



The

# Criterion

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## Joyful Witness

Life's marathon keeps us sprinting toward God, page 12.

CriterionOnline.com

December 10, 2021

Vol. LXII, No. 11 75¢

## The true gift of Christmas



## Nativity scene project shines the spotlight on the presence of Jesus Christ our Savior

By John Shaughnessy

Jim Liston believes his idea of emphasizing the true meaning of Christmas is so simple that he wonders why it took him so long to think of it.

The idea came to Liston as he traveled through the neighborhoods around his Indianapolis home and saw how many people decorated their houses with brilliant light displays and filled their lawns with large,

inflated Santas, reindeer and snowmen.

It suddenly hit him that he rarely saw another kind of Christmas display.

"It's almost an anomaly when you see a Nativity scene," says Liston, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. "We're in a society where everything about Christmas is glitz and consumerism. The simplicity of the Nativity scene struck me right in the heart. This is what

See NATIVITY, page 8

Above: Jim Liston and Karen Smith pose in front of a Nativity scene in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

## Pro-lifers hopeful about outcome of Dobbs case, urge prayers for court

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The chairman of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee on Dec. 1 urged Catholics, people of other faiths and all people of goodwill to unite in prayer that the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn *Roe v. Wade* in its eventual ruling on Mississippi's ban on most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.



Archbishop William E. Lori

His statement was issued the same day the court heard oral arguments in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, an appeal from Mississippi. Its ban was struck down by a federal District Court in Mississippi in 2018 and upheld a year later by the New Orleans-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit.

The Mississippi law is being challenged by the state's only abortion facility, the Jackson Women's Health Organization. It's the first major abortion case the court has heard in decades.

"In the United States, abortion takes the lives of over 600,000 babies every year," said Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Pro-Life Activities. "*Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* could change that.

"We pray that the court will do the right thing and allow states to once again limit or prohibit abortion, and in doing so protect millions of unborn children and their mothers from this painful, life-destroying act," he added. "We invite all people of goodwill to uphold the dignity of human life by joining us in prayer and fasting for this important case."

If the court's ruling, expected in July, upholds the ban, it possibly also could overturn *Roe* and send the abortion issue back to the states to decide laws on it.

Archbishop Lori directed people to [www.prayfordobbs.com](http://www.prayfordobbs.com) for Catholic and ecumenical prayers and resources for community engagement and action "as we

See SCOTUS, page 9

## Family first: Pope says migration policy changes when newcomers seen as kin

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With passion in Cyprus and reason in Greece, Pope Francis continued to articulate and adjust his teaching on migration.

Since his first trip out of Rome as pope—his visit in 2013 to the Italian island of Lampedusa—Pope Francis has made the plight of migrants and refugees a central concern of his ministry.

For more than eight years, he has argued against closed borders and closed hearts.

But during his visit on Dec. 5 to the

See POPE, page 9



Pope Francis greets children as he visits with refugees at the government-run Reception and Identification Center in Mytilene, Greece, on Dec. 5.

(CNS photo/Vatican Media)



# New guidelines offer 'best practices' for preparation for child baptism

By Natalie Hoefler

The baptism of children seems a straightforward sacrament in terms of celebration. Water, oil and fire play sacramental roles, and parents and godparents vow to raise the child in the truth of the Catholic faith and to serve as models of those values.

But the process of preparing for the sacrament offers a chance for more than rehearsing the steps of the ceremony.

"Sacramental preparation for infant baptism is an evangelical opportunity for



Ken Ogorek

parents especially," said Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis.

"There's always room for growth in how our 126 parishes approach this opportunity. We want to share best practices and resources to help all our catechetical

leaders capitalize on this grace-filled opportunity."

To accomplish this goal, the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis released a new document called "Order of Baptism of Children Guidelines for Sacramental Preparation."

"To our knowledge, this is the first [archdiocesan] resource in recent history to guide baptism preparation," Ogorek said.

According to the 12-page document—which is available in English and Spanish—the guidelines "are meant to help parish leaders apply best practices in preparing parents for the baptism of their infant children."

One section addresses "the ongoing catechesis of mystagogy and accompaniment," said Jim Wood, archdiocesan coordinator of catechetical resources for the Office of Catechesis.

He said mystagogy "is the opportunity for parents to reflect on the baptism of their child. This guideline should help parents center around the experience of the celebration, helping them understand their role as parents and understand what God's purpose is for celebrating the sacrament."

