



The MESSAGE

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ICC
focusing
on school
choice,
immigration in
second half
of session



By VICTORIA ARTHUR
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Universal school choice for Indiana is within reach as the 2025 legislative session moves into its second half, while an effort to abolish the death penalty in the state will have to wait another year.

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) and other advocates continue to monitor key legislation that made it through crossover — the midway point of the General Assembly when bills that are still active move from one legislative chamber to the other. This is a long session of the state legislature, held every other year and culminating in the passage of Indiana's two-year budget.

House Bill 1001 — the proposed state budget — includes a provision removing the income cap on Indiana's current Choice Scholarship Program, more commonly known as the voucher program. The measure passed the Indiana House of Representatives Feb. 20 on a 66-28 vote and now awaits further action in the Senate.

"We are pleased to have support for universal vouchers from both Gov. (Mike) Braun and the Indiana House of Representatives," said John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Edu-

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Pope, from hospital, writes about 'blessing' hidden in frailty

Editor's note: As of press time, the Holy See Press Office reported on the morning of March 5 that Pope Francis had a restful night in Rome's Gemelli Hospital, where he is being treated for bilateral pneumonia. As planned, Pope Francis transitioned from non-invasive mechanical ventilation during the evening of March 4 to high-flow oxygen therapy through nasal cannulas on the morning of March 5. The Holy See Press Office reported that his overall clinical condition remained stable, including heart, kidney and blood values. The Holy See Press Office also noted that the Pope did not run a fever, and he remained alert, cooperative with therapies and oriented. His prognosis remained guarded as of press time on March 5.

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis' condition remained "stable" March 2, and he "did not require non-invasive mechanical ventilation, but only high-flow oxygen therapy," the Vatican said in its evening medical bulletin.

The 88-year-old pope did not have a fever, it said, but "in view of the complexity of the clinical picture, the prognosis remains guarded."

In the morning of March 3, the Vatican said, Pope Francis participated in a Mass "together with those who are caring for him during these days of hospitalization, then alternated rest with prayer."

The pope had what his doctors described as "an isolated crisis of bronchospasm" Feb. 28, which caused him



CNS photo by Lola Gomez

A balloon featuring an image of Pope Francis is seen as people pray around a statue of St. John Paul II outside Rome's Gemelli hospital March 2. Pope Francis is receiving treatment there for double pneumonia.

to vomit and to inhale some of it, leading to concern that he could contract another infection. Signs of an infection could have included a fever and an elevated white blood cell count, neither of which was present, a source said.

The crisis also forced doctors to employ "non-invasive" mechanical ventilation using a mask; by the next day, he could alternate the mask and high-flow oxygen therapy administered through a nasal cannula.

As he continues to receive treatment in Rome's Gemelli hospital, Pope Francis sent written thanks for people's prayers, but he did not go to his hospital window as some people had hoped.

Young people and members of the House of Mary, both groups associated with the Pontifical Academy of the Immaculate Conception, led the recitation of the Angelus prayer March 2 around a statue of St. John Paul II below the pope's hospital window.

A couple dozen other people and many photographers and TV correspondents joined them.

The Vatican press office released a message from Pope Francis with a brief reflection on the day's Gospel reading, but also with a reflection on being hospitalized since Feb. 14 with breathing

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Abby Coudret named February St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Outstanding Educator

Special to The Message

On Feb. 24, Abby Coudret, physical education and resource teacher at Corpus Christi School in Evansville, was named the February St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Outstanding Educator by the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Schools Office. Coudret was surprised by Diocesan Superintendent Michelle Priar, Associate Superintendent Kari Ford and School Support Administrator Lynde Anquillare, who presented her with a certificate and a small gift.

Coudret is the 14th educator to receive the honor since its inception in 2023. She is in her 11th year of teaching for the Diocese.

A nominator said Coudret "exemplifies the spirit of St. Elizabeth

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Submitted photo

Abby Coudret, physical education and resource teacher at Corpus Christi School in Evansville, is pictured with some of her students after being named February's St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Outstanding Educator by the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Schools Office. Also pictured with Coudret, back row second from left, are Corpus Christi Principal Andrea Greaney, back row far left, Diocesan Superintendent Michelle Priar, Associate Superintendent Kari Ford and School Support Administrator Lynde Anquillare.