Students at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Nashville routinely score better than 70 percent of the students across the nation on standardized test scores. In some subject areas, the diocesan wide test scores are better than almost 85 percent of students in the nation.

“The test scores are really good,” said Lara Shuler, the new assistant superintendent of schools for the diocese who will be working on adding even more rigor to the curriculum at diocesan schools.

The problem is that many people, including many in the Catholic community, are unaware that the diocesan schools are so good academically, said Rebecca Hammel, superintendent of schools of the diocese.

“We realized we’ve not been sharing that information,” said Hammel, who spent last year, her first on the job, building a staff that is now complete with Shuler, Director of Marketing and Enrollment Management Mike Lavigna and Director of Exceptional Learners Kathy Boles.

While Shuler will be helping the diocesan schools push their test scores and academic achievements even higher during this new school year, Lavigna will roll out a new marketing plan centered around the promise that Catholic schools build “kind hearts, strong minds and confident leaders in faith.”

“The brand promise comes from our parents,” Hammel noted. “We did focus groups and asked them, ‘what does it mean to be part of this community?’ The answers boiled down to kind hearts, strong minds and confident leaders in faith, she said.

“We’re going to spend the next academic year hammering that brand promise,” Lavigna said.

Academic success

Students in the diocesan schools take the Iowa Assessments every year, which is a cognitive abilities test that can show how students are progressing in key academic areas, such as reading, language arts, math, science and social studies.

“The tests are nationally normed so the diocesan schools can see where their students stand in relation to students from across the country. "You can make sure your kids in Tennessee are performing as well as kids in Massachusetts," Shuler said.

State tests are normally criterion-based tests that measure a student’s performance against a set of criteria they are expected to know at each grade level, Shuler explained. That can lead to teaching to the tests.

“We don’t teach to the test,” Shuler said. “We teach skills that allow students to take any test. That’s a big difference.”

Those skills include critical thinking

Continued on page 12

Photo by Theresa Laurence

St. Edward School pre-kindergarten teacher Kristen Kovar decorates outside her classroom on Aug. 6. She and teachers across the Diocese of Nashville were preparing for the start of the new school year, which for St. Edward will be Monday, Aug. 12. St. Edward is one of four schools that will see a boost in enrollment this year, thanks to the Advancement of Catholic Education’s Welcome Grants. See story on page 10.

Catholic schools amplify message of academic excellence

Andy Telli

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Mary McWilliams

Putting a “face” on a process that can be painful, intimate and sometimes devastatingly disappointing sounds daunting, but possessing the skills to carry out those challenges are what makes Erin Stracener uniquely qualified to be the new director of the Diocese of Nashville’s Tribunal Office. The former hospice chaplain took over July 23 following the retirement of her predecessor, Jeannette Buchanan, who had been with the office for 20 years.

“We are here to help people heal, not to judge them, not to shame them,” Stracener said. “We will be patient, loving and kind.”

Building on a strong foundation established by Buchanan and the Tribunal’s previous Judicial Vicar, Father Dexter Brewer, the new leadership at the Diocese of Nashville’s Tribunal Office, with the support and experience of Bishop J. Mark Spalding, is looking forward to carrying out Pope Francis’ reforms in the Tribunal Office.

The Tribunal Office is known mainly for investigating requests for declarations of nullity, commonly and incorrectly known as “annulments,” for divorced persons who wish to remarry and be in full Communion with the Church.

The investigation and Tribunal examination requires petitioners to address a difficult period, but it is one that Stracener said can also be healing and help a person move ahead with their life. “This is a very specialized ministry that involves special skills on legal and pastoral levels,” said Father Hammond, a canon lawyer. “And it’s a delicate ministry. We work with people at one of the most vulnerable times of their lives.”

He said Stracener’s combination of pastoral experience working in hospice and as a religious education director, along with the many roles she’s already served with the Tribunal Office, made her an ideal fit for the job.

Raised Methodist, Stracener chose to become a Catholic while an undergraduate at the University of Tennessee-Martin. She made her profession of faith there in 2005. After graduation, she pursued a master of divinity degree at St. Thomas University.

It was through a class in canon law that Stracener first became involved with the Diocese of Nashville’s Tribunal office. An assignment required the students to contact their home dioceses for applications sent out to petitioners from the Tribunal office. She reached out to Jeanette Buchanan and the two remained in contact.

“Because I love canon law, I told Jeanette that if an opening ever came up, I’d be interested,” Stracener recalled.

In October 2011, Stracener was offered an administrative assistant position. She went on to serve in several capacities, including coordinator of Tribunal affairs, until 2016, when she was offered a position as a pastoral associate and director of religious education at St. Matthew Church in Franklin, her home parish since 2009.

While there, she continued to work with the diocesan Tribunal office as a case sponsor, the liaison who helps the petitioner with their application. On occasion she served as an advocate, preparing briefs and representing the petitioner before the Tribunal, usually, Stracener said, arguing in favor of inviability, most likely when the situation has become sensitive or contentious.

Currently there are no more than five advocates in the diocese.

The two goals of the Tribunal office are to retrain current case sponsors and train additional case sponsors. Additionally, they are exploring ways not just to be present in every parish, but approachable, and as director, part of Stracener’s job is to see that vision is carried out.

Part of the Tribunal’s work is clearing up misunderstandings and misconceptions about the process and about Pope Francis’ reforms. Every parish, however, has a case sponsor, explained Father Hammond. Often, it’s a priest or deacon, but more lay people are being trained for the role.

The number one rule in the diocesan offices, he said, is that everything they do is in support of the parishes and the people of the parish, and that is the principle that guides the Tribunal office. He added that Bishop Spalding is a canon lawyer and was Judicial Vicar in the Archdiocese of Louisville before he was appointed as Bishop of Nashville.

“He understands the importance of this work,” said Father Hammond.

“At the direction of the Holy Father and bishop, the process is to be as pastoral and human as it can be and as efficient as it can be,” said Father Hammond.

A declaration of nullity remains a process that has to be rigorous, Father Hammond said. But the compassion and caring with which it is investigated and an approach that emphasizes accompaniment rather than authority is...
Welcome Ladies of Charity

Bishop J. Mark Spalding celebrated Mass for the Nashville Association of the Ladies of Charity on Saturday, Aug. 3, and installed 15 new members. The new members and their parishes, pictured with Bishop Spalding, Father Ben Butler, chaplain of the Ladies of Charity, and Father Jean Baptiste Kyabuta, pastor of St. Joseph Church, are: (front row, L-R) Sally Stack, Cathedral of the Incarnation; Rosemarie Barnett, Christ the King; Grace Werнак, Christ the King; Molly Herber, St. Henry; Lynn Horton, St. Edward; Carole Collins, Holy Rosary; Mary Gardner, St. Henry; Lynda Winter, Christ the King; (second row) Ashley Counce Pirolli, Cathedral; Ladies of Charity President Arlene Smith; Chris Browning, Christ the King; Cathy Kelly, Christ the King; Beth Canfield, St. Stephen; Jodie Benezek, St. Henry; Meghan Paragno, St. Henry; Sally Holepold, Christ the King.

Official announcements

Bishop J. Mark Spalding has announced the following appointments:
• Father Jacob Dio, MFSP, has been released from service as pastor of St. Luke Church in Smyrna and has been appointed pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Clarksville for a period of six years, effective Aug. 1, 2019.
• Father Phillip Halladay has been appointed Pastor of St. Luke Church in Smyrna for a period of six years, effective Aug. 1, 2019.
• Father Eric Johansen has been appointed as Associate Pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Cookeville, effective Aug. 5, 2019.
• Deacon Orin Rovito has been granted Diocesan Faculties for the Diocese of Nashville and has been appointed to serve at Immaculate Conception Church in Clarksville, effective July 1, 2019.
• Deacon Lachlan Cameron has been granted Diocesan Faculties for the Diocese of Nashville and has been appointed to serve at St. Matthew Church in Franklin, effective July 1, 2019.
• Deacon Paul Taylor has been released from service at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Lebanon and has been appointed to serve at St. Stephen Church in Old Hickory, effective July 15, 2019.
• Deacon Gerard J. Ziemkiewicz has been released from service at St. Edward Church in Nashville and has been appointed to serve at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Lebanon, effective Aug. 5, 2019.

Correction

In the article “Clarksville Knights extend helping hand to Ukrainian priests, nuns” in the July 26 issue of the Tennessee Register listed an incorrect address for people to send donations to pay for new habits for nuns in the Ukraine. The correct address is: William E. Morgan Assembly 2328, 709 Franklin St., Clarksville, TN, 37079. In the memo line, write “habits for nuns.” ♦
Supreme Knight Carl Anderson highlights Knights’ efforts worldwide

Susan Klemond CNS

MINNEAPOLIS. Five years after the Islamic State invaded northern Iraq and began systematically persecuting the country’s Christians, the Knights of Columbus are continuing their work of supporting Iraqi parishes that are rebuilding. Supreme Knight Carl Anderson said in his annual report Aug. 6 at the Knights’ 157th Supreme Convention in Minneapolis.

“The road ahead for our Christian brothers and sisters is long and dangerous,” Anderson said, telling the 2,200 Knights, family members, clergy and others about the group’s new “Adopt a Parish” program, encouraging Knights councils to commit to two years of directly supporting parishes across Iraq. The initiative is in addition to the $25 million already committed to helping the Middle East region and its displaced and threatened people since 2014, he said. “As new threats emerge, the Knights of Columbus will be there with prayers and support,” Anderson said. “We will work to ensure that Christianity has a future in the lands where it first flourished.”

Six cardinals, 75 bishops, including Nashville Bishop J. Mark Spalding, and more than 115 priests attended the convention. Attendees represented 14 countries in North America, Europe and Asia.

Emphasizing the Knights’ nearly 2 million members are “Knights of Unity,” Anderson also outlined new efforts to reach Native Americans in the U.S. and First Nations people in Canada and to help refugees at the southern U.S. border. He also honored the bravery of 18-year-old Kendrick Castillo, who gave his life while protecting his classmates during a May shooting at his Denver high school. After Anderson’s report, the fraternal organization post-humously named Castillo an honorary Knight.

Last year, the Knights gave $185 million in charitable contributions and dedicated 76 million volunteer hours. The Knights’ insurance arm also provided $1 billion in benefits to members and their families.

Support for human dignity in many forms underlies the work done by the Knights roughly 18,000 councils, Anderson said. He said in January the Knights met a 10-year goal of placing 1,000 ultrasound machines in pregnancy resource centers throughout the United States.