Wood explained that accompaniment involves "engaging parents after baptism."

"Baptism opens up the door for evangelization to bring families back into

the Church if they haven't been back to church for a while," he said.

"We want them to call, we want to invite them, we want them to come to sacramental preparation. And then we hope when they come to the parish that they'll want to stay. No matter where they are on their faith journey, we want to welcome them and hope they'll find a place in that parish."

The document outlines best practices for three different situations of sacramental preparation—extended time, when parents call in advance of their child's birth; short preparation time, when parents call after the child is born; and distance preparation "for families who really can't attend baptism preparation at a local parish, like in the case of those in the military or where spouses are separated," Wood explained.

"We realize that every parish community is a little different, and every family situation is a little different," Ogorek said. "These guidelines don't take a one-size-fits-all approach. We're trying to offer different models based on best practices."

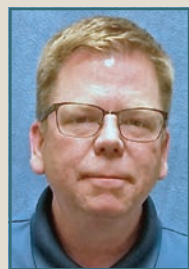
"There's an old saying: 'God loves us enough to meet us where we are, and enough that he doesn't want us to stay there.' It's our approach to meet families where they are and help them move forward in faith as a family."

The document also lists resources for the formation of parents, godparents and children, and includes a prayer for baptismal preparation.

As noted in the document, guidelines for sacramental preparation bolster "the parental sense of discipleship—lived in full communion with the mystical body of Christ, the Church—that helps equip parents to live their call as primary educators of their children."

These guidelines are the first of several sacramental guideline documents the Office of Catechesis plans to publish. The project is part of the department's action steps for the archdiocesan pastoral plan, which addresses how the Church in central and southern Indiana will fulfill its mission to "joyfully proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people by living his mission of mercy, hope and salvation."

(To view the "Order of Baptism of Children Guidelines for Sacramental Preparation," go to [www.archindy.org/catechesis](http://www.archindy.org/catechesis).) †



'Baptism opens up the door for evangelization to bring families back into the Church if they haven't been back to church for a while.'

—Jim Wood, archdiocesan coordinator of catechetical resources for the Office of Catechesis



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 10–20, 2021

**December 10 – 5:30 p.m.**

Little Sisters of the Poor Christmas Celebration at The Willows, Indianapolis

**December 11 – 4 p.m.**

Mass at Most Sorrowful Mother of God Church, Vevay

**December 12 – 8:15 a.m.**

Mass at St. Bernard Church, Frenchtown

**December 14 – 10 a.m.**

Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

**December 14 – 3:30 p.m.**

Indiana Bishops' Province meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**December 15 – 9 a.m.**

Indiana Catholic Conference meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**December 15 – 1:15 p.m.**

Ascension health care meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**December 16 – 8:45 a.m.**

Mass for the students of St. Susanna School, Plainfield, at St. Susanna Church

**December 16 – noon**

Catholic Center Employee Advent Gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**December 18 – 2 p.m. CST**

Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Boniface Parish, Fulda, and St. Meinrad Parish, St. Meinrad, at St. Meinrad Church

**December 19 – 11 a.m.**

Dedication of St. John Paul II Church at St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg

**December 20 – 3 p.m.**

Legal Department meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**December 20 – 5:30 p.m.**

Serra Club dinner for seminarians and guests at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

# Vatican announces pope will bring migrants from Cyprus to Italy

NICOSIA, Cyprus (CNS)—After Pope Francis denounced putting up "barbed wire" to keep out migrants and the practice of pushing boats back to countries where they face conditions similar to a "lager," the Vatican announced he would help move a dozen migrants from Cyprus to Italy before Christmas.

"As a sign of the Holy Father's concern for migrant families and individuals, the apostolic trip to Cyprus will be accompanied in the coming weeks by a humanitarian gesture of welcoming about 12 refugees, some of whom the pope greeted this evening at the end of his ecumenical prayer with migrants," said Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office.

At the prayer service on Dec. 3, the pope said the government of Cyprus should not be blamed for knowing that it cannot welcome and resettle the thousands of migrants and asylum-seekers that have reached its shores. The country currently has the highest percentage of migrants of any country in the European Union.

