



# The MESSAGE

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## Diocese holds Celebration for Our Lady of Guadalupe



Father Juan Ramirez, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Washington, delivers the homily at the Bilingual Mass for the Celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Emperese of America.



A group provides music during the Mass. (See more photos on page 5.)

The Message photos by John Rohlf

By JOHN ROHLF  
The Message assistant editor

The Diocese of Evansville held their annual Diocesan Bilingual Celebration for Our Lady of Guadalupe, Emperese of America.

The annual celebration was held Dec. 7 at St. Benedict Cathedral. Starting at 11 a.m., there was a bilingual Rosary and traditional dancers. Bishop Joseph M. Siegel then celebrated Mass at noon. Several diocesan priests concelebrated the Mass. First-year seminarians were altar servers.

Father Juan Ramirez, one of several

diocesan priests who concelebrated the Mass, delivered the homily during the Mass. He is the parochial vicar at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Washington.

Father Ramirez said they were celebrating the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He said on Dec. 7, 2024, they celebrated the event that happened many years ago and still impacts our faith and our relationship with God today.

He said Our Lady of Guadalupe is accompanying us in this time until the second coming of Christ.

"She's our mother and she's there to

help us in this journey of faith until Christ comes for the second time," Father Ramirez said. "So today, this is a beautiful reminder for all of us as Catholics and believers in Our Lady of Guadalupe that we are not walking alone. We have her. We have her love, her intercession."

Father Ramirez said in the Old Testament, God promised that he would send the Messiah. He said Our Lady of Guadalupe is accompanying us and letting us know that God fulfills his promises. He encouraged all in attendance to bring all their needs, fears and all that is in

their hearts to the hands of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"All our needs, all our faith, whatever we need in our lives, let us place them in the hands of Our Lady of Guadalupe because she knows that God fulfills his promises and we have a mother. She's there to help us and to bring us closer to her son every time," Father Ramirez said.

After the Mass, a Mariachi band played music next to the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the front of the church. There was a meal in the Woodward Center at St. Benedict after Mass.

### The Message will miss two issues over Christmas

By THE MESSAGE STAFF

Because Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Wednesdays, **The Message** will not publish issues on Dec. 27, 2024, or Jan. 3, 2025.

Our last 2024 issue will be published on Dec. 20, and the first 2025 issue will be published on Jan. 10. **The Message** offices will be closed for the holidays starting Dec. 24, 2024, and we will reopen Jan. 2, 2025.

To stay up-to-date on news across the Diocese, please visit our website at [www.evdiomessage.org](http://www.evdiomessage.org).

## ICC works to support legislation outlawing death penalty as state executions set to resume

By NATALIE HOEFER  
The Criterion  
Special to The Message

With Indiana's first state execution in 15 years scheduled for Dec. 18, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is already working to promote legislation for the 2025 General Assembly — set to begin on Jan. 8 — that would eradicate the death penalty in Indiana.

Indiana Rep. Bob Morris (District 84) "will file a full death penalty repeal bill that will have the option of life without parole," says Alexander Mingus, ICC executive director, which serves as the public policy voice for the Church in Indiana. Morris, a Catholic, designed the bill to adhere to Church teaching, which

opposes the death penalty.

"Our effort now is to determine the appetite in the House for looking at a bill like this," says Mingus.

He notes that there have been only two bills related to the death penalty proposed in the last decade — one in 2017 to create a mental illness exception, and one in 2021 to reserve the sentence to cases of multiple murders or the death of a police officer.

"Neither bill went anywhere," says Mingus. "So, we don't have a full picture of where current legislators stand on the death penalty because there's no voting record. And there's not much on record for how someone feels on the death penalty."

See ICC, page 8