“Our ultrasound initiative is now the greatest humanitarian achievement in the history of the Knights of Columbus. ... We can and I am confident that we will, save millions of unborn lives. But pro-life is not only a matter of charity. It is also a matter of justice. Another outreach is the Knights’ plan to increase its efforts to reach out to Native Americans, Anderson said, noting that as many as one in four Native Americans in the United States are Catholic.

In partnership with the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico, and the South-west Indian Foundation, the Knights will break ground Aug. 11 on a new shrine to the first Native American saint, St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

“It is our hope that in the years to come this St. Kateri Shrine will become a national spiritual home for Native Americans and for Catholics in North America,” Anderson said.

Looking toward the U.S. southern border, Anderson said that the Knights will break ground Aug. 11 on a new $250 million in humanitarian aid to assist refugees there. Anderson said the decision is not a political statement, he said but represents an extension of the order’s assistance to refugees around the world.

“As Catholic men and family men, we are all deeply concerned for the right of people to be able to flee their homelands into ours,” Anderson said.

Susan Klemond writes for The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

KPC Ladies Auxiliary to host Prayer Breakfast on Aug. 17

The Father Kevin Roe Court 5 of the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Nashville will host the annual Dr. May Alice Ridley Prayer Breakfast at 9 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 17.

The theme for this year’s Prayer breakfast is “People of Prayer: Make a Better World.” The guest speaker will be Father John J. Raphel, a member of the pastoral team and an ethics consultant at Saint Thomas West Hospital in Nashville.

New to this year’s prayer breakfast, which will be held in the St. Vincent de Paul gymnasium, will be a silent auction.

Tickets are $25 each. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Lady Edna Shannon Scholarship Fund and other charitable endeavors.

For more information, call the St. Vincent de Paul church office at 615-320-0695.

St. Joseph to host festival Aug. 18

St. Joseph Church in Madison is starting a new tradition for the parish and the surrounding community with its first Around the World Festival, noon to 6 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 18.

“Our mission is to bring all people together in peace and harmony,” said Carol Wewe, co-chair of the festival with Alberto Go.

The festival, which is open to the public, will feature food and entertainment from cultures around the world.

People will be able to buy food of different international styles from eight food trucks, Wewe said. They also will be able to enjoy food from Wendy’s, Red Lobster and a vendor selling Italian ice. There also will be a beer garden. There will be entertainment from noon to 6 p.m. featuring dance troupes performing traditional dances from various cultures, a bluegrass band and a country and rock band. There will also be kids games for the children, Wewe said.

The festival will be held in the parking lot behind St. Joseph School on Gallatin Road in Madison. There will be a large tent where people can sit while eating and to get out from under the sun, Wewe said.

Admission is free but there will be a charge for food and drinks, Wewe said. St. Joseph is located at 1225 Gallatin Road South in Madison.

Announce your engagement, wedding or anniversary

If you are engaged, just got married, or are celebrating a milestone anniversary, such as a 25th or 50th, the Tennessee Register can help you let all your friends in the Catholic community know about it.

On Oct. 4, the Register will publish a special supplement to honor engaged couples, recently married couples and people celebrating big anniversaries. If you would like to include an announcement about your engagement, wedding or anniversary, please fill out one of the online forms at: https://tennesseeregister.com/engagement-wedding-or-anniversary-forms.

If you want to make the announcement even more special, submit a photo that can be published with the announcement. Email the photo to tnregister@dioceseofnashville.com.

The deadline for submitting announcements and photos will be Friday, Sept. 20.
Hispanic Ministry responds to Bishop’s Annual Appeal

Andy Telli

For the past two years, the Hispanic community has shown its support for the Diocese of Nashville with a strong response to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries. Father David Ramirez, director of Hispanic ministry for the diocese and pastor of Iglesia Sagrado Corazon, and his associate, Father Alejandro Godinez, promoted the Bishop’s Annual Appeal by explaining the needs of the diocese, Father Godinez explained. “When you explain the necessity, the people are generous,” Father Godinez said.

For the 2018 Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries, Sagrado Corazon exceeded its goals for both the amount of money raised and the number of donors participating. Parishioners at Sagrado Corazon contributed $99,777 to last year’s Bishop’s Annual Appeal, which was 116 percent of its goal of $85,980. The money came from 1,997 donors, which far exceeded its participation goal.

For the 2019 Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries, Sagrado Corazon again is making progress toward exceeding its goals. Through the first week of August, Sagrado Corazon raised more than $56,000, which is 62 percent of its goal of $90,000. The exact number of donors is still being tabulated but it is above half of the goal of 1,997.

Sagrado Corazon is a growing congregation, Father Godinez said. About 5,000 people attend the five weekend Masses at Sagrado Corazon, which is located at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Nashville. Sagrado Corazon also has Masses on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Besides Sagrado Corazon, Father Ramirez and Father Godinez also serve the Spanish speaking congregations at St. Ignatius of Antioch Church, St. Ann Church, St. Catherine Church in Columbia, St. John Vianney Church in Gallatin, St. Luke Church in Smyrna, Good Shepherd Church in Decherd, St. Anthony Church in Fayetteville, and Church of the Nativity in Spring Hill. Weekend Masses at those locations draw another 5,000 people in total, Father Godinez said.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Nashville is a separate parish serving Hispanic-speaking Catholics. So far in this year’s Bishop’s Annual Appeal, Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioners have donated $55,887 or 56 percent of its goal. The money has come from 639 donors, which is 96 percent of its goal.

Father Jacob Dio and Deacons Anselmo Ambriz and Javier Suarez, who is a seminarian for the Diocese of Nashville, help Father Ramirez and Father Godinez provide for the spiritual needs of all the people served by the diocese’s Hispanic Ministry.

Besides celebrating Mass, the team provides religious education and presides at baptisms, weddings, funerals and quinceaneras, adult formation and retreats during Advent and Lent, Father Godinez said.

“And confessions, confessions, confessions, confessions," he added with a smile. "The Hispanic Ministry priests hear confessions for one hour before Mass, Father Godinez said. "They have access to confession in English, but our people prefer it in Spanish."

As the Hispanic communities in the diocese have grown, so has their response to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries. The response to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal "this year is good," Father Godinez said.

Collections usually dip in the summer when people are on vacation, he said. Sagrado Corazon will make another push to meet its goal for the Bishop’s Appeal for Ministries as the summer comes to a close, said Father Godinez.

Appeal moving forward

The Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries is more than 60 percent to its goal and has launched the Summer Sizzle Challenge to help carry the diocese the rest of the way by Sept. 30.

During the course of a long campaign, “it’s just human nature that people get tired,” said Brian Cooper, chief administrative officer and vice chancellor of the diocese. “We’re trying to address this in a fun way, a positive way to achieve our goal, because the Bishop’s Appeal is very important.”

Bishop J. Mark Spalding personally issued the challenge, Cooper said. Meeting the goal by Sept. 30, will require “additional teamwork and focus to get the story out to all of the parishioners that they can help make a difference with their pledges and donations.”

Through Aug. 5, the Bishop’s Annual Appeal has raised $1,647,379.90, which is 61 percent of the goal of $2.7 million. The money has come from 5,062 donors, which is 29 percent of the goal of 8,311.

Money raised in the Bishop’s Annual Appeal provides operating funds for all the ministries of the diocese, such as the Faith Formation Office, youth and young adult ministry, family ministry and marriage preparation, Catholic schools, and the diocesan Vocations Office, “and all the good things they do,” Cooper said.

When the Catholic community focuses and works together, “things happen,” Cooper said.

For added recognition and fun, Cooper said, each parish that achieves its 2019 goal for the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries by the Summer Sizzle goal of Sept. 30, will receive an invitation, sent to the pastor, for two special guests to enjoy an appreciation dinner at Bishop Spalding’s home.

People can make a pledge or gift of any amount to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries at any time through 2019. “They can give a one-time gift, a quarterly gift or a monthly gift,” said Diocesan Director of Stewardship Ashley Linville. “There are a lot of options for how to give... We’re making us as user friendly as possible.”

People can return pledge cards to their parish, mail them, or pledge online at www.dioceseofnashville.com/bishops-annual-appeal-for-ministries. For more information about the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries, visit the diocesan website at www.dioceseofnashville.com or contact Linville at ashley.linville@dioceseofnashville.com or 615-645-9768, or Anna Beth Godfrey, assistant director of development for the diocese, at annabeth.godfrey@dioceseofnashville.com or 615-645-9769.

“We’re hopeful and grateful for past success and confident we’ll succeed in this year’s campaign and the Summer Sizzle Challenge,” Cooper said.†
Beyond prayers, U.S. bishops stress action after deadly shootings

WashingtoN. In response to the mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, Aug. 3 and 4, several U.S. bishops expressed their support and prayers for victims while also expressing outrage that these tragedies continue to occur.

Some bishops kept their reaction brief, within the 280-character confines of Twitter, but others posted links to their own statements or video responses where they were able to say more; one wrote a column for his archdiocesan website about it.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, in a video posted on Twitter Aug. 5, said: “Like the rest of you, I’m trying hard to figure out some type of meaning and get some consolation for those who are suffering from the terrible tragedies over the weekend in El Paso and Dayton.”

The cardinal said he learned about the Dayton shooting, which left nine dead along with the 24-year-old gunman, in an Ireland airport at the end of his vacation.

“Tm no expert on this, and it would be presumptuous of me to think I could give some easy answers to this terrible horrific suffering,” he said, adding that at best he could recommend that it is “a time for all of us to exercise our faith muscle and try to believe that God’s in charge.”

The cardinal said he is inspired by the reaction people have to such tragedies, from the initial shock that this shouldn’t be because: “We know deep down this is not how God intended it.” This is followed by the reaction of love and compassion to those who have been wounded, which he said is followed by a “commitment to bring some type of reform and renewal.”

Bishop J. Mark Spalding of Nashville expressed his support for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ call for elected officials to heal the wounds caused by the shootings and to deal with the scourge of racism, xenophobia and religious bigotry.

Commitment to stopping the violence is something Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich stressed in his Aug. 4 statement: “Mass shootings are not an inevitability. All human beings have the right to live without violence. To behave otherwise is to advance a lie.”

He said the Chicago Archdiocese “mourns the prayers for the victims of the shootings in El Paso and Dayton, but it also stands “with their loved ones demanding an end to this deadly status quo.”

The archbishop, who lives in a city that has seen its share of gun violence in recent years, emphasized that an end to tragedies that occurred in Dayton and El Paso, which now has a death count of 22, “begins with holding accountable our elected officials who have done nothing to address gun violence.”

