the national pastoral framework of marriage and family ministry that they approved in June.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco said that addressing marriage and family life is vital in a time when families are under increasing threats from “scapegoating ideological currents that destroy and undermine our sexual identity as man and woman and God-given vocations as father and mother, son or daughter.” Bolstering marriage and family ministry is an appropriate undertaking to start during the “Amoris Laetitia Family Year,” declared by Pope Francis, the archbishop said.

Titled “Called to the Joy of Love: A Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry,” the document can serve as a practical guidebook to serve couples and families because it offers an adaptable set of principles and strategies for pastoral care, he said.

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, told his fellow bishops that the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities “Walking with the Married and Family” initiative may have been slowed by the coronavirus pandemic, but it has by no means stopped helping expectant mothers from any walk of life. It was launched March 25, 2020, just as the pandemic began to take hold.

This initiative “has the capacity to take what is often seen as a partisan divide and transform it into pastoral unity, bridging the divide between Catholics who describe themselves using the labels of ‘pro-life’ or ‘social justice,’” he said. “The vision of WWMIN is that a pregnant or parenting mother in need can turn to any local Catholic parish and be connected with the life-affirming assistance and accompaniment that she needs.”

The initiative’s website is WalkingWith Moms.com.

The U.S. bishops also voted to approve budgets for 2022 that were crafted with upheavals wrought by the coronavirus pandemic fresh in mind. “The anomaly of 2020 made challenges for predicting 2022,” said Bishop Gregory L. Parkes of St. Petersburg, Florida, treasurer of the USCCB and chairman of its Committee on Budget and Finance, in an introductory message to his fellow bishops.

Due to illness, Bishop Parkes was not present in Baltimore, where the bishops’ Nov. 15-18 fall general meeting was held. Despite the uncertainties, the overall budget carries a revenue surplus of $527,080, Bishop Parkes noted.

Bishops affirm saithhood causes

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops agreed Nov. 17 that the saithhood causes for three laypeople from the United States should be advanced by their respective dioceses.


The 2007 Vatican document “Sanctorum Mater” requires the diocesan bishop promoting a saithhood cause to consult with the body of bishops on the advisability of pursuing the cause. The bishops affirmed advancement of all three causes during their fall general meeting in Baltimore. All three saithhood candidates have the title “Servant of God,” given to them when their causes were officially opened.

Auxiliary Bishop John P. Dolan of San Diego urged his fellow bishops that during November, which is Black Catholic History Month, that they “beg our heavenly Fa¬ther” to further the saithhood causes of six Black Catholic Americans: Sister Thea Bowman, Mother Mary Lange and Julia Greeley, who all have the title “Servant of God”; and Mother Henriette Delille, Father Augustus Tolton and Pierre Toussaint, all of whom have the title “Venerable.”
Parishioners throughout Diocese of Steubenville celebrate enduring marriages

St. Adalbert Parish, Dillonvale
John and Cynthia Kaffana, 50;

Holy Cross Parish, Glouster
Sum and Brenda Simons, 51;

St. Henry Parish, Harrietsville
James and Lynne Smithberger, 41;

St. Joseph Parish, Ironton
J. Michael and Christina Pauley, 20;
Nicholas and Mary Beth Weber, 20;
Timothy and Carissa Weber, 20;
Michael and Bianca Sexton, 21;
Michael and Alice Balestra, 25;
Christopher and Kimberly Zornes, 25;
Tony and Jennifer Compliment, 26;
Joseph and Rita Isaac, 26;
John and Denise Turner, 26;
Marion and Janet Priode, 30;
Donald and Mary Jo Vermilyea, 30;
James and Joni Hacker, 31;
Ronald and Linda McGraw, 31;
Frank and Jennifer Mullens, 31;
Mark and Andrea Harvey, 40;
James Michael and Mariclare Waginger, 41;
Phillip and Margaret McMahon, 45;
Stephen and Pamela Payton, 46;
Larry and Terry Collins, 50;
George and Theresa Kelley, 50;
John and Patricia Compliment, 55;
Francis and Marilyn Miller, 55;
Greg and Rita Weber, 55;
Roger and Laura Jones, 56;
Jimmy and Mary Wipert, 56;
Benny and Kay Blankenship, 60;
James and Mary Laber, 67;

St. Lawrence O’Toole Parish, Ironton
Andrew and Stacy Mains, 10;
Scott and Christienne Moore, 26;
Scott and Amy Woods, 26;
Randy and Diane Koerper, 30;
Patrick and Elizabeth Laber, 30;
Dana and Amy Lewis, 36;
Brian and Nancy Kelley, 40;
Lawrence and Maria Whaley, 40;
Tony and Kimberly Addis, 41;
James and Gloria Riedel, 41;
Ralph and Mary Roush, 41;
James and Teresa Rudmann, 46;
Michael and Dianne McFann, 51;
Larry and Cathy Muche, 51;
Joseph and Virginia Miller, 55;
Thomas and Catherine Sutton, 56;
Bernard and Nancy Wallace, 56;

