

ENGAGING THE SPIRIT

Bible talks at brew pub link to focus on evangelization

BY VANESSA NEGRETE
 Northwest Indiana Catholic

In Father Michael Surufka's eyes, the tap room at St. John Malt Brothers is a great place to talk about the Bible. It doesn't have the feel of a church hall under the glare of fluorescent lights. People can have a brew and a burger. It is neutral territory, not tied to a specific parish.

Father Surufka, OFM, pastor of Holy Name in Cedar Lake, worked with Jim Estry, operating partner of the St. John brew pub, to host Bible, Beer and Beyond. As the event name implies, Father Surufka leads talks about the Bible and religious-related topics.

"It's BYOB," Father Surufka said. "Bring your own Bible."

The discussions take place at 6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of the month through May at St. John Malt Brothers, 9607 Wicker Ave., St. John. All those 21 and older are welcome, but most of the attendees are members of Holy Name or St. John the Evangelist, Father Surufka said.

Admission is free. Half

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IHSAA CLASS 1A GIRLS' BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



Members of the Marquette Catholic High School Michigan City girls basketball team pose with the IHSAA Class A girls basketball state trophy. The Blazers beat Vincennes Rivet 57-36 at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis on Feb. 23. The championship is the team's second consecutive state title. (Bob Wellinski photo)

Marquette girls claim 2nd state title

BY BOB WELLINSKI
 NWIC Correspondent

INDIANAPOLIS - There must have been a sense of déjà vu for the Marquette Catholic High School and Vincennes Rivet girls' basketball teams as they stepped onto the Bankers Life Fieldhouse court on Feb. 23.

In fact, Saturday's IHSAA Class A girls' basketball championship game mirrored last year's, as number one-ranked Marquette once again defeated number two Vincennes for back-to-back titles.

Unlike last year's 38-31 nail biter, however, Marquette came out and took control of the game from tipoff until the final second for the

57-36 victory.

"It was a well-played 32 minutes from my squad today, and I'm just really proud of their effort," said Blazers' coach Katie Collignon.

Player Emmery Joseph commented that her team "wanted to come out here and bring everything we had. We didn't play very well last year, so we were prepared this year, being our last season. Most of us are seniors and it was awesome playing together and finishing with back-to-back state championships."

Collignon said she has a largely senior team this year with 10 seniors, a junior and a sophomore.

Towering twin sisters Sophia and Emma Nolan (both 6'1"), combined to score more

points than the entire Vincennes team. Sophia's 26 points and Emma's 12 points totaled two more than Vincennes' 36 points.

"This year we walked on the court a lot more confident and ready to play the (championship) game," said Emma Nolan. "This is the best way to end it. I never in a million years thought we could do this back when I was a freshman."

Sophia explained winning state back-to-back is difficult because "we had a target on our backs, and it takes a lot of heart to overcome that . . . everyone wants to beat the defending state champs."

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VATICAN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CRISIS

Summit affirms need to hold bishops accountable

BY CINDY WOODEN
 Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - The Vatican summit on child protection and the clerical sexual abuse crisis affirmed the U.S. bishops' strong belief that bishops and cardinals who abuse children or cover up abuse must be held accountable, said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston.

The cardinal attended the Feb. 21-24 summit as president of the U.S.

Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"While here, it became obvious to me" that several speakers were insisting that "any loopholes" existing in how bishops are treated - if they are accused of abuse or of negligence in handling allegations - "must be closed," Cardinal DiNardo told Catholic News Service.

Most people feel "justice was done" when the Vatican dismissed



Pope Francis speaks at the conclusion of a Mass on the final day of a meeting on the protection of minors in the church at the Vatican on Feb. 24. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

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Marquette's Morgan Crook saves the ball from going out as she passes around Vincennes' Grace Waggoner with Marquette fans looking on. Marquette beat Vincennes 57-36 to win their second consecutive state championship. (Bob Wellinski photo)

MARQUETTE

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The Blazers girls' basketball program has seen quite a turn-around. In the past three years since Collignon has taken the helm, they've enjoyed an overall record of 75-10, including 54-4 in the last past two championship years. The previous 18 years, with exception of one year, the basketball program never had a winning season.

Credit goes both ways, with Collignon crediting the girls and the team giving kudos to the coaching staff.

Senior Morgan Crook noted that one thing their coach does really well is "help calm our nerves and make us mentally focused," because, as Crook admits, "We can have mental lapses at times." Crook and other teammates knew there was something different about "Coach K" at the very first practice.

"I went to the first open gym with Coach K and she played basketball with

us. When you have somebody who brings that type of energy to practice, you know that they're giving it their all . . . she works tirelessly day in and day out," explained Crook.

Collignon had nothing but praise for her team.

"It's easier when you have talent. They're so coachable . . . they're such nice kids on and off the court that it sure makes a difference," Collignon said.

She added that the team has several MVP's who don't get the publicity or may not show up in the stat sheet, but "without them, we wouldn't be here. Everyone bought into their role and did it to the best of their ability. That's why we're sitting here today."

The coach said she was very blessed when she showed up for that first practice. "They were ready to listen and to do something different. It's awesome as a coach," she said.

Collignon and her players agree that the players will take away more than

knowing how to play the game. Crook acknowledges that there is more to basketball than running plays and wins and losses. "You learn life lessons playing sports," she shared.

Crook points to the coaches, especially Collignon, for their leadership. "She's such a good role model . . . she sets a good example for us especially in terms of our Catholic faith."

Emmery added that Coach Collignon has taught her and her teammates that there are two things a person can control: attitude and effort.

"No matter what's going on in your life, you can always control the attitude you bring and the mental focus," said Emmery.

With a perpetual smile, Crook joined her teammates after the awards ceremony, bouncing between groups of family, friends and fans as they exchanged hugs and posed for photos.