He also said it requires holding others accountable, “including some leaders who fuel these violent acts by dividing humanity through hateful rhetoric. This must stop – along with the silence of our elected officials who have failed to condemn hate speech, for they are the very ones who have sworn to keep our nation safe.”

Pittsburgh Bishop David A. Zubik, who experienced a mass shooting in his own city in 2018 when 11 were killed at the Tree of Life Synagogue, said in an Aug. 4 statement: “Over and over and over, we grieve as a nation for the victims of mass shootings, praying for the souls of those who have died and for the long recovery of those with wounded bodies and broken hearts.”

He stressed that these prayers must “also lead us to actions that will address the complex causes of these crimes. Among those steps are limiting civilian access to high capacity weapons and magazines, addressing online sites that encourage violence, improving access to mental health care for those who may be prone to violence, and working to overcome the racism that contributes to some of these crimes.”

The bishop said the victims of the weekend’s shootings will be in his prayers and he said he also would pray for “those who hold the power to help prevent these massacres.”

Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput also spoke from his own experience. In a column posted Aug. 3 for CatholicPhilly.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, he repeated some of his remarks from his testimony 20 years ago before the U.S. Senate about the shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999, which at the time was the worst high school shooting in U.S. history.

In his testimony then, he said the problem of violence stems from “a culture that markets violence in dozens of different ways, seven days a week. It’s part of our social fabric.”

He said the recent shootings, including the July 28 shooting in Gilroy, California, which left three people dead, are “just the latest in a long pattern of mass shootings; shootings that have blood-stained the past two decades with no end in sight.”

Archbishop Chaput also said the “usual aftermath” would soon begin in response to the recent U.S. shootings, which he described as: “expressions of shock, hand-wringing about senseless (or racist, or religious, or political) violence; bitter arguments about gun control; heated editorials, earnest (but brief) self-searching of the national soul; and eventually – we’re on to the next crisis.”

The archbishop said he “saw the human wreckage that gun violence leaves behind” when he sat with parents whose children were killed in the Colorado school shooting.

“That experience taught him, he said, that “assault rifles are not a birthright, and the Second Amendment is not a golden call.” He added that he supports thorough background checks and more restrictive access to guns but said that wasn’t the only answer.

He said his experience after the Columbine shooting also taught him “that only a fool can believe that ‘gun control’ will solve the problem of mass violence. The people using the guns in these senseless incidents are moral agents with twisted hearts. And the twisting is done by the culture of sexual anarchy, personal excess, political hatreds, intellectual dishonesty and perverted freedoms that we’ve systematically created over the past half-century.”

Reiterating what he said 20 years ago, he added: “Treating the symptoms in a culture of violence doesn’t work. We need to look deeper. Until we’re willing to do that, nothing fundamental will change.”

People hold hands in prayer Aug. 5, 2019, next to crosses in honor of victims of a mass shooting Aug. 3 at a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas. Bishops across the country have called for action to address gun violence and prevent mass shootings in the U.S.
Don Clemmer CNS

Nick Cardilino thought he understood solidarity and the human family. Then he woke up to the news Aug. 4 of the mass shooting at a bar in Dayton’s Oregon District and remembered that his son had been a few blocks away, at a baseball game, the night before.

“As you can imagine, I panicked,” said Cardilino, who serves as associate director of campus ministry and director of the Center for Social Concern at the Marianist-run University of Dayton. He texted his son right away and thought, “If he doesn’t reply to me in five minutes, I’m going to call him and wake him up.”

His son texted right back, to Cardilino’s great relief, but an hour later, he found himself sobbing. He was now in solidarity with his brothers and sisters in a litany of U.S. communities impacted by mass shootings, including El Paso, Texas, and Dayton in recent months, such as a Ku Klux Klan rally and devastating tornadoes, have left the city “feeling beaten down.”

“I wish I had gone there first,” he said of how he became desensitized, and so he was kind of shocked in some ways at how personal this became, because it happened in my backyard,” he said. The physical distance of other affected communities, he noted, “enables us to be not only physically distant but also somehow psychologically distant. And when it keeps happening over and over again, it makes us even more distant.”

Sara Seligmann, regional director for the Dayton-based Catholic Social Action Office of the Cincinnati Archdiocese, said people have told her they’re surprised by how numb they feel, again largely due to the frequent nature of mass shootings. She observed that other bad news in Dayton in recent months, such as a Ku Klux Klan rally and devastating tornadoes, have left the city “feeling beaten down.”

“You need to comfort the community,” Seligmann said, “but recognize this is no longer a freak thing. This keeps happening, and we need to figure out how to make it stop happening and treat it like the life issue that it is, because people keep getting killed.”

Cardilino agreed about the need for action and said that while watching former Ohio Gov. John Kasich on television, he found his own anger reflected in Kasich’s words, particularly when he said nobody talks about policy fixes in the aftermath of a shooting, letting the issue fade. He is convinced things are “not going to change unless people are marching in the streets.”

This is something Precious Blood Sister Jeanette Buehler knows a lot about. She has been part of an effort to lead prayer vigils marking homicides in Dayton for the past decade, a practice that has commemorated nearly 530 deaths. She participated in a larger vigil, put on by the city Aug. 4, where Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine spoke, and the crowd responded with a chant of “Do something!”

“I think we kind of hate to say it’s a political issue, but there are definitely political implications here. I keep wondering what is going to be the final tipping point that’s going to say to us, as people, this really is enough and we are going to do something, and we’re going to insist that our Congress does something,” Sister Buehler said.

“We can keep talking among ourselves. We can keep holding prayer vigils, and we have to trust that the work of God is going to be brought to completion. But at the same time, we do have to do something ourselves,” she said.

The woman religious stressed the importance of stepping out of one’s comfort zone and building relationships with people who are strangers. “I think it’s something we want to do something about, but it’s so much easier to come together when something terrible happens,” she noted.

Cardilino said he hopes his students take up the push for commonsense gun laws — including greater care and funding for people with mental illnesses — when they return for the semester, provided that the issue hasn’t faded when school starts again.

“Our students are constantly surprising me with their compassion and with their ingenuity and creating new things,” he said.

Seligmann of the Cincinnati Archdiocese sees political action as a natural and necessary part of a Catholic response to tragedy.

“We have got to stop this. We have got to vote for people to stop this, and we have got to lobby people,” she said. “You can’t be authentically pastoral if you’re not trying to stop the problem.”

Don Clemmer writes for National Catholic Reporter, an independent biweekly newspaper based in Kansas City, Missouri.
St. Joseph School will start the new school year with the new leadership team of Principal Michael LaHaie and Director of Instructional Programs Natalie Eskert.

“From everything we can see it’s a great school,” LaHaie said.

His plans for the first year will be to primarily see how the school functions as is, and work with the St. Joseph community to explore ways in which the school can perform even better, LaHaie said.

“I’m just excited to see how it all works out – how the first day goes, how the first week goes, how the month goes,” LaHaie said. “We’re here to support the kids, support the teachers, we’re going to support the parents, we’re going to blend into the community, and we’re looking forward to a great year.”

Eskert echoes LaHaie’s excitement about the new year, which opens on Monday, Aug. 12. “I’m looking forward to meeting the students, to see them roaming the halls. The few that I have met are so nice, so polite, so happy to be there. And I’m looking forward to really diving in and seeing the teachers in action and seeing how we can work together to bring everything positive to St. Joseph.”

Both LaHaie and Eskert have experience working in Catholic and public schools. This diversity of experience makes them appreciate Catholic schools all the more, they said.

“More than anything, I have learned to listen,” LaHaie said. “I’ve spent all of my career – and especially the last 15 – having conversations with parents. … So, I have learned to listen.”

LaHaie was happy to add Eskert to the team at St. Joseph. “Natalie … has taught pre-k all of the way to college. So, she is capable of helping wherever she needs to help,” Eskert said.

“From everything we can see it’s a great school,” LaHaie said.

Eskert spent the last nine years working in Catholic schools in the Miami area. “I credit a lot of what I know and what I do to my experience in Catholic school,” she said. “They set a good example as to not only what it meant to be a good leader, but a Catholic leader, which is huge.”

Catholic schools create a culture based on a strong faith, family and academics, LaHaie said.

“Whether taking a 100 kids to D.C. for the March for life, or 15 on alternative Spring Break trip, you really have an opportunity to connect,” LaHaie said. “I had no idea that position was posted. I had no idea that St. Joseph was looking for a principal until that moment. And that was well into the running of the ad,” LaHaie said. “So, it seemed like it was meant to be.”

“Mine was a very similar situation,” Eskert said. “I would look at the diocesan website, and I would look at the schools to see what was posted. And I had stopped for a while. Then one day I had this thought to look again. A part of me was like, ‘No one would post a position at this time of year.’ But, something said, ‘Look again.’ And that’s when I saw St. Joseph and I was like, ‘What is this?’ And as I was reading this I was thinking, ‘I would be great at this!’”

Michael LaHaie, the new principal at St. Joseph School, and Natalie Eskert, the director of instructional programs, are the new leadership team at the school.
Father Fleming’s trust surpasses $1M awarded to Ryan students

Theresa Laurence

When beloved Cathedral of the Incarnation pastor Father Bill Fleming died from cancer in 1999, he established a trust fund to offer need-based tuition assistance to students at Father Ryan High School.

“He left everything to Father Ryan through the trust,” said Ann Krenson, a lifetime trustee of the fund, former chancellor of the Diocese of Nashville, and a close friend of Father Fleming. “He just loved the school. It was a very influential part of his life, and he never did separate himself from it.”

July 29, 2019, marked the 20th anniversary of Father Fleming’s death, and a milestone for the William J. Fleming Trust fund. The fund has now surpassed $1 million in scholarship money awarded, which is disbursed annually to students in need of financial aid to attend the school. Funds from the trust are used as part of Father Ryan’s general tuition assistance and distributed to students as part of their financial aid package.

The fund “provides a legacy in Father Fleming’s name that ensures a Father Ryan education remains a real and viable option for members of our community and for that we’re very grateful,” said Father Ryan President Jim McIntyre.

Father Fleming, who was born in Nashville, attended Father Ryan for two years before his family moved to Chattanooga, where he finished high school at Notre Dame High School. He went on to study at St. Ambrose College and the Catholic University of America. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Nashville in 1958 when the entire state was all one diocese.

One of Father Fleming’s first assignments as a new priest was as a teacher at Father Ryan, where he taught for the next 14 years. He also served as head of the guidance department before being appointed principal of the school from 1972-1974.

He was remembered as a gifted educator, empathetic priest, and witty storyteller. “He was one of a kind,” Krenson said.

He was also a passionate sports fan, cheering especially for perennial underdogs the Vanderbilt Commodores and the Chicago Cubs.