St. Ambrose Parish, Little Hocking
Carl and Susan Perry, 50;
Andrew and Mary Vesel, 50;

Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta
James and Heidi Humphrey, 10;
Nicholas and Jacqueline Lather, 20;
Scott and Mary LaBarre, 25;
Duncan and Mary Segrest, 30;
Tom and Teresa Hushion, 31;
William and Jeanette Flowers, 35;
Jeff and Melanie Fouss, 36;
Michael and Cathy Harper, 40;
Michael and Amy Brockett, 45;
David and Jean Czeb, 45;
Barney and Mary Ellen Poole, 45;
Craig and Sheila Lovett, 46;
Jim and Carolyn Arnold, 50;
David and Sharon Payne, 50;
Donald and Deborah Murray, 55;
Louis and Ruth Brooker, 60;
Edward and Carol Kern, 61;
David and Donna Zoller, 61;
Leo and Mary Ellen Daniels, 64;
Robert and Catherine Dickson, 65;

St. Agnes Parish, Mingo Junction
Benjamin and Maria Elisa Gessler 25;

St. Mary of the Hills Parish, Nelsonville
John David and Linda Kottyan, 45;

St. Mary Mission, Pine Grove
Christopher and Mary Pat Monning, 36;
John and Theresa Medinger, 45;
Michael and Ina Sheridan, 60;

St. Mary Parish, St. Clairsville
Donald and Deborah Sensenig, 25;

Holy Family Parish, Steubenville
Brian and Nicole Hough, 20;
Father Drake and Crystal McCalister, 30;
Dominick and Theresa D’Aurora, 50;
Ronald and Dolores Michnowicz, 50;
James and Mary Salter, 50;
Richard A. and Mary Antionette Sunyog, 50;
Daniel and Kathleen Henry, 51;

St. Peter Parish, Steubenville
Ronald and Marianne DuBois, 40;

Triumph of the Cross Parish, Steubenville
Eric and Alexandra Hart, 20;
Stephen and Suzanne Lewis, 30;
Brian and Cynthia Neal, 30;
David and Donna Iachine, 35;
David and Deborah Cook, 40;
Joseph and Ana McGuinn, 40;
Michael and Maria Healy, 45;
Patrick and Rita Lee, 50;
Ronald and Carol Mazzaferra, 55;
Permanent Deacon Randall and Mary Alberta Redington, 55;

Blessed Sacrament Parish, Wintersville
David and Kasondra Chaney, 10;
Michael and Sia Krog, 10;
Ronald and Lynn Zamborlan, 25;
Joseph and Christina Mitchell, 30;
Kevin and Sharon Petrilla, 40;
Bruce and Toni Jean Dondzila, 46;
Ferdinand and Jacqueline Tulencik, 50;
William and Paulette Sprooch, 55;
Michael J. and Eleanor Welday, 56;
Ray and Jean Dalfonso, 69;
Arthur and June Bode, 70;

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Wintersville
Ronald and Dana Snider, 46;
George and Mary Zavatsky, 60;

Robert and Kathleen Curtis, parishioners of Christ the King University Parish, Athens, are celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary. The couple stands with Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, following the marriage anniversary Mass, Nov. 21. (Photo provided)
Saint shows us how ‘to move forward with hope amid struggles,’ bishop says

By Joyce Duriga
Catholic News Service

CHICAGO — Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Robert G. Casey in a Nov. 13 homily reflected on St. Frances Xavier Cabrini’s courage to carry out God’s will for her on earth, which often saw her crossing the Atlantic Ocean despite a fear of water.

“As we celebrate this day today, it’s a moment for us to consider, do we have that same courage? Do we have the courage to put aside our fears and get on the boat?” he asked. “Can we face our fears with deep faith and allow ourselves both to be blessed and to serve as a blessing to others?”

Bishop Casey, archdiocesan vicar general, was the main celebrant at a Mass at the National Shrine to St. Frances Xavier Cabrini that began a jubilee year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the canonization of Mother Cabrini, as she is known by many.

The bishop also officially blessed and opened the shrine’s holy door before Mass began.

In his homily, Bishop Casey also reflected on Mother Cabrini’s ministry to immigrants at the turn of the century. In fact, she came to the United States to minister to the growing number of immigrants from her native Italy and across Europe.

“In every corner of the world and throughout all of history, God’s people have been challenged to get on the boat, to have courage, to keep the faith and to move forward with hope amid the struggles,” he said.

“St. Frances Xavier Cabrini teaches us by her example,” he continued. “She said, ‘I have started houses with no more than the price of a loaf of bread and prayers, for with him who comforts me I can do anything. With God all things are possible.’”

With God in our midst, we can stay calm and afloat during the storms of life, the bishop said.