The government of Cyprus had said the pope would make arrangements for the transfer of 50 migrants who have been living since May in a tent on the U.N.-patrolled green line that serves as a buffer zone between the country's mainly Greek Cypriot south and the mainly Turkish Cypriot north.

Bruni said promising to bring a dozen migrants to Italy in the next few weeks

does not rule out more following later. In fact, news agencies were reporting that the others would follow in January and February.

The transfer of the 12, he said, "will be made possible thanks to an agreement between the [Vatican] Secretariat of State, Italian and Cypriot authorities, in collaboration with the Section for Migrants and Refugees of the Holy See and the Community of Sant'Egidio."

The lay Catholic Community of Sant'Egidio, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, the Waldensian Church and, more recently, the Italian bishops' conference and Caritas Italy have signed a "humanitarian corridor" agreement with the Italian internal affairs ministry.

The ministry issues humanitarian visas to vulnerable migrants and refugees, who are identified by the Church groups and supported by them as they begin a new life in Italy. The support includes housing and food, but also Italian language lessons and introductions to Italian culture and social life.

The 12 Syrian refugees the pope took on the plane with him to Rome from the Greek island of Lesbos in 2016 entered Italy under the program and are still being followed by the Sant'Egidio Community.

From February 2016 to late November, the program brought more than 4,200 people to Italy, Sant'Egidio said. Similar arrangements have been made with the governments of other European countries. †



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Advertising:..... 317-236-1585  
Toll free: ..... 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570  
Circulation: ..... 317-236-1585  
Toll free: ..... 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1585

**Price:** \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

### Postmaster:

Send address changes to *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

**Web site:** [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com)

**E-mail:** [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2021 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

## NEWS FROM YOU!

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### The Criterion

(ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

1400 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367  
317-236-1570  
800-382-9836 ext. 1570  
[criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.  
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1400 N. Meridian St.  
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# Catholic social teaching illuminates ICC public policy efforts

By Victoria Arthur

In this season of prayerful preparation, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is making plans to more powerfully and effectively bring the light of Catholic social teaching to bear on society's most important issues.



Angela Espada

As the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana for the past 55 years, the ICC hopes to build on its many successes while employing new approaches and technologies to amplify its messages and its reach. The start of the 2022 Indiana General Assembly is only weeks away, and the ICC will once again spotlight and weigh in on key legislation—while engaging as many Catholics as possible in the process.

“The ICC is looking forward to continuing its work on behalf of the Church,” said Angela Espada, the organization’s sixth and current executive director. “We are encouraged by the participation and interest shown in the podcasts and webinars we presented this past year, and we plan to expand on those. In 2022, we hope to continue to educate ourselves, legislators and the faithful on Catholic social teaching as the foundation for our participation in the public forum on issues ranging from the environment to the respect for the dignity of human life.”

Indiana was a pioneer in formalizing a way for the Church to speak on both state and national issues. When the ICC was founded in late 1966 by a small group of dedicated Catholics in Indiana,

it was one of the first entities of its kind in the nation.

Since that time, the ICC has served as the coordinating body and public policy voice of the five Catholic dioceses in the state—the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Diocese of Evansville, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the Diocese of Gary and the Diocese of Lafayette. Through the efforts of dedicated staff members, diocesan and parish liaisons, and board and advisory council members, the ICC:

- provides the five Catholic bishops of Indiana with a means to work together in the common interest of the Church and of citizens throughout the state;

- officially represents the Church in public policy issues, particularly legislation under consideration at the Indiana General Assembly;

- informs Catholics around the state about the Church’s position on important issues through its easily accessible I-CAN network and engages them in taking action.

In all of its efforts, the ICC is guided by the rich history of Catholic social teaching, which is 2,000 years strong but whose first touchstone in the modern era is considered the groundbreaking papal encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*” in 1891. In this pivotal teaching document, Pope Leo XIII addressed the turmoil of the late 19th century when the Industrial Revolution and the beginnings of communism were leading to social upheaval and sweeping changes in economics and societies.

Since that time, popes have used encyclicals at crucial moments in history to reflect on current issues through the lens of Church doctrine and the Gospel.

“That body of Catholic social teaching grounds and animates everything that we do,” said Alexander Mingus, associate

director of the ICC. “It motivates our actions entirely. Whenever we advocate for or against a bill at the Statehouse, it’s because there is a certain moral analysis and important questions we have to answer: How does this affect society?”