It’s fitting that Father Fleming donated his estate to supporting Catholic education, a cause that he was so proud of, Krenson said.

If Father Fleming got behind a cause, he inspired giving in others, Krenson said. He helped raise tens of thousands of dollars for Project Reflect, Habitat for Humanity, and the Carmel Center for Spirituality, among others. “If you were working on a project, you wanted him on your team,” she said. “He could raise money like no one else.”

The William J. Fleming Trust fund is just one source of tuition assistance available to Father Ryan High School students. More information about need and merit-based scholarships can be found at: www.fatherryan.org/admissions/scholarships.

The two other Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Nashville, Pope John Paul II High School and St. Cecilia Academy, also have scholarship information available on their websites: http://jp2hs.org/admissions/tuition-financial-aid/ and www.stcecilia.edu/uploaded/Affording_SCA.pdf.
ACE Welcome Grants enable new students to experience Catholic schools

Theresa Laurence

St. Edward Church parishioner Marina Ramos attended Catholic schools as a child, and wanted the same for her two children, but always felt that the tuition made it beyond her family’s reach.

That has changed now, thanks to the Diocese of Nashville’s Advancement of Catholic Education Welcome Grants. Ramos’ two children, a seventh and a fifth grader, will be able to attend Catholic school this year for half the cost.

Her son, who is an altar server at St. Edward, and her daughter, “are super excited about going to the school,” Ramos said.

The Ramos children are among 56 new students able to attend Catholic schools in the diocese this year through the new ACE Welcome Grant program as the start of the school year on Aug. 12 approaches. The grants offer a 50 percent reduction in tuition for a student’s first year attending Catholic school, and a 25 percent reduction their second year. The students must be new to Catholic schools, entering pre-K through seventh grade and attend one of four under-enrolled schools accepting the grants: St. Edward, St. Ann, St. John Vianney, or St. Pius X.

In addition to the Ramos children, St. Edward is welcoming 16 more new students to the school this year through the ACE grant program.

“We’re thrilled with the support from the diocese,” said principal Dr. Marsha Wharton. “This is a great opportunity for families that want to pursue Catholic education and a great opportunity for St. Edward.”

Enrollment at St. Edward is now up to 230 students in pre-K through eighth grade, and the Welcome Grants enable the school to fill open spots at a variety of grade levels without the need for additional staff. “We’re over 85 percent full now,” said Wharton, thanks in part to the new grant program.

Shortly after the ACE Welcome Grant program was announced last spring, more than 100 applications were submitted for an initial 30 grants offered at three schools. Due to the demand, and additional funds offered through the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries, a fourth school was added, and the grants expanded at each school.

The program was open to all families on a first-come, first-serve basis and not based on financial need. The robust response to the grant program “tells me that people want to come to Catholic schools who possibly can’t afford it,” said Rebecca Hammel, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Nashville.

Similar grant programs have been successful in other dioceses, Hammel said. “When schools increase enrollment, tuition revenues rise and the total costs to operate schools are positively impacted,” she said when the grant program was first announced. “The benefit to all families in these schools is that increased enrollment helps keep tuition lower for everyone.”

While the ACE Welcome Grants are designed to bring new students into certain under-enrolled Catholic schools in the diocese, ACE, with a $3.5 million endowment, also supports tuition assistance at all 19 schools in the diocese. The ACE Welcome Grants are poised to make a big difference at one of the diocese’s smallest schools, St. John Vianney in Gallatin, which has only about 60 students in pre-K through eighth grade. Principal Frank Cronin, starting his second year at the helm of the school, praised the grant program for enabling families to access Catholic

Continued on next page
Donor offers major matching grant opportunity for ACE fundraiser

Theresa Laurence

The Advancement of Catholic Education’s biggest fundraiser of the year will be held Tuesday, Sept. 17 at 5:30 p.m. at Cathedral of the Incarnation’s Fleming Center. The annual event raises money for tuition assistance at the Diocese of Nashville’s 19 Catholic schools.

This year, ACE has received an unprecedented matching grant opportunity. An anonymous donor has offered to match, dollar for dollar, up to $300,000 raised at this year’s event.

“This is an incredible opportunity,” said Ashley Linville, director of development for the Diocese of Nashville. It’s also an opportunity to enthusiastically respond to Bishop J. Mark Spalding’s challenge from last year’s ACE event: to grow the ACE endowment tenfold, from $3 million to $30 million over the next five years.

“We’re starting to really plan ways to move forward and meet that challenge,” Linville said. “There’s a lot of people in the community who are ready to help,” he added. “It’s an exciting time in Nashville’s economy and it lends itself to meet that goal.”

As the ACE endowment fund grows, more families who want to attend Catholic schools can do so.

“ACE is definitely an area where we want to grow,” said Linville. The more tuition assistance the diocese is able to offer, “the more people have the option to choose Catholic schools,” he said. “We know tuition can be a deciding factor.”

The Diocese of Nashville is looking to reverse local (and national) trends of falling Catholic school enrollment.

ACE Welcome Grants enable new students to experience Catholic schools

Continued from previous page

education and “a richly Catholic environment, and not have to mortgage their life to do it.”

St. John Vianney Parish, which has a strong culture of Catholic homeschooling, is fertile ground to support Catholic education, but tuition remains a challenge, said Linville, a former public and private school educator. “It’s a loving, safe environment you don’t get with other schools.”

Sponsorships for this year’s “Celebration of Catholic Education” fundraising event are available from $1,000 to $10,000 and individual tickets are available for $100 each.

For more information go to www.dioceseofnashville.com/ace. You may also contact Linville at ashley.linville@dioceseofnashville.com, or Anna Beth Godfrey at annabeth.godfrey@dioceseofnashville.com, 615-645-9768.

We celebrate the power of Catholic education to open doors and change lives.

The class of 2019 was accepted to 209 colleges and universities, and earned scholarships worth more than $31,500,000.

In addition to

23,835 Service Hours at 250 nonprofit organizations

Among Tennessee Catholic Schools with 9 National Merit Semifinalists

$1,000,000 Raised at Relay for Life for American Cancer Society in the past 10 years

ACE Welcome Grants to new students attending certain under-enrolled Catholic schools (see story on previous page).

ACE funds general need-based tuition assistance across its 19 schools. The Advancement of Catholic Education, (formerly known as the Endowment for the Advancement of Catholic Schools) was created in 1992 and is committed to supporting the mission of Catholic education by helping to meet the growing financial needs of parochial schools.

“There are so many benefits to Catholic schools,” said Linville, a former public and private school educator. “It’s a loving, safe environment you don’t get with other schools.”

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ACE Welcome Grants enable new students to experience Catholic schools

Continued from previous page

blessing” for St. John Vianney, as they will help boost enrollment by 11 students this year, Cronin said. The next challenge will be “sustaining new students over time.”

St. Pius X Classical Academy in Nashville will welcome 15 new students thanks to the Welcome Grant program, and St. Ann School in Nashville, which was the fourth school added to the program, will be adding 12 new students this year. “We have two years to really make sure they feel at home and this is their place to be,” said Anna Rumfola, principal of St. Ann School.

All of the families receiving the grants at St. Ann had previously expressed interest in the school, and affordability was the last obstacle to coming to St. Ann for some of the families, Rumfola said.

St. Ann, a pre-K through eighth grade school, will start the school year with 130 students, “which was our goal,” Rumfola said. “Our new goal is 135,” but the school’s capacity is closer to 200 students, she said.

“The job has just started for us,” she said. “Getting them in with the grant I’m sure was the easiest part.” Next is to make sure they have that welcoming feeling and the families want to keep their child at the school until they graduate.
Catholic schools spread the word about academic excellence

and problem solving, Hammel said.
The latest scores on the Iowa Assessments for all third grade students in the 19 diocesan schools include: the 89th percentile in reading; 78 in English Language Arts, which includes reading and writing; 74 in math; 81 in science; and 73 in social studies.

For eighth graders, the scores were: 70th percentile in reading, 82 in English Language Arts; 75 in math, 70 in science and 75 in social studies.

"Analyzing the data, I think we have a lot to brag about," Shuler said.

"Strong English Language Arts scores are really important," Shuler said, because third grade is the first year students have to read the questions themselves, understand the question and answer it, Shuler said.

Typically, when the test scores are drawn from a larger number of students, the scores are lower, Shuler said. "So to have scores this high means a lot of schools are performing well."

Three of the diocese's elementary schools, Holy Rosary Academy, Christ the King School and St. Henry School, have scores high enough to qualify them to apply for recognition as a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education, Shuler said. And five more schools are close to that benchmark, she added.

Currently, St. Matthew School in Franklin and St. Bernard Academy in Nashville, an independent Catholic school rather than a diocesan school, both are Blue Ribbon Schools. Holy Rosary and Overbrook School, another independent Catholic school in Nashville, have been Blue Ribbon Schools in the past; schools can re-apply five years after first receiving the designation.

Curriculum review

Shuler also will be overseeing the diocesan curriculum review process, which was suspended last year while Hammel assembled her staff.

The Curriculum Review Committee, made up of teachers and principals from schools throughout the diocese, reviews the standards for each subject that guide what students at Catholic schools should know at each grade. Each year, the committee looks at a different subject, and this year the committee will be reviewing the standards for math instruction in diocesan elementary schools.

The committee will be reviewing the test scores to identify areas of weakness and at the current standards to see how they might be improved, Shuler said. Committee members will compare the diocesan standards with standards from other high performing dioceses and national standards, she said.

"Just the participation in that process builds a higher awareness among teachers and they bring that back to their schools," Shuler said.

"Teachers want to improve. They instinctively want to make these things happen."

The goal of the committee’s work is to make sure that when students finish a grade they are ready to learn the skills and content that will be taught at the next grade, Shuler said.

"But we’re also preparing students for the social and emotional learning at the next grade," Shuler said. "That’s where (teaching) the whole child comes in."

Whether it’s studying the arts, being lectors at school Masses, participating in forensics or other activities outside the classroom can help students develop skills that will help them throughout their lives, Shuler said.

Marketing plan

For Catholic schools, educating the whole child includes teaching them about faith and providing opportunities to put faith into action through service, Lavigna said.

"We’re challenging these students to grow internally through faith and service, challenging them to look at the world as a whole and to recognize ways they can serve others to make the world a better place," he said.

The goal of educating the whole child is encapsulated in the new brand promise for Catholic schools. Lavigna plans to have posters highlighting the brand promise put up in all the parishes, and featured in billboard ads along Interstate 65.

"We’re trying to promote our diocese as a whole and Catholic education as a whole," Lavigna said.