“Knowing that God is with us and around us, my hope for this Eucharist today is that we can pray together to have the courage as God’s people to get on the boat, to face our fears with deep faith and to allow ourselves, like Frances Cabrini, to be people blessed by God as well as serving as a blessing through others,” he said.

Sister Bridget Zanin, executive director of the shrine, is a member of the religious order Mother Cabrini founded in 1880, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Following the Mass, she said, “I’m in awe. I could feel the people’s faith and their feelings of happiness in being here.”

“Sometimes we say the heart can see what the mind cannot express and I think that’s what probably everybody here felt in their heart today,” she said. “I think Mother Cabrini really touched the people’s hearts.”

Sister Bridget, the other Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the shrine staff are looking forward to this jubilee year.

“We’re expecting many people to come on pilgrimage. We are here, not only with arms open and doors open but with hearts open for people to come. Mother Cabrini always said, ‘There is room for everyone here.’ How right she was. We are trying to carry that legacy out,” Sister Bridget said. “When she was alive, Mother Cabrini worked hard. She never had anything big or a celebration for her, so I think today she deserves all of this.”

During the jubilee year, people can make pilgrimages to the shrine, pass through the holy door and fulfill the three conditions of receiving the Eucharist, going to confession and praying for the intentions of the pope to receive a plenary indulgence, which is the remission of temporal punishment due to sin.

Those who cannot physically make a pilgrimage to the shrine can receive a plenary indulgence “having expressed the resolution to detach themselves from all sin and the intention to fulfill the three customary conditions, if they are spiritually united to the celebrations or pilgrimages, by offering their prayers, suffering or the hardships of their lives to the mercy of God by the hand of Mary,” according to the official proclamation of the jubilee year.

The Chicago shrine is the only national shrine honoring Mother Cabrini, who became the first American citizen to be canonized.

“We were looking for an opportunity to restore a sense of gratitude toward Mother Cabrini and the Missionary Sisters,” said Father Ramil Fajardo, the shrine’s rector.

Holy Name Cathedral also will have a holy door for the jubilee year as a site where Mother Cabrini would have visited and worshipped, he said.

A donor has commissioned a statue of Mother Cabrini that will be installed in the cathedral courtyard in 2022.

At the time of her canonization, the Catholic faith was seeing a revival in the United States and the enthusiasm around the moment was especially strong in Chicago, where more than 100,000 Catholics filled Soldier Field for a Triduum of Masses and a Holy Hour.

“It’s amazing when you look at how this was such a sense of pride and also a sense of accomplishment,” Father Fajardo said. “So I thought, well, we should do something for Mother. Not just for the purpose of remembering but also anchoring mission.”

“Taking the reality of 2021 and making it a starting point for actually putting into practice ... whatever Mother Cabrini was talking about.”

That means, for example, care for immigrants “in Christ,” hospital care “in Christ,” the priest said, stressing “in Christ.”

“We can’t just do stuff. It has to be anchored and under-girded by our Lord. Faith is always very important,” he said.

“So the whole idea for the jubilee year is to reflect, for some months, on the gift of Mother Cabrini and to conclude the year with some firm resolutions (for the shrine’s ministry).”

Mother Cabrini died in Chicago Dec. 22, 1917. She had founded 67 institutions around the world, including several in Chicago, by the time of her death.

People often asked her where she got her money to found institutions, and she replied, “We spend millions but haven’t a cent. We draw from the Bank of Providence. Its funds are inexhaustible.”

Pope Pius XI beatified Mother Cabrini in 1938 and Pope Pius XII canonized her in 1946.

Advent during pandemic remains a season of compassion, pope says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — With Advent coming during an ongoing pandemic, Christians are called to hold on to hope and foster a season of compassion and tenderness, Pope Francis said.

During Advent this year, too, “its lights will be dimmed by the consequences of the pandemic, which still weighs heavily on our time,” he said Nov. 22. “All the more reason for this Eucharist today is that we can pray together to have the courage as God’s people to get on the boat.”

Adding that the Nativity of the Lord makes shine in every daily gesture of love, sharing and service.

Pope Francis quoted what St. Paul VI told artists during Advent in 1965: “This world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair.”

It must not be the false beauty “made of appearances and earthly riches, which are hollow and a generator of emptiness,” Pope Francis said. It must be the real beauty “of a God made flesh, the one of faces — the beauty of faces, the beauty of stories” and the beauty of “creatures that make up our common home.”

He thanked the young people, artists and other participants “for not forgetting to be custodians of this beauty that the Nativity of the Lord makes shine in every daily gesture of love, sharing and service.”