Alexander Mingus

How does this affect the common good? How does this affect the human person?

“This rich history of the Church’s social teaching is a gift—a treasury,” Mingus continued. “We have to make sure that we are well formed, and that we continue to learn about what the Church teaches us.”

Mingus recently spent a week in Washington, D.C., doing exactly that. Along with a small group of lay and religious leaders from across the country, Mingus immersed himself in Catholic social teaching at a master’s-level course at the Catholic University of America. The program was sponsored by CAPP-USA, the U.S. affiliate of the Vatican-based organization established by St. John Paul II to promote the knowledge and practice of Catholic social teaching.

CAPP—or *Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice*—is named for the encyclical that Pope John Paul II wrote in 1991, “*Centesimus Annus*,” on the 100th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII’s influential encyclical.

“All of the principles of Catholic

social teaching flow through each of the documents that the popes have written since the late 1800s, and they build off of one another in a really beautiful way,” Mingus said. “This tradition continues with Pope Francis, and it will continue with the next pope.”

Earlier this year, Mingus and Espada hosted a series of educational webinars about “*Laudato Si’*: On Care for Our Common Home,” the groundbreaking encyclical by Pope Francis concerning stewardship of the environment.

Mingus said that this effort may lead to a “once-a-year dive” by the ICC into other key areas of Catholic social teaching, including the dignity and sanctity of human life, which he calls “transcendent.”

“I returned from Washington with many new ideas for how to communicate these central teachings and apply them to everything we do,” Mingus said. “I look forward to working with Angela on bringing these ideas to fruition in the new year and beyond.”

For more information about the ICC, visit [www.indianacc.org](http://www.indianacc.org). This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on important legislation and ways to contact their elected representatives.

To learn more about Catholic social teaching, visit [www.capp-usa.org](http://www.capp-usa.org).

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

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## Editorial



A statue of St. Joseph is pictured at Jesus the Divine Word Church in Huntington, Md., on Dec. 5. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

## Lessons of ‘Year of St. Joseph’ include trusting in God’s plan

It came as a surprise to many when Pope Francis last year declared Dec. 8, 2020, to Dec. 8, 2021, as a time to mark the “Year of St. Joseph.”

The pope’s apostolic letter that announced the year, titled “*Patris corde*” (“With a Father’s Heart”) marked the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX’s declaration of St. Joseph as patron of the universal Church. To celebrate the anniversary, Pope Francis proclaimed the special year “to encourage us to implore [Joseph’s] intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal.”

We learned much about the Blessed Mother’s husband and Jesus’ earthly father during the celebration, which was providential for people of faith because St. Joseph was a man who never spoke a word in Scripture.

During his weekly audiences in the Vatican’s Paul VI hall, Pope Francis featured a series of talks on St. Joseph. His most recent reflection spoke about his role as a just man and husband of Mary, and what he can teach all engaged couples and newlyweds.

St. Joseph, the pope said, teaches people to learn to take life as it comes and to accept what God has in mind.

Speaking about how Joseph reacted to Mary being pregnant while they were still engaged, the pope explained why St. Joseph “gives us an important lesson: He chooses Mary with ‘his eyes open,’” and “with all the risks” that came with it.

“They had probably cultivated dreams and expectations regarding their life and their future,” the pope said during his weekly general audience on Dec. 1. But then, “out of the blue, God seems to have inserted himself into their lives and, even if at first it was difficult for them, both of them opened their hearts wide to the reality that was placed before them.”

For many of us, opening our hearts wide to God’s will is not easy. After all, it should always be about *me*, shouldn’t it? That way of thinking is among the constant sentiments fed by our secular culture to us. These days, we are inundated by messages on television and umpteen forms of social media, telling us to put ourselves first and not worry about others. Faith is for the weak-minded, some tell us. And speaking of religion, keep it inside your place of worship and out of the public square, others warn us.

But a steadfast faith is at the heart of many people’s witness—past and present—St. Joseph included.

He was pious and subject to observing the religious laws of the time, the pope said, which called for stoning a woman accused of adultery or—with later interpretations—a formal repudiation that had civil and criminal consequences for the woman, the pope said. But Joseph’s “love for Mary and his trust in her suggested a way he could remain in observance of the law and save the honor of his bride. He decided to repudiate her in secret, without making noise, without subjecting her to public humiliation.”

