



The MESSAGE

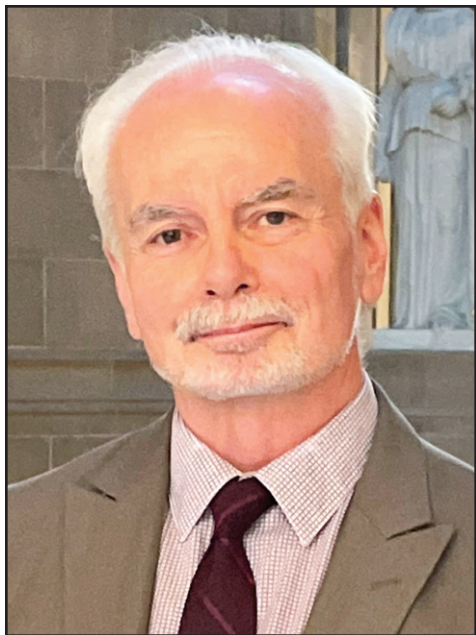
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INPEA leader eyes retirement, seeks to fulfill vision for universal school choice



JOHN ELCESSER

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR
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Following a history-making tenure as the voice of Indiana's non-public schools, John Elcesser announced he will retire in June 2025 — after one more legislative session, which he and other advocates hope will result in the passage of universal school choice for Indiana families.

Elcesser, who has served as executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA) for

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Race for Vocations boasts over 80 participants

BY JOHN ROHLF
The Message assistant editor

Two days before over 80 runners and walkers participated in the Evansville Half Marathon and 5-mile race as part of the Diocese of Evansville's Race for Vocations group, participants, family and friends gathered at St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville for a pre-race Mass and dinner.

Bishop Joseph M. Siegel celebrated Mass Oct. 3 at St. Benedict Cathedral ahead of the first Race for Vocations in the Diocese of Evansville. Diocesan Vicar General and Rector of St. Benedict Cathedral Father Alex Zenthoefer and Diocesan Director of Vocations Father Tyler Tenbarge concelebrated the Mass.

At the beginning of Mass, Bishop Siegel thanked those in attendance for their support of the diocesan vocations program through the Race for Vocations.

The first Race for Vocations happened in large part due to the work of Anna Bragin, a parishioner at St. Benedict Cathedral. A few months



The Message photo by John Rohlf

Bishop Joseph M. Siegel, left, and first year seminarians Jake Evitts and Eli Steckler walk towards the back of the Cathedral at the conclusion of Mass.

ago, she approached Father Tenbarge about the diocese possibly starting a Race for Vocations. Father Tenbarge had helped with a Race for Vocations in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis when he was a seminarian back in 2009.

"I said I'd love to have one here but

I definitely don't have the time to run it," Father Tenbarge said in his homily during the Oct. 3 Mass. "She decided to meet with me anyway, knowing I was probably going to ask her to do all the work. And she happily and boldly said yes."

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Sixth annual prayer vigil, peaceful march kicks off 40 Days for Life

BY MEGAN ERBACHER
The Message editor

Standing on the front steps of Reitz Memorial High School in Evansville, Bishop Joseph M. Siegel asked God for his guidance and protection for those who provide prayerful witness to the Gospel of Life over the next 40 Days for Life fall campaign.

More than 75 women, men and children of all ages gathered for the sixth annual 40 Days for Life prayer vigil and a roughly 1-mile peaceful prayer walk to Planned Parenthood Sept. 30. The kick-off march, originally scheduled for Sept. 24, was rescheduled due to expected inclement weather. The group walked from Reitz Memorial to the Planned Parenthood office on North Weinbach Ave. to kick off the fall 2024 observance of 40 Days for Life, which is Sept. 25 through Nov. 3.

See [40 DAYS](#), page 7



The Message photo by Megan Erbacher

More than 75 women, men and children of all ages line the streets in front of the Planned Parenthood office on North Weinbach Avenue Sept. 30 after a prayer walk from Reitz Memorial High School to kick off the fall 2024 observance of 40 Days for Life, which continues through Nov. 3.

Catholic elementary schools recognized for 2023-24 IREAD pass rates

On Sept. 25, 18 of the Diocese of Evansville's 22 Catholic elementary schools had the opportunity to be recognized by the Indiana Department of Education for Indiana's Literacy Achievement Award. This award is given to schools with 95 percent or more of students passing IREAD (Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination) in 2023-2024. For previous coverage in *The Message* on the assessment results for the 2023-2024 school year, visit <https://evdiomessage.org/11-diocesan-schools-reach-100-percent-pass-rate-on-iread/>.

Submitted photo