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4:1-2). The wicked and the just shall both face a fire and a light. That is, we will face Christ himself, the true light of the world, the sun of justice, coming on the clouds, the ancient of days, who has been made judge of the living and the dead. It is true that when we die, we will already have to face this perfect judge. It is also true, for the sake of justice, that at the end of this world, there will be a general judgment of all peoples through all times; a great reckoning. The book of accounting shall be opened, and we shall all face the facts, the naked truth, where no one shall be able to deceive or be deceived. We shall receive reward or punishment according to the deeds we committed in our bodies as either instruments of wickedness or righteousness, and we shall receive that reward or punishment in our resuscitated bodies. A reward of eternal happiness with God and his angels and saints, or a punishment of the loss of God accompanied by companionship with demons and whatever physical torment ensue.

Although it sounds scary, and it will be for some, the general judgment is both good and just. It will be when true history begins, because all people will know all the facts. We will see the hidden life of so many who went about doing good in imitation of Jesus, and they will receive their praise. We will see how people’s decisions affected the lives of those around them. We will know who was truly wicked and who was truly just, a reality that we cannot know with certainty in this life. We will see how God’s providence was present throughout all time. That is to say, we will see the great drama of human history played out, and like someone writing a novel from an omniscient point of view, we will see all of the hidden realities that played out.

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The Steubenville Register

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St. John Paul II On Chastity

By Diocese of Steubenville
Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

The fact is that chastity is a virtue that all must practice: married or single, man or woman, younger or adult. We are human, regardless of our age or state of life. The reason is that nature has given us all the urge to reproduce. That urge, of course, varies with age, with sex, with one’s habit of dealing with it. It is not affected by choice or state of life. We cannot choose not to have the sexual urge. Likewise, a Trappist monk has the same natural urges as any grown man. It is, we might say, “built-in” to our nature as human beings, as is the appetite for food and drink. The instinct knows nothing of our choices. Choice is a function of the mind, the non-material part of a person, at least in part. Recent studies have shown that the brain and the nervous system are far more involved in what we used to be sure were strictly non-material functions. This is not the place, however, to go into the pro and con arguments for the existence of a spiritual soul and the consequences of a partly-spiritual nature.

Our state of life, after all, is a rational matter; however one looks at choice. By “rational” here, we mean a conscious, deliberate action; however, one chooses to define those terms. Our instinct related to reproduction is normal for a healthy human beings and are instinctive, no matter one’s state of life. Instinct knows nothing of what the will chooses. It must be given special attention as the most practical for all of us. It is so because, as long as we are human, we share the instinct for reproduction, whether our state of life calls for it or not. It is a practical subject of course in the life of all. As a confessor, or a former confessor, I can attest to the fact that failures to control properly one’s sexual instinct is one of the most common failings of people in general. That’s understandable, too, because it involves one of the most powerful drives of our nature. Without it, the human race would die out. Some might ask, “So what?” So God wants it, that’s what. To do so, sex must be exercised and exercised properly. Again, that’s the way God wants it. Souls are created to share in God’s life for all eternity. God’s life is infinite. The number of souls that can share it will never be reached. Almighty God is aware of that, of course, but we can speculate with our own human minds that the number of sharers is to be proportionate, at least in token, to the number of souls that have come into the world. But, all of that is a job for the recording angels, not poor theologians with their human minds. (As a corollary, we might consider the malice of abortion here. However, this is not the place to go into the fate of the unborn.)

Since reproduction is so important, nature has provided a kind of bonus with the mechanism that reproduction depends on, sexual intercourse. The bonus is pleasure. It might be described as the carrot. Sexual pleasure is the carrot that entices reproduction.

Our weakened nature tends to strive after the carrot for its own sake. That’s where the trouble comes in. That pleasure might be sought in many ways other than that invented by nature. To indulge in sex, even in imagination, is seriously sinful because it involves a serious matter, human reproduction. It is not something to be played with. Christ indicated that in the Sermon on the Mount when he was talking about divorce: He who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart (see, Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 28).

The vow of chastity is one of the three vows taken by religious. It is a vow that pledges oneself to avoid all sins against sins of impurity, i.e., violations against the improper use of the sexual urge. For the religious, that means against all use of the sexual urge. The pope quotes the Second Vatican Council on this matter: “Perfect continence, out of desire for the kingdom of heaven, is outstanding among the evangelical counsels. This is a gift, given by the Father to that they may devote themselves to God alone more easily.”

The term, “continence,” is a related word to chastity, meaning abstinence of all physical actions of a sexual nature. It is a more closely focused than that of chastity (“chastity” – Latin: “castus,” meaning pure, unmixed as in cast iron). He quotes several passages from Scripture here: “Not all can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given” (Mt 19:11).

“Indeed, I wish everyone to be as I am, but each has his own gift from God” (1 Cor 7:7). It is Our Lord’s response to the Apostles’ comment that, if divorce were not allowed, one is better off not getting married at all!” As far as we know, Paul was unmarried and remained so after his conversion. (An unmarried rabbi was almost unheard of in Jewish circles, then, as today.)