“How holy Joseph was,” the Holy Father continued. In contrast, “we, as soon as we have a bit of gossip, something scandalous about someone else, we go around talking about it right away!”

We are called, Pope Francis reminds us, “to cultivate a just life and, at the same time, to always feel the need for God’s help to broaden our horizons and to consider the circumstances of life from an always different, larger perspective,” the pope said.

Christian couples who are engaged are called to witness to a kind of love that “has the courage to move from the logic of falling in love to that of mature love,” the pope said. Mature love, he noted, moves from infatuation and imagination to taking “responsibility for one’s life as it comes.”

It is demanding, but it will strengthen their love “so that it endures when faced with the trials of time,” the pope added.

A year later, we better understand why Pope Francis declared a special “Year of St. Joseph.”

As the Holy Father showed us, St. Joseph was a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who was creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows, a beloved husband, a disciple who trusted God’s plan, a witness of faith and much more.

May we have the courage to follow this great saint’s example as we live out our vocations, God willing, on our journey to our heavenly home.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

—Mike Krokos

## Be Our Guest/Bishop James S. Wall

### Catholics show they are ‘doers of the word’ with generosity to collections

(The following commentary provided by Catholic News Service was written by Bishop James S. Wall of Gallup, N.M., Chairman of the U.S. Conference of



Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on National Collections, Bishop Wall offers a message of gratitude to Catholics in the U.S. for their support of the USCCB’s national collections.)

In this season of Advent as we prepare for the birth of our Lord and the celebration of the greatest gift of all, I am immensely grateful to the Catholics who have expressed their love for Jesus by giving generously to help the poor and marginalized through the national collections of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Many of you have given despite your own struggles during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be assured that our Lord sees your generosity and is using your gifts to create change in communities and in the lives of people who once felt hopeless. The eight collections administered by the U.S. bishops support the Church’s works of evangelization, catechesis, social justice and community development at the local, national and global levels.

We were blessed by your prayers for and donations to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, the Catholic Relief Services Collection, the Catholic Communication Campaign, the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, the Collection for the Church in Latin America, the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa and the Bishops’ Emergency Disaster Fund.

The faithful who gave sacrificially to these national collections when they were themselves in need have shown our world the loving face of Jesus. Your gifts are transforming the lives of struggling communities and hurting people through practical assistance to the poor and by helping to spread the Gospel of Jesus in places where the Church is new, small or challenged.

I have seen the fruits of your gifts in my own Diocese of Gallup, N.M., which is materially the poorest diocese in the United States. Created primarily to serve Native and Indigenous communities, it has 52 parishes and 22 missions across two states in a territory the size of the state of Illinois. Many parishioners live in areas so remote they cannot bring their children to religious education each week.

Thanks to your gifts to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, a priest in one of our most isolated parishes has brought religious sisters in to run a three-week faith formation camp. It is bringing young people and their parents

to the Lord—and back to Mass. Your gifts are making an eternal difference in their lives.

That is why I am glad to serve as chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for National Collections. I see what your gifts do as refugees arriving in the United States are warmly welcomed into communities across the country because you supported the Catholic Relief Services Collection.

Through the Catholic Communication Campaign, CAPP-USA (U.S. affiliate of the *Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice* Foundation) produced videos and infographics explaining the core concepts of Catholic social teaching and how they apply to current social issues.

In Tennessee, Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM) works to keep poisons out of streams and wells and help mining communities transition to sustainable energy, with your support to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

Your generosity extends to those suffering from natural and man-made disasters through the Bishop Emergency Disaster Fund.

But the impact of your generosity extends beyond the borders of our own country: In Cameroon, refugee families traumatized by civil war will sleep a little better tonight because your gifts to the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa have integrated therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder into a program of pastoral care.

And thanks to your contributions, homeless people in Croatia are receiving the spiritual support and counseling they need to turn their lives around with the help of the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. In Brazil, lay leaders receive nine months of spiritual formation for evangelization and learn how to share the Gospel and lovingly address difficult issues, because of your gifts to the Collection for the Church in Latin America. It’s all thanks to you.

Most of you give at Mass or through your parish’s e-offertory program. And the online giving platform #iGiveCatholicTogether now provides options to give to these programs, so it’s now possible to make an extra gift or make up for missing the parish collection.