"Whirlwind of emotions" a jubilant Crook said. "I'm trying to take it all in right now."

SUMMIT

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Theodore E. McCarrick, the former cardinal and archbishop of Washington, from the clerical state, Cardinal DiNardo said. But he and many U.S. Catholics are still awaiting a promised Vatican report on how the former cardinal could abuse minors and sexually harass seminarians for so long and still rise through the hierarchical ranks of the Church.

The calls at the summit to hold bishops accountable, he said, affirmed the U.S. bishops' in their efforts to establish standards of conduct for bishops and procedures for reviewing complaints against bishops. The bishops had planned to vote on the proposals in November, but the Vatican asked them to delay considering the measures until after the summit.

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago presented a step-by-step plan for bishops' accountability at the summit on Feb. 22 using what has been described as a "metropolitan model" that would rely on the metropolitan archbishop of each Church region coordinating the initial investigation into complaints made against a bishop in that region. The guidelines also would name an alternate - perhaps the neighboring metropolitan or the senior diocesan bishop - in cases where the accused is the metropolitan archbishop.

Both Cardinal Cupich in his presentation and Cardinal DiNardo in his comments on Feb. 24 insisted that model would need to include the involvement of laypeople.

Cardinal DiNardo said it obviously will be up to the entire U.S. bishops' conference to determine what proposal they will approve,

but it could end up being "a kind of fusion" of a "metropolitan model" and the establishment of a special commission of mostly laypeople to receive and initially review complaints against bishops.

While some commentators thought the U.S. bishops' proposals turned too much responsibility over to laypeople, Cardinal DiNardo said, "in our proposals the work of the laity is to collaborate - that's pretty important" - and almost all the speakers at the summit insisted on the need to involve laypeople in the process.

The ideal, Cardinal DiNardo said, is to ensure the lay board has a certain "independence without losing being part of the Church."

In a statement issued later, the cardinal said the U.S. bishops would intensify their guidelines for handling abuse allegations.

He also noted that at the summit "a range of presenters, from cardinals to other bishops to religious sisters to laywomen, spoke about a code of conduct for bishops, the need to establish specific protocols for handling accusations against bishops, user-friendly reporting mechanisms, and the essential role transparency must play in the healing process."

"Achieving these goals will require the active involvement and collaboration of the laity," he said. "A comprehensive range of skills is required to assess allegations and to ensure that local policies and procedures are regularly reviewed so that our healing response continues to be effective."

On a more global level, Cardinal DiNardo said the summit seemed to be effective in getting all the world's bishops on the same page in placing victims and survivors at the center of the Church's concern, rather

than the Church's reputation and its personnel.

The focus on victims was not simply a slogan, he said. In the general sessions and small groups there was discussion of "ways in which we can show that (focus): ways of repentance, ways of moving forward, ways of compassion and ways of accompaniment."

"As always, what is striking are the statements, the witnessing of the victims," he said, as was the attention Sister Veronica Openibo, leader of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, drew to the issue of violence against women and women religious.

Another emphasis, the cardinal said, was on safeguarding programs for clergy, religious, Church employees, volunteers and students.

Colombian Ruben Salazar Gomez of Bogota, in a formal speech to the summit, blamed "clericalism" for

promoting a culture within the Church where power could be used and abused and where abuse was regularly covered up.

Cardinal DiNardo said he would lay the blame less on "clericalism" and more on a "sense of entitlement" among some clergy and bishops. "That can be very dangerous, particularly in a personality that already is not very healthy," he said.

In a statement released on Feb. 24 from the Los Angeles archdiocese, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, USCCB vice president, said the crisis in the Church is also a crisis of personal fidelity.

"Reform and renewal must begin with the bishops and clergy. But all of us in the Church are called to a new conversion, to renewal of our hearts and minds - so that we live our faith with greater integrity, new devotion and new excitement," he said.

BIBLE

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the proceeds from sales during the event go to charity, Father Surufka said.

Although the events are not outlined in the parish synod plan at Holy Name, they fall under the rubric of evangelization, he noted.

The idea for Bible, Beer and Beyond came up among a talk with parishioners about the need for

Bible study.

"Let's do a Bible study, and let's do it in a place that isn't a church hall," Surufka described as the consensus of the planning talk.

The gatherings are not guided by a rigid format. They are more organic. Father Surufka picks a topic and sees where the questions and curiosity lead. The groups have discussed how Catholics read the Bible, the history of the

Bible and how it was written, for example.

The setting lends itself to a casual experience, with people often walking in right at the start time, he said.

"It's not like class where you hunker down at 6:30 p.m.," he said.

About 40 people attended a recent Bible, Beer and Beyond event, Estry said.

If attendance continues to grow, the group might leave the private tap room

area and instead meet in the main room. Then the general public would sit in the tap room during the events, Estry said.

"Do we have more room? We'll make room," he said.

Estry is happy to host the Bible discussion nights, saying the events fit in with the feel of St. John Malt Brothers, which is located not too far from Shrine of Christ's Passion, St. John the Evangelist church

and only a few miles from Holy Name.

He emphasized that the establishment is not a bar; it is a brew pub. And it does not carry the type of décor that is popular in a lot of craft breweries, where people might see drawings of the devil.

"We're the antithesis of the typical craft brewery," he said. "We're catering to the people in St. John. I like to consider this a fairly wholesome environment."

Estry said he has learned a lot since the events started.

"It's a Bible study group," he said. "To me, it is really more the history of the Bible. It's not a homily or sermon. It's not preaching."

To tell us how your parish is following the Holy Spirit's lead in this synod process, contact Vanessa Negrete at vnegrete@dgary.org or 769-9292, ext. 246.