We said earlier that chastity was not limited to those in religious life, that it applies to all. For the unmarried, it means total abstinence from sexual acts and relatively sexual acts (like “necking”). For the married, it means abstinence from any act that violates the exclusiveness of sexual acts with one’s spouse. For all, we can again quote Our Lord’s words: “But, I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully, has already committed lust with her in his heart” (Mt 5:28, from the Sermon on the Mount). This means that even purely mental acts, e.g., thoughts and desires, can be sinful.

We must be, therefore, chaste (“pure”) in thoughts and desires, as well as in actual acts. This would include dirty jokes and gestures, as well. Is this of any help to those who “have nothing to confess?”

“The fact is that chastity is a virtue that all must practice: married or single, man or woman, younger or adult.”

St. John Paul II

On Chastity

By Father Jonas A. Shell

As the end of the liturgical year has come, so also holy mother church bids us to reflect upon the end of this present world, something spoken of by the prophets, Christ and the Apostles, and contained in the articles of the creed. It is the time of the resurrection of our bodies from the dead and the great day of final judgement. A terrible day for the wicked, a glorious day for the just. “For behold the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But, for you who fear my name, the sun will be a light with healing in its wings” (Mal 4:1-2).
Why Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Are Not Absolute Values

By Bishop Robert Barron

In the wake of the French Revolution, the triplet of “liberty, equality, fraternity” emerged as a moral compass for the secular society. Something similar has happened today in regard to “equity, diversity and inclusion.” For most pundits and social activists, at least in the West, these three values function as fundamental norms, self-evident moral truths of absolute value that ought to guide our behavior at both the personal and institutional level. But, this cannot be right. For whatever plays that determining role must be good in itself, valuable in every and any circumstance, incapable of being positioned by a higher value. Neither equity, diversity nor inclusion enjoy these prerogatives, and this can be shown readily enough.

First, let us consider equity. Fostering equality is indeed a high moral value in the measure that all people are identical in dignity and are equally deserving of respect. This ethical intuition is embodied in the Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal and are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.” It is, accordingly, a moral imperative that all people be considered one and the same before the law and provided, as far as possible, parity of opportunity in the educational, economic and cultural spheres. But, equity in all things? Absolutely not. Many inequalities that obtain within human society – differences in intelligence, creativity, skill, courage, energy, etc. – are naturally given and could be eliminated only through a brutally imposed leveling out. And, what follows from these natural inequalities among his disciples and sisters. In our diaconia, we serve the Lord as St. Paul instructs: “holding fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim 3:9). Make the mystery of faith clearly known! Breaking news: In your ecclesial service, there are moments and encounters when you may be confused like the Prophet Jeremiah in our first reading. Nevertheless, remember, this is all part of God’s plan and he will never desert you. God’s grace is sufficient.

Our Holy Father Pope Francis is quite clear: It is the joy, joy of the Gospel. As deacons, that is, as ministers of Jesus Christ, who came among his disciples as one who served, do the will of God the Father from the heart, with love and joy: Serve the people in love and joy as you would the Lord. As it said by the Lord Jesus Christ himself: “No one can serve two masters” (Mt 6:24).

Like those once chosen by the Apostles for the ministry of charity, you should be men of good reputation, filled with wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Firmly rooted and grounded in faith, you are to show yourselves chaste and beyond reproach before God and all you encounter, as is proper for the ministers of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries.

Never allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope offered by the Gospel, the Gospel you proclaim each day with your very lives. You are both hearers and ministers of the Gospel. Express by your actions the word of God that your lips proclaim, so that the Christian faithful, brought to life by the Spirit, may be a pure offering accepted by God. Then on the last day, when you go out to meet the Lord, you will be able to hear him say: Well done, good and faithful servant, come share your Master’s joy (see, Matthew, Chapter 25, Verse 23). Amen!
The Day

From Page 6 into this great drama of salvation history, all things shall be revealed. It shall be a great and terrible day.

How are we to prepare for it? We are to live in the truth provided to us through Scripture and tradition. We must imitate Jesus Christ. We must make an honest accounting of ourselves everyday and seek God’s mercy now. This is not meant to paralyze us into worrying about every thought and action at every moment. Rather, we can take time to make a nightly examination of conscience and then, through the grace of God, conform our thoughts, words and actions to the message of the Gospel. As best as we can, we must already face the naked truth. We must place our lives before the light of Christ, the burning radiance of his gaze, so that all that is not holy, all that is not true, may already be burned to stubble. We must enter the refining fires now, so that we can lift up our heads on that day standing upright and joyful at the coming of the Lord. “And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But, he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God” (Jn 3:19-21).

Father Shell is a Diocese of Steubenville priest and the pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Carrollton, and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Morges.

Why

From Page 7 than walls, is entirely understandable and morally laudable. Nevertheless, inclusion cannot be an absolute value and good. We might first draw attention to a conundrum regarding inclusivity. When a person wants to be included, she wants to become part of a group or a society or an economy or a culture that has a particular form. For example, an immigrant who longs to be welcomed to America wants to participate in an altogether distinctive political society; when someone wants to be included in the Abraham Lincoln society, he seeks entry into a very circumscribed community.