Through whichever way you give, you are fulfilling the scriptural exhortation to be “doers of the word,” whose actions help to build the kingdom of God. More information on the USCCB national collections is at [www.usccb.org/committees/national-collections](http://www.usccb.org/committees/national-collections). To learn more about #iGiveCatholicTogether, visit [www.igivecatholictogether.org](http://www.igivecatholictogether.org).

Thank you again for your generosity. As we joyfully anticipate the birth of our Lord at Christmas, may this Advent season be a time of prayer in gratitude for the many blessings we have received through God’s grace and mercy. †

## Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit

letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

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# Christ the Cornerstone

## Advent celebrates Mary, mother of our Savior

*“O Mary, ever Virgin, rejoice, you who were worthy to bear Christ, the Creator of heaven and Earth; for from your womb you brought forth the Savior of the world, alleluia.”* (Marian Antiphon, translated from the Latin by James Monti)

Today, Dec. 10, we honor the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Loreto. This is a minor Marian feast—especially in light of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, which we observed on Dec. 8, and the popular feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, normally celebrated on Dec. 12 except when it falls on a Sunday as it does this year on the Third Sunday of Advent.

The legend surrounding Our Lady of Loreto relates the story of angels who miraculously preserved the house in Nazareth where Mary first responded “yes” to the Archangel Gabriel and agreed to become the mother of our Savior. As the story goes, the house was threatened with destruction at the time of the crusades, and so the angels transported it to the Italian city of Loreto on Dec. 10, 1294, where it is now enshrined in a basilica.

Historians believe that this legend is based on some truth. Documents in the Vatican archive reveal that in the 13th century a noble Byzantine family, the Angeli family, rescued “materials” from “Our Lady’s House” in Nazareth from Muslim invaders and then had them transported to Italy for the building of a shrine in the town of Loreto. This family, whose name means “the angels,” were trying to preserve what they believed to be Mary’s house. Their efforts became the source of the legend of Loreto.

Regardless of its history, the Holy House of Loreto remains, in the words of St. John Paul II, “the foremost shrine of international import dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.” Many saints, including St. Francis de Sales, St. Louis de Montfort and St. Charles Borromeo, considered this shrine to be a fitting memorial to Mary’s “fiat” and the joyful mystery of the Annunciation.

Advent celebrates Mary in her many diverse roles before, during and after our Lord’s incarnation, death and resurrection. Mary’s “yes” to God’s will makes her the mother of our Savior. Her presence at the foot of the Cross allows Jesus to entrust

her to us as our mother. Her prayerful participation in the formation of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church at Pentecost makes Mary the first missionary disciple, the model for all of us who seek to follow in her Son’s footsteps.

Whether we address her as the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Loreto, or any of the hundreds of titles lovingly given to the Blessed Virgin Mary during the past 2,000 years, we acknowledge that this simple woman who occupied a humble home in a tiny village in an obscure region of the world was someone extraordinary. She is exalted now because of her lowliness and humility. She is hailed as Queen of the Universe now, and we acclaim her as Mother of our Redeemer, because she gave herself completely to the child entrusted to her by God in the humblest of circumstances.

During this special time of year, we acknowledge the depth of longing that we have for the return of Christ our Savior. For many, the 20-plus months of pandemic have taken a serious toll, and we experience intensely the desire for comfort, healing and hope. We

turn to our Blessed Mother Mary with confidence in her ability to help and inspire us, especially in moments of doubt and desperation.

The humble dwelling that has come to be known as “the Holy House of Loreto” is a symbol of the safe place that we seek during uncertain times like these. Here, Mary of Nazareth lived quietly but securely. Here she prayed, worked and meditated on the word of God that communicated God’s love for his chosen people. Here it was that Mary accepted her destiny with courage, faithfulness and profound love.

As we move into the final weeks of the Advent season—in this special time of preparation for the 2023 Synod of Bishops—let’s ask Mary to walk with us. Through her intercession, may we be ready to encounter Jesus in word, sacrament and attentiveness to the hopes and dreams of others. May our loving mother, Our Lady of Loreto, help us to discern God’s will for each of us and for our Church.