Besides the posters and advertising, there will be three social media campaigns throughout the school year, Lavigna said. Each campaign will focus on one the brand promise, the first being "building kind hearts."

During the campaign, all the schools will post to their social media accounts stories highlighting one of their students showing kindness, Lavigna said.

"All the schools will share a common hashtag," he added.

The posters that will be distributed throughout the diocese will include a QR code that people can scan to take them to a webpage with a map of all the Catholic schools in the diocese so they can click on the school they want to know more about, Lavigna said.

For families looking for a Catholic school, he said, “the first step is picking a school that makes sense geographically.”

The goal of the marketing plan is to raise awareness of Catholic schools throughout the area. "Our brand needs to be recognizable," Lavigna said.

Continued on next page
The result, they hope, will be a rising enrollment in all Catholic schools. “We want families in Nashville to know we are a viable option,” Hammel said.

Streamlining operations
The diocesan schools office is also working to standardize some operations across all the schools. “A major component of that is fiscal management,” Hammel said.

Seven diocesan schools were using the FACTS tuition payment system, which has now been expanded to all schools, Hammel said. That will help streamline tuition collection, relieving school staff from that responsibility, she explained.

It will also make the process for applying for financial assistance and determining the level of need a family qualifies for consistent across all schools, Hammel said.

That will help the Advancement of Catholic Education board when it distributes funds to schools for tuition assistance, she added.

The schools office also hopes to institute a common budgeting process for all the elementary schools, Hammel said. “We need to find effective ways to operate our schools so we can be self-sustaining as much as possible,” she said.

Pope John Paul II High School welcomed back students for the first day of the new school year on Thursday, Aug. 8. Theology teacher Caleb Childers, left photo, talks to his advisory group. School chaplain Father Andrew Forsythe, photo below, blesses the seniors at the start of the day.

Diocese still weighing participation in Education Savings Account program

Theresa Laurence

Diocese of Nashville Superintendent of Schools Rebecca Hammel and her staff continue to monitor developments in Tennessee’s new Education Savings Account law that was signed by Gov. Bill Lee on May 24.

“We remain hopeful about participating in the program,” said Hammel, a member of Tennessee Deputy Commissioner of Education Amity Schuyler’s advisory committee on Education Savings Accounts.

Schuyler was hired as deputy commissioner in May and tapped last month as special project manager of the state’s new Education Savings Account program.

The result, they hope, will be a rising enrollment in all Catholic schools. “We want families in Nashville to know we are a viable option,” Hammel said.

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The Catholic Church has consistently supported school choice initiatives like Tennessee’s new Education Savings Account program, affirming the parents’ role as the primary educators of their children, arguing that they should have the right to access public funding to enable them to choose the school that best serves their children, regardless of their zip code.

Hammel said she “remains optimistic” that the Diocese of Nashville’s Catholic schools will be able to participate in the ESA program. “We know that Catholic education can break cycles of poverty,” she said.
EDITORIAL

U.S. suffers from an epidemic of mass shootings

What is the pro-life response?
When you need a service technician it’s always hurry up and wait

Mary Margaret Lambert

The lightning and thunder put quite a show. We were trapped outside the church building Saturday evening Mass, and although we had several umbrellas, they were all secure inside our car. The rain was coming down in buckets and we waited for it to subside. It showed no signs of stopping, so I decided to check out the lost and found closet for an umbrella to borrow. There were dozens to choose from, so I chose a golf umbrella large enough to keep me and my husband from getting soaked. We made a mad dash for our vehicle and were none the worse for wear once we fastened ourselves into our seats. Utilizing a service offered by several local restaurants, we phoned in our dinner order and headed to pick it up. No need to even leave our car as they brought it out to us. It was reminiscent of the days when we would pull into a drive-in restaurant and blink our lights for curb service.

After we ate our tasty dinner in the comfort of our kitchen, we got into our jammies and settled in to watch some of our favorite television programs, which we had recorded. The message on our TV screen brought tears to our eyes and fear to our hearts: “Service is currently unavailable.”

We tried it three times before resorting to that dreaded telephone call to the provider’s customer service toll free number. I found the number on the internet website and nominated my husband to make the actual call. After pushing all the multi-tiered numbers on the phone, a live person finally responded. She proceeded to verify our address, phone number and name on the account before running through a battery of tests from her location. No luck.

She asked that we unplug the television set for 30 seconds and plug it back in. I wasted through the tangle of electrical cords and cables lurking behind the TV and found the correct power cord. Unplugging it proved to be the easy part of this process. In order to reconnect it to the wall outlet, I had to find a working flashlight and fit it until it fit the socket. By this time, I am sweating and saying a few choice explosive deleted words of frustration.

After this exercise in futility she finally said that she would request a service technician to come to our home the following day between 2 and 4 p.m. We requested an earlier time, but none was available, so we accepted the one she offered.

Sitting at home, waiting for any sort of home repair is frustrating and the time drags on while waiting for that doorbell to ring. At 4:05 p.m., with no sign of anyone, and no phone calls from the provider, I went through the toll-free telephone number maze once more. The rep took our information again, (luckily, I remembered the recently divulged pin number), checked his records and told me that the service call was set for the following day. I explained to him that we would not be at home and we would not have set it up for that day. He was steadfast and repeated that someone would arrive between 2 and 4 p.m. the next day. Did he not understand what I had just told him? I repeated that was not acceptable as nobody was going to be at home and told him to just forget about it.

I then proceeded to perform a last-ditch effort to restore peace and harmony to our household, and a picture and sound to our idle television set. I did what every red-blooded citizen does in this situation and unplugged the power service in our home office. I waited one full minute, plugged it back in and watched with eager anticipation as all the blinking green lights slowly came back on.

I am happy to report that everything is back up and running again, and if you lost your black and white golf umbrella at church, it will be returned to the lost and found closet between the hours of 2 and 4 p.m. one day this week.

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Following Christ may often require us to swim against the tide

Mary Margaret Lambert

kingship in the eyes of the devout ancient Hebrews was not a matter primarily of governing the country politically, or of conducting foreign affairs, or of commanding the military.

Instead, for the faithful, the king’s responsibility, regardless of the person who was wearing the crown at any given time, was to see that the law of God was obeyed, and that the people of the kingdom were aware, and attentive to, the Covenant with God.

Very often, this expectation meant that prophets placed themselves in conflict with the powerful.

Jeremiah in this reading is certainly involving himself in controversy. He made enemies. Not everyone appreciated his demands to be loyal, above all else, to religious obligations. Indeed, enemies gathered to plot his death.

Despite the personal risk, however, ignoring the scheming of his enemies, Jeremiah with utter determination spoke that God deserved obedience. The Covenant had to be honored.

The Epistle to the Hebrews provides the second reading. Written for a Jewish audience, eloquent and even majestically so, with strong reference to Hebrew history and symbols, this epistle splendidly proclaims the Lord Jesus to be the Redeemer, the Lamb of God, and the High Priest.

The epistle’s section, read the weekend of Aug. 18, says that Jesus was “shameless” even when dying the ignoble death of crucifixion. Regardless of the insults and scorn of others, Jesus chose to at the hand of the Father in glory.

For its last reading on the weekend of Aug. 18, the Church offered the passage from St. Luke’s Gospel.

Always in reading the Gospels, it is important to note that they were written not at the time of Jesus, but decades later. This Gospel, for instance, was probably written 40 years after Jesus. By the time this Gospel was composed, hostility against Christians already was beginning to form in the Roman Empire. This hostility erupted into a full-fledged persecution.

Even without legal persecution, the Christian ethic stood utterly opposed to the prevailing culture. It was Christianity versus the culture.

The Evangelist had to apply words spoken by Jesus to important points to the Evangelist’s audience.

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This being the case, it is easy to see why the Gospel in this reading quotes Jesus as predicting that peace would not inevitably occur on earth. Conflict was inevitable, as the attraction to sin was inevitable. Humans have never automatically submitted themselves to God. The Lord’s promise was unfulfilled.

Life for Christians would not be easy. Christians must be prepared to withstand many pressures to turn away from Christ.

Reflection

The Church is always inviting us to follow Christ. Indeed, its most magnificent liturgical moments are in Holy Week when it tells us so brilliantly of the Lord’s love for us, given in the Eucharist, and on Calvary, and of the Lord’s identity as Son of God, affirmed by the Resurrection.

Nevertheless, in inviting us to discipleship, the Church never leads us down a primrose path. It is very honest.

It is being very straightforward in these readings. Following Christ may often require us to swim against the tide. Pushing us the other way will be the setting in which we live, those among whom we love, or ourselves.

was Jeremiah, as was Christ, willing to understand all that is contrary to God.

Msgr. Owen Campion is a former editor of the Tennessee Register.

Mary Margaret Lambert

BACKGROUND. The Book of Jeremiah is the source of the first reading for the weekend of Aug. 18. Jeremiah is regarded as one of the more important prophets. Along with Isaiah and Ezekiel, Jeremiah, is called a Major Prophet.

Jeremiah was active as a prophet during the reign of King Josiah. Such hatred from, so I chose a golf umbrella.

from 4:05 p.m., with no sign of anyone, and no phone calls from the provider, I went through the toll-free telephone number maze once more. The rep took our information again, (luckily, I remembered the recently divulged pin number), checked his records and told me that the service call was set for the following day. I explained to him that we would not be at home and we would not have set it up for that day. He was steadfast and repeated that someone would arrive between 2 and 4 p.m. the next day. Did he not understand what I had just told him? I repeated that was not acceptable as nobody was going to be at home and told him to just forget about it.

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Mary Margaret Lambert

BACKGROUND. The Book of Jeremiah is the source of the first reading for the weekend of Aug. 18. Jeremiah is regarded as one of the more important prophets. Along with Isaiah and Ezekiel, Jeremiah, is called a Major Prophet.

Jeremiah was active as a prophet during the reign of King Josiah. Such hatred from, so I chose a golf umbrella.

from 4:05 p.m., with no sign of anyone, and no phone calls from the provider, I went through the toll-free telephone number maze once more. The rep took our information again, (luckily, I remembered the recently divulged pin number), checked his records and told me that the service call was set for the following day. I explained to him that we would not be at home and we would not have set it up for that day. He was steadfast and repeated that someone would arrive between 2 and 4 p.m. the next day. Did he not understand what I had just told him? I repeated that was not acceptable as nobody was going to be at home and told him to just forget about it.

I then proceeded to perform a last-ditch effort to restore peace and harmony to our household, and a picture and sound to our idle television set. I did what every red-blooded citizen does in this situation and unplugged the power service in our home office. I waited one full minute, plugged it back in and watched with eager anticipation as all the blinking green lights slowly came back on.