In other words, he or she desires to be included in a collectivity that is, at least to some degree, exclusive! Absolute or universal inclusivity is, in point of fact, operationally a contradiction. Perhaps this principle can be seen with greatest clarity in regard to the church. On the one hand, the church is meant to reach out to everyone – as is suggested symbolically by the Bernini colonnade outside of St. Peter’s Basilica. Yet, at the same time, the church is a very definite society, with strict rules, expectations and internal structures. By its nature, therefore, it excludes certain forms of thought and behavior. Cardinal Francis George was once asked whether all are welcome in the church. He responded, “Yes, but on Christ’s terms, not their own.” In a word, there is a healthy and necessary tension between inclusion and exclusion in any rightly ordered community.

Having shown that none of the three great secular values are in fact of absolute value, are we left in a lurch, forced to accept a kind of moral relativism? No! In point of fact, the supreme value that positions every other value, the unsurpassable moral good in which all subordinate goods participate, can be clearly named. It is love, which is willing the good of the other as other, which indeed is the very nature and essence of God. Are equity, diversity and inclusivity valuable? Yes, precisely in the measure that they are expressions of love; no, in the measure that they stand athwart love. To grasp this is of crucial importance in the moral conversation that our society must have.

Bishop joins CCHS for adoration

Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton joins Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, students for Eucharistic adoration. Nearly a third of the school’s students attended adoration Nov. 10, which included a Holy Hour and confessions. Eucharistic adoration at the school takes place every Wednesday at 7 p.m. Bishop Monforton said, “The Eucharistic revival is alive and growing at CCHS.” (Photo provided)
St. Joseph reminds church to pay attention to the essential, pope says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Extreme poverty, the lack of employment that can support a family and desperation are the major drivers of exploitative child labor, Pope Francis said.

“If we want to stamp out the scourge of child labor, we must work together to eradicate poverty and (to) correct the distortions in the current economic system, which concentrates wealth in the hands of a few,” he said.

“We must encourage nations and the stakeholders of the world of business to create opportunities for decent employment with fair wages that let families meet their needs without their children being forced to work,” he said Nov. 19 during a meeting with stakeholders of the world of business.

“Child labor is exploiting a child within a system of production in today’s globalized economy for the earnings and profits of others,” he said.

Pope Francis quoted the dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development said on its website.

“The problem of child labor has nothing to do with age-appropriate chores and work that helps the family or their community and is carried out in their free time, the pope said.

“Child labor is exploiting a child within a system of production of today’s globalized economy for the earnings and profits of others,” he said.

Pope Francis quoted the dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development said on its website.

“Progress toward the elimination of child labor has stalled for the first time in 20 years with a reversal of the downward trend and numbers reaching 160 million children suffering worldwide of this situation,” which has worsened during the pandemic, the dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development said on its website.

The problem of child labor has nothing to do with age-appropriate chores and work that helps the family or their community and is carried out in their free time, the pope said.

Another important aspect is St. Joseph’s connection with Bethlehem, where Jesus is born, and Nazareth, where he settles and supports his family as a carpenter.

“Never before, today, in this time marked by a global crisis,” the pope said, “can he offer us support, consolation and guidance.”

The name Joseph, which comes from the Hebrew verb, “to increase,” signifies “may God increase, may God give growth,” he said.

“His name reveals an essential aspect of St. Joseph’s character: ‘He is a man full of faith in God, in his providence,’ and everything he does indicates his certainty that God helps things grow, that God increases and adds, Pope Francis said.

Pope Francis greets people during his weekly general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican Nov. 17. (CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

“A child who cannot dream, who can’t play, a child’s rights to health, education, sound development and marginality are preferred by God,” he said, and “to fail to take this fact seriously is equivalent to not taking seriously the Gospel and the work of God, who continues to manifest himself in the geographical and existential peripheries.”

Even though the “doctors of the law” scolded Jesus for this, Jesus goes out in search of sinners, going into their homes, speaking and eating with them, calling them to conversion, the pope said.

But Jesus also goes in search of “those who have done no evil, but have suffered it: the sick, the hungry, the poor, the least,” he added.

There is a center and a periphery — in society and in the human heart and soul, Pope Francis said. People should draw confidence from knowing that Jesus “knows the peripheries of our heart, of our soul,” of one’s community or family and knows those “places that are a bit dark, that we don’t let people see, perhaps out of shame.”

Jesus always acts quietly, out of the limelight in these far corners, “and the church knows that she is called to proclaim the good news from the periphery,” he said.

St. Joseph, “who is a carpenter from Nazareth and who trusts in God’s plan for his young fiancee and for himself,” reminds the church “not to look so much at the things the world praises,” but to keep her eyes on those peripheries and dark corners, he said.