May our Advent prayers now resound with hope-filled expectation, in the words of St. Paul: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. . . . Indeed, the Lord is near!” (Phil 4:4-5). †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## El Adviento celebra a María, madre de nuestro Salvador

*“Oh María, siempre Virgen, alégrate, tú que fuiste digna de dar a luz a Cristo, el Creador del cielo y de la tierra; porque de tu seno vino el Salvador del mundo, aleluia.”* (Antífona mariana, traducida del latín al inglés por James Monti)

Hoy, 10 de diciembre, honramos a la Santísima Virgen María bajo la advocación de Nuestra Señora de Loreto. Se trata de una fiesta mariana menor, sobre todo teniendo en cuenta la solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción, que celebramos el 8 de diciembre, y la popular fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, que normalmente se celebra el 12 de diciembre, excepto cuando cae en domingo, como ocurre este año durante el tercer domingo de Adviento.

La leyenda en torno a Nuestra Señora de Loreto relata la historia de los ángeles que preservaron milagrosamente la casa de Nazaret donde María le dijo por primera vez “sí” al Arcángel Gabriel y aceptó convertirse en la madre de nuestro Salvador. El relato señala que la casa estaba amenazada de destrucción en la época de las cruzadas, por lo que los ángeles la transportaron a la ciudad italiana de Loreto el 10 de diciembre de 1294, donde ahora está consagrada en una basílica.

Los historiadores creen que esta leyenda tiene algo de verdad. Los documentos del archivo vaticano revelan que en el siglo XIII una familia de nobles bizantinos, los Angeli, rescataron de los invasores musulmanes “materiales” de la “Casa de Nuestra Señora” de Nazaret y los hicieron transportar a Italia para construir un santuario en la ciudad de Loreto. Esta familia, cuyo nombre significa “los ángeles,” intentaba conservar lo que creían que era la casa de María. Sus esfuerzos se convirtieron en el origen de la leyenda de Loreto.

Independientemente de su historia, la Santa Casa de Loreto sigue siendo, en palabras de san Juan Pablo II, “el principal santuario de importancia internacional dedicado a la Santísima Virgen.” Muchos santos, entre ellos san Francisco de Sales, san Luis de Montfort y san Carlos Borromeo, consideraron que este santuario era un digno recuerdo del fiat de María y del jubiloso misterio de la Anunciación.

El Adviento celebra a María en sus múltiples funciones antes, durante y después de la encarnación, muerte y resurrección de nuestro Señor. El “sí” de María a la voluntad de Dios la convierte en la madre de nuestro Salvador. Por su presencia al pie de la cruz, Jesús la consagra

como nuestra madre. Su piadosa participación en la formación de la Iglesia como una, santa, católica y apostólica en Pentecostés convirtió a María en la primera discípula misionera, el modelo para todos los que queremos seguir las huellas de su Hijo.

Ya sea que nos dirijamos a ella como la Inmaculada Concepción, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Nuestra Señora de Loreto, o cualquiera de los cientos de títulos que se le han dado amorosamente a la Santísima Virgen María durante los últimos 2,000 años, reconocemos que esta sencilla mujer que ocupó un humilde hogar en una pequeña aldea ubicada en una oscura región del mundo fue alguien extraordinario. Ahora se la exalta por su humildad; se la ensalza como Reina del Universo, y nosotros la aclamamos como Madre de nuestro Redentor, porque se entregó por completo al niño que Dios le confió en las circunstancias más humildes.

Durante esta época especial del año, reconocemos el profundo anhelo que tenemos por el regreso de Cristo nuestro Salvador. Para muchos, los más de 20 meses de pandemia han hecho una gran mella, y experimentamos intensamente el deseo de consuelo, curación y esperanza. Nos dirigimos a nuestra Santísima Madre

María con confianza en su capacidad para ayudarnos e inspirarnos, especialmente en los momentos de duda y desesperación.

La humilde morada que ha llegado a ser conocida como “la Santa Casa de Loreto” es símbolo del refugio que buscamos en tiempos inciertos como los que atravesamos. Allí, María de Nazaret vivió tranquila pero segura; allí rezó, trabajó y meditó sobre la Palabra de Dios que comunicaba el amor de Dios por su pueblo elegido. Allí fue donde María aceptó su destino con valentía, fidelidad y profundo amor.

Al entrar en las últimas semanas del tiempo de Adviento y en este tiempo particularmente especial de preparación para el Sínodo de los Obispos de 2023, pidamos a María que camine con nosotros. Que, por su intercesión, estemos dispuestos a encontrar a Jesús en la Palabra, los sacramentos y la atención a las esperanzas y los sueños de los demás. Que nuestra amorosa madre, Nuestra Señora de Loreto, nos ayude a discernir la voluntad de Dios para cada uno de nosotros y para nuestra Iglesia.