I am happy to report that everything is back up and running again, and if you lost your black and white golf umbrella at church, it will be returned to the lost and found closet between the hours of 2 and 4 p.m. one day this week.

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Robert Alan Glover

When Mike Thornton’s daughter was a student at St. Cecilia Academy, it changed his life. Through his involvement at the school as a parent, Thornton’s faith and spirituality blossomed, and prompted him to give up his career in the construction business and become a teacher.

His first job as an educator will be teaching math this year at St. Cecilia. “I guess you could say that I’m going back to school,” he said. “I chose to attend Aquinas College and earn a master’s degree in teaching and then go on to teach.”

Mike Thornton decided to become a teacher after becoming involved at St. Cecilia Academy as a parent when his daughter was a student there. He will start his teaching career this year as a math teacher at St. Cecilia.

Dads club at St. Cecilia, ” Thornton recalled.

Junno Arocho Esteves CNS

VATICAN CITY. Pope Francis acknowledged the shame and frustration felt by priests who are discouraged by the actions of fellow clergy members who betrayed the trust of their flock through sexual abuse and abuse of conscience and power.

In a letter addressed to priests around the world Aug. 4, the pope said that many priests have spoken or written to him expressing “their outrage at what happened” and the doubts and fears the sexual abuse crisis has caused.

“Without denying or dismissing the harm caused by some of our brothers, it would be unfair not to express our gratitude to all those priests who faithfully and generously spend their lives in the service of others,” he said.

Commemorating the 160th anniversary of the death of St. John Mary Vianney, patron saint of parish priests, the pope praised those priests who, like their patron, carry out their mission “often without fanfare and at personal cost, amid weariness, infinity and sorrow.”

However, he also shared his concern that many priests “feel themselves attacked and blamed for crimes they did not commit.”

The revelations of sexual abuse and cover-up by clergy members, he explained, have “been a time of great suffering in the lives of those who experienced such abuse, but also in the lives of their families and of the entire people of God.”

The pope added that priests have not been immune to the pain felt by the faithful and “embody a spiritual fatherhood capable of weeping with those who weep.”

“Countless priests make of their lives a work of mercy in areas or situations that are often hostile, isolated or ignored, even at the risk of their lives,” he said. “I acknowledge and appreciate your courageous and steadfast example; in these times of turbulence, shame and pain, you demonstrate that you have joyfully put your lives on the line for the sake of the Gospel.”

Nevertheless, the pope said, the current crisis is a time of “ecclesial purification” that “makes us realize that without (God) we are simply dust.”

“He is rescuing us from hypocracy, from the spirituality of appearances. He is breathing forth his spirit in order to restore the beauty of his bride, caught in adultery,” he said. “Our humble repentance, expressed in silent tears before these atrocious sins and the un-fathomable grandeur of God’s forgiveness, is the beginning of a renewal of our holiness.”

Pope Francis also encouraged priests to find the strength to persevere while warning them not to succumb to the temptation of despair “amid trials, weakness and the consciousness of our limitations.”

Gratitude for all the ways God has shown love, patience and forgiveness “is always a powerful weapon” that can “renew – and not simply patch up – our life and mission,” he said.

 Daughter’s St. Cecilia education inspires dad’s career change

The Dominicans Dads are an early morning prayer group that meets on Fridays from 6 to 7:30 a.m., for adoration and coffee, adjourning in time for the fathers to get to Work.

“The best thing that ever happened to me, and what I want to say to those other sleepwalking Catholics out there is that they need to rediscover their faith, because what happens when you work like I did, is that you lose your sense of direction,” Thornton said.

Another dividend of the Dominican Dads club was its access to a Cursillo retreat weekend. “It re-establishes your relationship with God, and helps you realize that he is present and in control of things,” Thornton said of Cursillo.

“Things are going to work out the way that he wants them to, and years ago I would be the last person who would really have wanted to do this,” Thornton said.

Thornton, who has a bachelor’s degree in business administration and finance from the University of Memphis, decided to take a different career path. He applied for a teaching position at Memphis Central and earn a master’s degree in teaching, Thornton said.

He applied for a teaching position at St. Cecilia because, “I was grateful for what they did for my daughter, Keely.”

The pope added that priests have not been immune to the pain felt by the faithful and “embody a spiritual fatherhood capable of weeping with those who weep.”

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St. Henry School launches preschool program for 3-year-olds

Kristina Shaw

For the first time this school year, St. Henry School will welcome 3-year-olds as part of its newly expanded pre-kindergarten program.

The class has filled with 21 students and has a waiting list. The school already had a pre-kindergarten 4 program in place and it is envisioned that the two groups will work closely together. There is one pre-kindergarten 3 class and two pre-kindergarten 4 classes.

“The idea is these children are going to be going to daycare anyway, so why not invite them and show them St. Henry way early on and be part of the community,” said pre-kindergarten 4 teacher Tracy Aszkler.

With new classrooms, teachers, outdoor access, materials, learning tools and more, the young students will learn traditional skills like shapes, colors and sharing in a play-based environment.

A new salt-water aquarium complete with crabs, shrimp, starfish and a variety of other fish also provides learning opportunities. The aquarium was purchased through funds raised by St. Henry third graders who opened and organized a Christmas shop last school year.

“Every time we walk by, we have to give ourselves five minutes extra so we can all look at the fish tank,” said pre-school director and pre-kindergarten 4 teacher Susie Gilles.

Gilles described the pre-K lessons as intentional but presented in a fun way to capture a child’s sense of wonder. She and Aszkler are working together to develop appropriate curriculum.

“We may go outside one day and find shapes,” she said.

In addition to thematic lessons, students discover the Catholic faith with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, which is a formation program that catechizes through the involvement of both children and their parents or instructors.

St. Henry 3- and 4-year-olds will do Catechesis of the Good Shepherd lessons in their new atrium space. The space has a sacristy cabinet and altar table. The children learn about Mass and how to set the altar with a real candle set, chalice, cruet and paten.

There are eight teachers in the whole school and has two teachers and a full-time aide.

Kelley Zemba is a new teacher for the 3-year-olds. She has 18 years of teaching experience, 12 of which is with preschoolers, and has worked with Principal Sister Mary Elizabeth to pick out items for the new classroom. Zemba is also a St. Henry and St. Cecilia Academy graduate.

“It’s wonderful to come back to where I began school, as a teacher and parent,” she said. “I’m excited to finally be in a school where I can practice and teach Catholicism.”

Twenty-one children are registered, but there will be no more than 15 present a day. Parents set their children’s schedule. They can attend two, three or a day. Parents set their children’s schedule. They can attend two, three or five days or attend half days.

“It’s beautiful the connections that they make in our atrium,” Gilles said. “Really, for us it’s the highlight of the day to go in there and be with the children in this work.”

The atrium is part of the three newly-remodeled rooms that make up the preschool wing. The space previously belonged to the kindergarteners, who moved upstairs. Prior to the remodel, preschool groups held class in basement rooms.

The rooms have a writing and block center and each has a bathroom. A courtyard is outside the main wing door. “Classes are set up to make them feel like they are at home,” Gilles said, in order to create a nurturing and engaging environment.

The classrooms have doors connecting to one another and both women oversee the groups working together and bouncing from room to room.

There are eight teachers in the whole pre-kindergarten program and each class has two teachers and a full-time aide.

At the end of the day, kids can stay until 6 p.m. in the revamped after school program. A previous program existed in partnership with St. Mary Villa Child Development Center. This year, St. Henry decided to spearhead its own program.

“Children at this age don’t need to see a new face every day,” Gilles said.

Nurse Christie El-Shishini is the after-care director and three additional teachers have been hired with the intention of working in after-care only. There is a room for all pre-k and kindergarten children; a room for students 1st through 8th grade; and a homework room open to the older kids. The service will also be open on in-service days and some holidays.

“I’m thrilled that we are able to provide for families,” El-Shishini said. “It’s very needed.”

St. Henry School fifth grader Heidi Green, left, eighth graders Julia Hinson, left, and Abby Aszkler, and Ava Waley, Pre-K, watch a variety of inhabitants of the school’s 150-gallon saltwater aquarium in the hallway at the school on August 5.

“Some parents and kids are not ready for full time and some parents and kids are,” Gilles said.

The day begins at 7:55 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. for children that will stay the whole day. Students eat lunch in their classroom.

Photo by Rick Musacchio

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Bob Nolte

CMB

NMLS #160882
Catholic educators from around the world, including four Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia who teach at Aquinas College in Nashville, attended the World Congress of Catholic Education in New York in June which examined issues facing Catholic schools around the globe.

Aquinas College, which is owned and operated by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, is where the congregation’s young sisters are prepared for its apostolate of teaching. The congregation has spread to countries outside the United States, including Australia, Canada, Ireland, Scotland and the Netherlands.

“The students we teach in Melbourne are refugees from Syria,” said Sister Thomas More Stepnowski, O.P., the provost and vice president for academics at Aquinas.

“It’s important (the sisters) have a global view of Catholic education,” she added. “A conference like this opens up your world view to better educate our sisters to educate the young people we encounter.”

Sister Thomas More was joined at the conference, held June 5-8, by: Sister Mary Agnes Greiffendorf, O.P., president of Aquinas; Sister Elizabeth Anne Allen, O.P., director of Aquinas’ Center for Catholic Education; and Sister Matthew Marie Cummings, O.P., professor of education at Aquinas.

“We are only they delegates from the Diocese of Nashville to attend the conference, which was sponsored by Fordham University’s Center for Catholic School Leadership and the Office of International Catholic Education.

Speakers at the conference detailed the many issues facing Catholic education around the world.

“One woman was the principal of the only Catholic school in the Arctic Circle,” which is located in Norway, Sister Thomas More said. “I found out Finland no longer has any Catholic schools.

“In the Congo, they have children as young as 4 working in mines,” she said. “It’s akin to slavery.

“You see these incredible stories of faithfulness and hope to bring Catholic education where there is none,” Sister Thomas More said. The conference also addressed the challenges facing Catholic educators in industrialized nations, such as Belgium, which has a shrinking Catholic school enrollment, Sister Thomas More said.

“The common thread must be the work of the Holy Spirit, and we cannot predict when or how the inspiration will come, but we can be confident in the pouring of God’s grace and mercy will be with us,” Sister Thomas More said.