“Let us ask him to intercede so that the whole church may recover this insight, this ability to discern and this ability to evaluate what is essential. Let us start again from Bethlehem, let us start again from Nazareth,” he said.

The pope also offered a special prayer and message to “all the men and women who live in the most forgotten geographical peripheries of the world or who experience situations of existential marginalization.”

“May you find in St. Joseph the witness and protector to look to,” he said, offering the following prayer:

“St. Joseph, you who have always trusted God and have made your choices guided by his providence, teach us not to count so much on our own plans but on his plan of love. You who come from the peripheries, help us to convert our gaze and to prefer what the world discards and marginalizes. Comfort those who feel alone and support those who work silently to defend life and human dignity. Amen.”

The Knights of Columbus are celebrating the one-year anniversary of Our Founder’s beatification and invite you to join!

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP
Join men from all over the world, young and old, who work with local parishes and communities to follow a path where faith leads the way.

For more information visit KOFCFOI.Org
Join online free for your first year through December 31, 2021
Use the promotional code: MCG19/NEY20

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP
Join the Knights with an online membership, no matter how much time you have to commit. Everyone is welcome.

Welcome to the Light of the East
St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church
207 Standard St., Mingo Junction
Sunday Divine Liturgy – 11 a.m.
St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church
814 N. 5th St., Toronto
Sunday Vigil Divine Liturgy – Saturday, 5 p.m.
weekdays/holidays – as announced at both churches
Rev. Father John Kapitan Jr, O.F.M. – revfrjohn@sbcglobal.net

The steelworker families celebrated the Nov. 17 feast day of St. Joseph as patron of the workers. The family of Catherine and Edward Pluta, from Weirton, celebrate the Mass and Eucharistic Adoration for the steelworker families at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Weirton.

The Knights of Columbus are celebrating the one-year anniversary of Our Founder’s beatification and invite you to join!
Diocese benefits from AmazonSmile 

STEUBENVILLE — The Diocese of Steubenville can benefit from purchases made while using AmazonSmile. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to charitable organizations.

Parishioners can help their parish, school for Giving Tuesday Nov. 30 

STEUBENVILLE — Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving (Nov. 30), is a day when people are encouraged to donate to nonprofits that support their values. Parishes and schools throughout the Diocese of Steubenville can benefit this year on Giving Tuesday through iGiveCatholic. Last year, $2.47 billion was raised in the United States with $12.7 million being raised by iGiveCatholic for Catholic organizations.

People in the diocese can support their parish and school online by visiting www.igivecatholic.org.

Churchtown — Knights of Columbus Council 4617 will hold a “Spread the Light of Christ – Christmas Tree Lighting and Blessing” at 7 p.m., Dec. 7, at their hall, 17472 Ohio Route 676. Refreshments will be available. For more information, telephone or text Ian Alexander at (740) 525-4898.

Steubenville — Franciscan University of Steubenville Chorale will present a “How Far Is It to Bethlehem?” cantata at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 2, in the Tony and Nina Gentile Gallery at the J.C. Williams Center. The 10-voice choir will perform Christmas songs from a variety of cultures and eras that trace the journey of the Holy Family to Bethlehem. Admission is free.

Steubenville — Sycamore Youth Center will hold a “mobile Christmas party” Dec. 10 for youth in kindergarten through 12th-grade at 4 p.m., on the green space on Maryland Avenue; at 5 p.m. at Elmer White Family Units (north end); and at 6 p.m. at Earl Rogers Plaza (south end). The event will include hot chocolate, cookie decorating and an art project.

Wheeling, W.Va. — An Advent evening of reflection, “Prepare the Way of the Lord: Longing for a Savior,” will take place at 6 p.m., Dec. 2, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph, 1300 Eoff St. It will be led by Father Adam Potter, a Diocese of Pittsburgh priest.

St. Mary School helps cancer center

St. Mary School, Marietta, faculty and students present the Strecker Cancer Center/patient relief fund with a check for $2,128.77 on behalf of the school’s “Knockout Cancer” philanthropy, Nov. 10. Students and staff participated in the project during the month of October. Pictured is the third-grade class, which brought in the most change during the “Change Challenge” between classes at the school. The third-grade class received an ice cream sandwich party courtesy of the Irish Booster organization, who spearheaded the month of activities. (Photo provided by Tammi Bradley)

Students go to ‘drive-in theater’

First-grade students at Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School, Steubenville, seated in “automobiles” they made for the “drive-in movie theater,” watch a movie of a book they read in class. (Photos provided)

Knights help Guernsey Industries

Knights of Columbus Council 1641, Cambridge, presents Guernsey Industries a check for $343 for their “Measure Up Campaign.” Guernsey Industries empowers individuals with special needs to reach their full potential for employment, social and recreational interaction, as well as becoming vital members in the community. Pictured, from left, are Staci Knouff, executive director; Jason Chewning, a client and council member, who presented the check; Angela Merva, client and parishioner of Christ Our Light Parish, Cambridge; Doug Fairchild client and council member; and Steve Weir, Grand Knight of Council 1641. (Photo provided)
Youths share defining moments in their lives when they turned to God

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) — Sixteen-year-old Roch Egan remembers the moment as a turning point in his faith—the day when his mother was near death.

