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EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

A Pastoral Letter on the Age of Confirmation in the Diocese of Evansville

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
In the final words spoken by our Lord before He ascended into Heaven, the Church is instructed, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." In His Great Commission, Christ reveals the purpose and destiny of the Church. So that His apostles would be prepared for this all-important mission, Jesus told them to remain in Jerusalem and to await the "promise of the Father," the Holy Spirit.

This promise was made manifest for the apostles on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon them in signs of a driving wind and tongues of fire. Empowered by the Spirit, the Church burst forth from the upper room and went forth into the world to boldly proclaim the Gospel.

The apostles would later lay hands upon the baptized to confer the same Holy Spirit, continuing the graces of the Pentecost event and strengthening and empowering the faithful for their mission to evangelize the world around them.

From the beginning, the sacrament of Confirmation has made real Christ's promise to be with us always until the end of the age. "The gift of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation makes Christ present in our very souls so that our relationship to him is intimate, interior, and experiential." In our time when large numbers of people are distancing themselves from Jesus Christ and the Church, the need for the faithful to be enkindled by the Holy Spirit to be missionary disciples, to fulfill the Great Commission, is a great imperative.

The normal age for receiving Confirmation has greatly varied over

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Queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo:

En las últimas palabras pronunciadas por nuestro Señor antes de ascender al Cielo, se instruye a la Iglesia: "Id, pues, y haced discípulos a todas las naciones, bautizándolos en el nombre del Padre y del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo, enseñándoles a guardar todo lo que os he mandado." En su Gran Comisión, Cristo revela el propósito y el destino de la Iglesia. A fin de que sus apóstoles estuvieran preparados para esta misión tan importante, Jesús les dijo que permanecieran en Jerusalén y que esperaran la "promesa del Padre," el Espíritu Santo.

Esta promesa se manifestó a los Apóstoles el día de Pentecostés, cuando el Espíritu Santo descendió sobre ellos en señales de un viento impetuoso y lenguas de fuego.

Fortalecida por el Espíritu, la Iglesia brotó del aposento alto para salir al

mundo a proclamar el Evangelio con valentía. Más tarde, los apóstoles impondrían las manos sobre los bautizados para conferir el mismo Espíritu Santo, continuando las gracias del evento de Pentecostés y fortaleciendo y empoderando a los fieles para su misión de evangelizar el mundo a su alrededor.

Desde el principio, el sacramento de la Confirmación ha hecho realidad la promesa de Cristo de estar con nosotros siempre hasta el fin de los tiempos. "El don del Espíritu Santo en la Confirmación hace presente a Cristo en nuestras almas, de modo que nuestra relación con Él es íntima, interior y experiential." En nuestro tiempo, en el que un gran número de personas se alejan de Jesucristo y de la Iglesia, la necesidad de que los fieles se enciendan por el Espíritu Santo para ser discípulos misioneros, para

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Table linens offer opportunity to 'take home a memory of the liturgy'

"The BENEDICTVS collection reflects the beauty and faith of this community . . ."

MARGHERITA VEZZANI



Submitted photo

The napkins and table cloth for the table linens are shown.

By **JOHN ROHLF**
The Message assistant editor

A set of table linens based on the architectural features of St. Benedict Cathedral allows individuals to "take home a memory of the liturgy," Father Alex Zenthoefer said.

Several months ago, Father Zenthoefer, Diocesan Vicar General and rector of St. Benedict Cathedral, noticed a couple of his friends, Lucia Bertaggia and Margherita Vezzani, were making table linens based on designs they

saw in Catholic Churches. Father Zenthoefer contacted them to see if they were interested in coming to the Cathedral to see the church and potentially design a set of table linens.

They visited the Cathedral and set to work on designs shortly afterwards. The first linens were created in October.

"For me, the desire was not to create another fundraiser, but to create an opportunity for our people to take home a memory of the liturgy," Father Zenthoefer said.

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ICC supporting pro-life, pro-family initiatives at Statehouse



By **VICTORIA ARTHUR**
Statehouse Correspondent for
Indiana's Catholic Newspapers

On the heels of the Indiana March for Life, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is taking steps to support pro-life legislation while calling for a halt to the death penalty in the state.

The ICC — the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana — made its presence felt during the Jan. 22 march and rally in downtown Indianapolis and is backing life-affirming bills that have been introduced in the state legislature. Now, the ICC is also planning a Feb. 3 press conference at the Statehouse seeking the abolishment of the death penalty, which was recently reinstated in Indiana.

"All of our efforts tie in nicely with a week of reflection on the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death," said Alexander Mingus, ICC executive director, referring to both the Indiana march and the national March for Life, held two days later in Washington, D.C.

These events continue to mark the anniversary of the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion nationwide, even following the court's overturning of the ruling in 2022, which returned the issue of abortion to the states. In Indiana, most unborn lives are now protected from abortion, with exceptions in instances of rape or incest, lethal fetal anom-

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