During the conference, Archbishop Vincenzo Zani, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education at the Vatican, noted that the challenges of the 21st century, namely secularism, relativism and utilitarianism, require an education in a “new reality,” that is, Catholic faculty, staff and students must be formed “by the pedagogy of the New Creation that should permeate your world view to better educate our students to be educators who allow truth and charity to transform their own lives and the lives of those they will serve,” stated the strategic plan.

Delegates to this year’s conference represented more than 85 countries and 200,000 Catholic schools.

“The world conference of Catholic education presented Catholic education at its best as a gift to all nations,” said Gerald M. Cattaro, executive director of Fordham’s Center for Catholic School Leadership and Faith-Based Education.

“This year, we gathered at Fordham to share our vision for the future: to provide sustainable Catholic education, modeling the pedagogy of Pope Francis, promoting integral human development.

The theme of the conference was “Laudato Si’,” Pope Francis’ encyclical on the care for the earth.

The theme of the conference was “Laudato Si’” was manifested not only in practical examples of incorporating the care for God’s creation in school wide programs, “Sister Thomas More said, by the pedagogy of Pope Francis, fostering the caring for the creation that should permeate Catholic schools.”

On anniversary, Japan’s bishops renew hope for nuclear-free world

Carol Glatz CNS

VATICAN CITY. With the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the bishops of Japan are renewing calls and prayers to build peace by abolishing nuclear armament and the abolition of all nuclear weapons worldwide and the nuclear threat by abolishing nuclear weapons.”

The bishop of the U.S. plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki, the “cradle of Christianity” in Japan, some 8,000 Catholics died. The Nagasaki Diocese at the time had about 60,000 Catholics, nearly one-fourth of all the Catholics in the war-time Japanese Empire.

“The pilot of the U.S. plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki was actually a Catholic,” Archbishop Takami said in an interview with Japan-forward.com.

“The city’s cathedral was located about 540 yards from ground zero. A number of worshipers were inside praying the morning of Aug. 9, 1945; they were all killed and the cathedral was destroyed.

U.S. Cardinal John F. O’Hara, then the bishop of Buffalo, New York, and Bishop Michael J. Ready of Columbus, Ohio, officiated at the cornerstone laying ceremony in 1946 of a temporary church, which was completed and dedicated by Cardinal Norman Gilroy of Sydney later that year. The Urahama Cathedral was rebuilt in 1959 and it is one of the largest Catholic churches in Japan.

A globe, a symbol of life that survived the bombing of the cathedral was recently returned to the city.

Tanya Maus, director of the Peace Resource Center at Wilmington College in Ohio, gave Archbishop Takami the cross during a special ceremony Aug. 7.

The three-foot-tall cross had been given to 2nd Lt. Walter Hooke, a U.S. Marine from Yonkers, New York, who had been stationed in Nagasaki from October 1945 to February 1946, according to the Japanese daily, The Asahi Shimbun.

A devout Catholic, he befriended the late-Archbishop Paul Ajiro Yamaguchi of Nagasaki, who gave him the cross that had been salvaged from the rubble.

Hooke, who died in 2010 at the age of 97, kept the cross in his family’s living room, but later donated it to the Peace Resource Center at Wilmington College in 1982. The center then decided to return the cross to the cathedral.

“I am delighted the cross is alive,” said the 73-year-old Archbishop Takami, who was growing in his mother’s womb when the bomb fell.

“Atomic bomb victims will die, but the cross will with them as a living witness to what happened in Nagasaki,” he told the newspaper.

“The cross tells how brutal humans can be, and at the same time, it gives us hope,” he said.
Hand in Hand Options program takes step forward

ANDY TELLI

The Hand in Hand Options program for students with developmental delays is heading into a benchmark year as it expands into a third school, and the first graduates of the program at the elementary school level are moving onto the high school program.

St. Matthew School in Franklin will be the third diocesan school to offer the program, joining St. Ann School in Nashville and Pope John Paul II High School in Hendersonville, where the program was first established.

“I’ve gotten a number of emails in support for the program” from the parents of the three students at St. Matthew’s Hand in Hand Options program, said Principal Tim Forbes. “They’re excited for the opportunities for their children.”

Last year, St. Matthew had one student with Down syndrome. “Through a private donation we were able to have a teacher with that student last year with the idea we were going to continue to grow the program,” Forbes said. “This year there’s a significant amount of resources for that program, but one that has been embraced by our community.”

St. Matthew added another staff member to support the school’s learning specialist and inclusion coordinator to accommodate the larger program, Forbes said. “So we have a team here to support students who learn differently,” he said.

The school’s inclusion team will also be supporting students with other learning differences such as dyslexia, Forbes said.

The model for the Hand in Hand Options program calls for the students to be in the regular classes with other students as much as possible. They are pulled out for specialized instruction depending on their needs.

The inclusion benefits not only the Hand in Hand students but also the rest of the student body, said Anna Rumfola, the principal at St. Ann School.

The inclusion experience helps students experience a new level of diversity and learn about human dignity, she said. “We love everyone and we want to include everyone.”

After several years of being in class with the Hand in Hand options students, it’s become the norm for the rest of the students, Rumfola said. “They don’t see the students as different. It’s just that they are their friends,” she said. “They are very much a part of the class.”

This year, St. Ann will have seven students in the Hand in Hand Options program, which is an increase from last year’s five. Three of the students are returning from last year and four are new to St. Ann, Rumfola said, including one in the fifth grade, two in the seventh and one in the eighth.

“We see pretty significant growth” in academic and social skills for Hand in Hand Options students, Rumfola said. “They have some actionable steps they work on each quarter. They have sort of a growth plan. They have these attainable goals (they work on) in and out of the Hand in Hand classroom.”

Last year, St. Ann had its first two graduates of the Hand in Hand Options program, Lilli Reep and Hannah Dodd. They’ve both enrolled in the Hand in Hand Options program at JPII High School.

“It’s been a wonderful transition,” said Kim Shaver, who is the Director of Student Support and in charge of the Hand in Hand Options program at JPII. Maggie Musacchio, who leads the program at St. Ann, started working last spring on getting her students ready for the transition to JPII. And she accompanied them earlier this month when they attended the student orientation with the rest of the freshman class.

“The diocese has incorporated the program and Kathy Boles, who started her new job as Director of Exceptional Learners on Aug. 1, is already working to establish a board. “We’re identifying and meeting with different people if the community who would be able to add their expertise as we work to create a strong program,” Boles said. “We want people with passion for the mission and the knowledge to help us move forward for the benefit of all our students.”

There’s a lot of emphasis too on securing funds to help grow the program,” Boles said, “so as many students as possible can benefit from the program.”

Hand in Hand Options program takes step forward
Vandy pitcher had support of JPII friends in championship run

Jacob Telli

When Mason Hickman walked to the pitcher’s mound for the deciding game of the NCAA College World Series, he carried with him not only the hopes and dreams of Vanderbilt University fans, but all of his friends and teachers at Pope John Paul II High School.

“It seemed like anyone and everyone sent me something to let me know they were watching and supporting me and the whole team,” said Hickman, a 2017 graduate of JPII, and the starting pitcher for the Commodores in the game in which they clinched the national championship this summer.

They also had to let him know they were watching when he had a rough start to the game. “I got a lot of joking snapchats after I gave up three hits to start the game, and then I got more when I eventually found a rhythm,” Hickman said.

And find a rhythm he did. After giving up three hits and a run to the first three Michigan batters, he allowed zero runs and struck out 10 batters in the next six innings. The starting pitcher’s dramatic shift from vulnerable to dominant was the key storyline in the Commodores’ clinching moment.

The key, Hickman said, was to just stick with what had gotten him to that point: staying calm and making quality pitches when he was ahead in the count.

The national championship capped an amazing first two years at Vanderbilt for Hickman. He had an 8-2 record as a freshman in 2018 and was named a Collegiate Baseball Freshman All-American.

He followed that performance in his sophomore season with an 9-0 record, a team-leading 2.05 earned run average, and a national championship.

Hickman was no stranger to success when he arrived at Vanderbilt. He was a four-year starter for the JPII baseball team and was named to the All-State and All-Region teams in 2015, 2016 and 2017. He was a finalist for the Tennessee Mr. Baseball Award for Division II his senior year.

Hickman was also a standout in the classroom at JPII, where he was a member of the National Honor Society. His experience at JPII helped prepare him for the rigors of being a student-athlete at one of the premier academic institutions in the country as well as one of the most successful college baseball programs in the nation.

“Obviously, JPII is an outstanding academic school that challenges its students,” Hickman said. “It taught me about time management, about how to find a balance between athletics, school work, and my social life. It gave me a really solid foundation.”

At Vanderbilt, Hickman is a Human and Organizational Development major, with a specific focus on Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness.

It’s hard to describe what it felt like to play in a national championship game, Hickman said, because he was feeling so many emotions at once.

“Game three was a whirlwind of emotions,” he said. The Commodores lost the first game in the three-game championship series but rebounded with a win in game two that set up the climactic game three.

Although he wanted to celebrate winning game two and having a chance to play in game three, Hickman also had to start preparing to start the next day.

“Heading into the game, I was excited, happy and nervous. This game just meant so much.” Hickman said.

And when the Commodores secured the last out and the national championship, it was both indescribable and unforgettable, Hickman said.

“Immediately after the game, it’s just a blur,” he said. “You just start sprinting, trying to get close to someone, and then you get on the dogpile. After that, you look for anyone you can hug.

“It’s the culmination of so much hard work for everyone, especially the seniors, coaches and staff,” Hickman said. “It’s exactly what you imagine.”

Hickman said his favorite memory of the nearly two-week long College World Series actually came from off the field. Every day, the Vanderbilt fans would gather for a team send-off as the players boarded the bus. The fans’ enthusiasm and school spirit ensured him that they had the support of people from all across the country.

“It’s a feeling you can’t describe but will always remember.”

JPII announces new boy’s lacrosse coach

Pope John Paul II High School has named Pat Kennedy the new head coach of the boy’s lacrosse team. Kennedy will be the fourth boy’s lacrosse head coach in the school’s history, succeeding Bob Page, JPII’s longest-tenured head coach.

Kennedy comes to JPII from Culver Academy in Culver, Indiana, where he served as an assistant coach to one of the top ranked teams in the nation. Before joining the team at Culver, Coach Kennedy served as the head coach and program director at Episcopal School of Dallas, compiling an impressive 117-25 record, six final four appearances, five conference championships and a state title in his seven-year tenure.

From 2007 to 2011, he coached in the college ranks for the College of Mount Saint Joseph in Cincinnati, leading the Lions to the first winning season in the school’s history.

He began his coaching career at Archbishop Moeller High School in Cincinnati, his alma mater, where he earned a city championship and a final four appearance as an assistant coach. His playing career took him from Moeller to Syracuse University, where he was a member of the NCAA Division I national championship team in 2000.