“Five years ago, my mom had a miscarriage, and she almost died at home and in the hospital,” recalled Roch, a member of Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. “I remember that night praying like crazy. Ever since then, I’ve gotten so much closer to God. I trust him more. ‘I’ve always felt called to be a caregiver, which has led to my desire to be a nurse in a neo-intensive care unit,’” she told The Criterion, Indianapolis’ archdiocesan newspaper. “I wanted to find a place where I could combine deepening my faith along with my education—and being around people who can support me and so we can grow together.”

That desire led her to choose the University of Mary in Bismarck, South Dakota, as her college destination. “The second I stepped on campus, I turned to my dad and said, ‘I could live here for four years,’” Ava recalled. “I knew it was the place for me.”

She also feels confident in her choice knowing the Catholic university is named after the Blessed Mother. “I know I’m going to be a mom someday, and I’ve turned to Mary for that calling. I’ve found comfort in my relationship with her,” she said. Miguel Saez was seeking a measure of comfort and hope in his life about a year ago.

“I was struggling. I was lonely,” said Miguel, a member of the Church of the Annunciation Parish in Shelbyville, Kentucky, in the Archdiocese of Louisville. “Then I realized there was somebody who knew more about me than I do myself. God has been there for me from day one.”

“I asked him to promise me to help me through everything I was going through. I heard something pop into my head — ‘I promise. I actually did cry when that happened. I cried tears of joy.’

At 16, Valentina Chavez has the same deep love of her faith that brings so many Catholic youths to the National Catholic Youth Conference every two years.

“For most of us, our faith has always been there for us since we were born,” said Valentina, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis. “It’s something we’ve learned to love and appreciate, thanks to our parents. We’re very blessed to have a very supportive parish and families to help us get involved in church.”

Still, she said, the teenage years are a time of challenge in many youths’ lives in regard to their faith.

“Especially at our age, as teenagers, we get judged a lot about our faith,” Valentina said. “A lot of people don’t have the same faith as us. Coming from our youth group, we have a strong faith, but it does get difficult at times. We remind ourselves that God is with us.”

It’s a feeling that resonated with many of the youths attendingNCYC this year.

“We’re here for a reason,” Valentina said. “And God is always here for us.”

Basilica CWC collects ‘Boxes of Joy’

Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Woman’s Club, Marietta, collects 612 Christmas “Boxes of Joy,” with the help of parish ministries and St. Mary School, Marietta. The “Boxes of Joy” will be distributed through Cross Catholic Outreach to children in impoverished countries. Area churches dropped off an additional 200 boxes at the basilica for shipment.

The basilica Catholic Woman’s Club has participated in the “Box of Joy” program for the past four years. (Photo provided)
Bishop ordains

From Page 1

Rice and Welker stood before the bishop and affirmed their intention to serve the church as deacons. They knelt before Bishop Monforton and placed their hands between his hands. The elect promised respect and obedience to the bishop and his successors. The saints were called upon to intercede for the elect. Rice and Welker prostrated themselves before the altar during the Litany of the Saints. After the litany, the elect knelt before Bishop Monforton, who, in silence, imposed hands upon each of them and invoked the Holy Spirit. This ancient sign, in conjunction with the prayer of ordination, constituted the essential rite of ordination to the diaconate.

The newly ordained deacons were vested with the deacon’s stole and dalmatic. After being vested, the bishop placed the Book of the Gospels in the hands of each deacon, since it is the duty of the deacon to proclaim the Gospel by word and deed.

The bishop shared the sign of peace with Deacon Rice and Deacon Welker, and the other deacons present welcomed them with the fraternal sign of peace.

The newly ordained permanent deacons are vested with the deacon’s stole and dalmatic. Third Order Regular Franciscan Father Dave Pivonka, president of Franciscan University of Steubenville, vests Deacon Bob Rice, while Deacon Don Fox of the Archdiocese of Richmond, Virginia, vests Deacon Michael Welker. Deacon Fox is the father of Deacon Welker’s son-in-law.

Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton places the Book of Gospels in the hands of Deacon Michael Welker, left photo, and Deacon Bob Rice, right photo.

Deacon Michael Welker also shared his feelings, stating: “It’s so great; it’s wonderful. The Holy Spirit is so present in liturgy. I think we are really blessed.” He expressed how meaningful it was for him to see his family at the ordination and to go from sitting with them in the crowd to the altar.

Cynthia, his wife, stated: “We are very grateful for all the friends and family that have prayed for us all the way through the formation and just seeing friends that are old and new here supporting us is a true blessing.”

A reception followed on the university’s campus.