“Pat brings a wealth of lacrosse experience from various levels,” JPII Athletic Director John Dempsey said. “He has been successful everywhere he has coached and understands what it takes to play at the next level, both as a player and a coach. He has sent several of his former students to play NCAA lacrosse.

“It is obvious from meeting him that he loves the game and wants to promote its growth across all levels,” Dempsey said. “He is eager to get involved within our community and to build on the strong foundation that Coach Page has begun.”

Kennedy will replace Page, who is stepping down after a 13-year career as the boy’s head lacrosse coach at JPII.

Page joined the school in 2006 as a coach and an instructor in the social studies department. Under his leadership, the team enjoyed its first winning season a year after his arrival and won Division II state championship titles in 2009 and 2011.

Page received the Tennessee Lacrosse Association’s Coach of the Year award twice, and earned JPII Harvest Awards for excellence in coaching and teaching during his tenure.

While he is stepping down as the head coach, Page will continue to help coach the program. He also will continue to teach at JPII, leading classes on the stock market and entrepreneurship in the school’s innov8 program and teaching AP Economics.

“We are so grateful to Coach Bob Page for all he has done with our lacrosse program for the past 13 years,” Dempsey said. “Bob has left our lacrosse program on a very strong foundation to build on, and we are excited about the future of lacrosse here at JPII. He has positively impacted numerous players and their families and has sent many players on to college to continue playing the sport he taught them to love. We cannot wait to see what Bob does with his new entrepreneurship program and the impact it will have on our students. We also thank his wife, Kate Page, and his children for supporting him in his passion and commitment to his student-athletes.”

Kennedy is married to Kate Kennedy, who is a teacher, and they have three children: PJ, 10, Ryan, 7, and Keegan, 2.
Father Ryan names new board chair, member

Julie Norfleet has been named the new chair of the Father Ryan High School Board of Trust and Chris Fay, principal of Christian Brothers High School in Memphis, has joined the board, according to Jim McIntyre, president of Father Ryan.

Both Norfleet and Fay began their positions on July 1.

“I am delighted to welcome Julie to the role of chair for Father Ryan,” McIntyre said. “She has been an outstanding board member whose insights and perspective will be important guides as we implement our new Strategic Plan.”

And it’s particularly exciting to have Chris’s experienced educational counsel on the board, adding a perspective that will be valuable to the school’s mission,” McIntyre said. “I look forward to another outstanding year for Father Ryan.”

“The introduction of our new Strategic Plan is a testament to the leadership of our outgoing chair, David Glascoe, and I am grateful for his wisdom and his presence,” McIntyre added. “More important, I am glad to have him continue as a member of the board.”

Norfleet is a Realtor with the Wilson Group Real Estate Services in Nashville and a 1988 graduate of Father Ryan. She joined the board in 2016 after prior service as a Father Ryan Alumni Board member and Annual Fund Class Representative, and subsequently chaired Father Ryan’s 2015 Legacy Gala with her husband, Ed. Norfleet attended the University of Kentucky and graduated from Middle Tennessee State University with a bachelor’s degree in English. She and Ed are the parents of two daughters, both of whom graduated from Father Ryan.

Fay has served as principal of Christian Brothers High School since 2010, when he became the school’s first lay principal. Prior to this, Fay served as assistant principal at Christian Brothers and before that, at St. Benedict at Auburndale in Cordova, Tennessee. A 1998 graduate of Christian Brothers University, he will be receiving his Doctor of Education in Leadership from St. Mary’s University of Minnesota during the summer of 2019.

New Dean of Students announced for Father Ryan

Joseph Crumby, an alumnus of Father Ryan High School, has returned to his alma mater as the school’s new Dean of Students, according to Father Ryan President Jim McIntyre.

Crumby, a 1995 graduate of Father Ryan, comes to the school from LaVergne High School, where he has served as assistant principal since 2016.

In making the announcement, McIntyre said Crumby’s experience, demeanor and proven record made him the choice for this position.

“The Dean of Students embodies our promise that our students will be known and loved while ensuring that our policies and mission are observed,” McIntyre said. “Joe demonstrates this, both as an alumnus of Father Ryan and through his nine years of work in the Rutherford County school system. He has a calm presence and good instincts that I am confident will enhance the experience here for all of our students. We are pleased to welcome Joe back to the campus.”

Crumby expressed his enthusiasm for being at his alma mater. “As a graduate of Nashville’s Catholic schools, I know their impact, and I am passionate about providing this Catholic education to more students,” he said.

“As an educator, I believe in forging partnerships with students, parents and teachers, where we hold each other accountable for our performance,” Crumby added. “Having benefited from this type of approach as a student at Father Ryan, I look forward to forging new relationships here that will benefit our entire community.”

Crumby began his career in education in 2011 as a World History teacher at Lavergne High School. After two years he became the administrative dean of students, serving in that role for three years prior to becoming assistant principal.

A graduate of MTSU where he earned his bachelor’s in Education, Crumby went on to earn his master’s in Instructional Leadership from Bethel University. He has been a participant in multiple educational conferences in his career and was featured as a speaker at conferences in Chicago and Nashville. He is a member of both the Tennessee and the National Associations of Secondary School Principals.
Listen for Bishop Spalding’s ‘Catholic Minute’ during Titans game broadcasts

Theresa Laurence

If you listened to the Titans Radio Network broadcast of the Tennessee Titans’ first preseason game against the Philadelphia Eagles on Thursday, Aug. 8, you may have heard a familiar voice bringing you a “Catholic Minute” message.

It’s a voice you’ll be hearing for a few minutes during every Titans game this season, that of Bishop J. Mark Spalding.

Just as he did last year, Bishop Spalding is recording a different one-minute message to be broadcast three times during each Titans game.

“It’s a fun, interesting way to reach an audience we generally don’t get to reach,” said Brian Cooper, Chief Administrative Officer and Vice Chancellor of the Diocese of Nashville. Cooper encouraged Bishop Spalding to record the spots and helps him script them. Every spot is different, and they evangelize in a way that “demonstrates our faith but doesn’t preach about it,” Cooper said.

For example, the inaugural spot recorded last year focused on teamwork and the role of a bishop using sports analogies. The first spot for this year talks about education and the diocese’s Catholic schools.

Bishop Spalding always signs off with one of his favorite sayings, “Good, better, best, never let it rest till your good is better and you better is best,” followed by an enthusiastic “Go Titans!”

“Every spot reinforces Catholic beliefs and principles … and fits our overall mission of living and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, welcoming all,” said Cooper.

The games broadcast on the Titans Radio Network can be heard on radio stations across the state of Tennessee, and in neighboring Kentucky, Alabama, and at www.titansradio.com.

Bishop Spalding has received “overwhelmingly positive” feedback from people across the diocese for doing the radio spots, Cooper said.

“People love The Catholic Minute,” Cooper said. “It’s always an uplifting message.”

Fun, fellowship and barbecue

The savory aroma of barbecue once again filled the summer air at St. Patrick Church in McEwen and St. Lawrence Church in Joelton during the annual barbecue picnics hosted by the historic parishes. The 165th Irish Homecoming and Picnic was held at St. Patrick July 26 and 27, and featured lots of tasty barbecue and fun activities like the face-painting booth, top photos. Bishop J. Mark Spalding, accompanied by St. Lawrence Pastor Father Edwige Carre, visited the 137th annual Barbecue Picnic at St. Lawrence, where hundreds of people volunteered and spent the day chopping the pork barbecue.
The summer, which is the freest time of the year for students, can be the time of year that hits the hardest for some low-income children. So Tom Kimball of the Knights of Columbus Council 10010 at St. John Vianney Church in Gallatin, decided to ask his brother Knights to make summer a little easier for families in need by collecting food donations to be distributed to children at the Gallatin Shalom Zone summer camp.

“Kids during the school year get free lunches, but during the summer they go hungry,” Kimball said. Many live with single parents who are doing their best, which means many children are left home alone during work hours in the summer months with very little to eat. Kimball became aware of this seasonal hunger issue at the same time that his council was recommitting to its core service values. Grand Knight David Chitwood had recently begun to post corporal works of mercy on the meeting agendas.

Kimball heard of the children’s summer needs through his college classmate Father Vic Subb, a Glenmary priest who is the pastor of Holy Family Church in Lafayette, and asked if the council might be able to do anything to help the local children in need. They spoke with St. John Vianney’s pastor Father Stephen Gideon, who recommended the Gallatin Shalom Zone as a potential partner. The Shalom Zone is a local nonprofit that operates a food pantry, after school programs, adult education and other programs. It also runs a local summer camp for low-income children. Staffers were able to feed the children at the camp for the month of June, but they would be left hungry for all of July. So, in stepped the Knights of Columbus.

The 63 Shalom Zone campers were asked to decorate grocery bags donated by the local Food Lion grocery store as an art project at the beginning of June. Kimball and the Knights then distributed these bags to St. John Vianney parishioners to take with them on their next trip to the grocery store. Kimball considered if it might have been better to just raise enough money to fill all the bags equally, but he decided against it because the families would miss out on a valuable charity experience. “Children could learn that there were others that weren’t as well off as they were, and parents could use it as a teaching moment,” he said.

The St. John Vianney council was able to fill each of the 63 bags with about 30 pounds of nonperishables and easily microwavable items, totaling more than 1,800 pounds of food donated. In addition, the council was able to raise about $500 to donate to the Shalom Zone pantry directly.

The kids were absent the day the bags were delivered, due to flooding, but Kimball learned that the campers were greatly surprised to receive the donations.

Kimball was quick to point out that this kind of generosity is being displayed by different Knights of Columbus councils all over Tennessee. As the chairman for the Knights’ Right to Life programs in Middle Tennessee, he gets the chance to visit other councils in the area. “I hear about amazing things that are being done across our region. So many of our councils are doing so many good things and this is an example of one of them,” he said. “The kids got a bag of food, and we got the joy of giving.”

Bishop J. Mark Spalding celebrated Mass at the Catholic Pastoral Center on Friday, July 26, to mark the 182nd anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Nashville and the 105th anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral of the Incarnation. Father John Hammond concelebrated the Mass, which also was the Feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin.
2019 Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries

“I am deeply grateful for your support of the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries. Your efforts make possible the works of mercy that affect so many in our diocese: service to the marginalized of our diocese, and seminarian education, to name a few. All these things happen because of your support of the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Ministries in your parish.”

—Most Reverend J. Mark Spalding, Bishop of Nashville

To whom much is given, much will be required.

—Luke 12:48

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