Que nuestras oraciones de Adviento resuenen ahora con una expectativa llena de esperanza, según las palabras de san Pablo: “Alégrense siempre en el Señor. Insisto: ¡Alégrense! El Señor está cerca” (Fil 4:4-5). †



# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## December 14

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Leave the Light On**, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation offered all day, no appointment needed. Information: 317-545-7681 or [jburger@archindy.org](mailto:jburger@archindy.org).

## December 14, Jan. 11

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available at [cutt.ly/Taize](http://cutt.ly/Taize). Information: 812-535-2952, [provctr@spsmw.org](mailto:provctr@spsmw.org).

## December 15

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

## December 16

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women

experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

## December 17

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, speaker Chuck Lofton, Broadcast Meteorologist at WTHR-TV, "The Forecast Never Changes," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Dec. 14. Information and registration: [cutt.ly/CBE-Reg](http://cutt.ly/CBE-Reg).

## December 18

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse Chapel, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Service of the Longest Night**, 6 p.m. CT, prayers, Scripture, music, for those struggling with loss at Christmas, Benedictine Father

Adrian Burke facilitating, light refreshments to follow, masks requested, free. RSVP requested: [info@abbeycaskets.com](mailto:info@abbeycaskets.com) or 800-987-7380.

## December 18, Jan. 8

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, assist with retired Providence Sisters. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, [provctr@spsmw.org](mailto:provctr@spsmw.org) or [spsmw.org/events](http://spsmw.org/events).

**December 18, January 15** St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Most Precious Infants Prayer Vigil for Life**, 8:30 a.m. Mass, then prayer partners will carpool to Clinic for Women at 3607 W. 16th St. for vigil. Information: [eric@romancatholicgentleman.com](mailto:eric@romancatholicgentleman.com).

## December 19

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis.

**Vox Sacra concert**, Advent and Christmas music, 7 p.m. Information: 317-236-1483 or [ctuley@archindy.org](mailto:ctuley@archindy.org).

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, O'Shaughnessy Dining Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sunday Brunch at the Woods**, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m., farm to table dining, reservations requested, adults \$17.50, seniors \$16.50, children ages 5-11 \$9.50, child ages 4 and younger free (prices listed do not include tax), purchase tickets online or at the door. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, [provctr@spsmw.org](mailto:provctr@spsmw.org) or [spsmw.org/events](http://spsmw.org/events).

## December 19, 26

**Benedictine Conversations** via GroupMe, 4 p.m. Sundays, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored

by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org).

## December 19, Jan. 17

**Sr. Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women Monthly Prayer Gathering**, via Zoom, third Monday of each month, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, 7 p.m. Join meeting: [cutt.ly/SrTheaPrayer](http://cutt.ly/SrTheaPrayer), meeting ID: 810 3567 0684 or dial-in at 301-715-8592. Information: Pearllette Springer, [pspringer@archindy.org](mailto:pspringer@archindy.org) or 317-236-1474.

## December 22, Jan. 12

**Group Lectio** via Zoom, 7 p.m., second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org).

## 2022

## January 7

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father

Clayton Thompson (Lafayette Diocese), celebrant, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, [www.womenscarecenter.org](http://www.womenscarecenter.org).

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, [msross1@hotmail.com](mailto:msross1@hotmail.com).

## January 8

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Marian Devotion**, 8 a.m. rosary, meditation, prayer; 8:30 a.m. Mass with confessions prior. Information: 812-246-3522.

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, devotional prayers, rosary, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462. †

## Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/retreats](http://www.archindy.org/retreats).

## December 27, January 3, 10, 17, 24

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Brother Bob's Bible Study"**, Mondays 10:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., led by Andrew Hennessy, free. Information and registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/bible-study](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/bible-study) or 812-923-8817.

**Virtual Advent Retreat for Single Women**, "Pray as You Go" Stepping Beyond Advent retreat sponsored by Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 6:30-8 p.m., women ages 18-42, free. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, [provctr@spsmw.org](mailto:provctr@spsmw.org) or [spsmw.org/events](http://spsmw.org/events).

## 2022

## January 4

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes a private room for the day and lunch; spiritual direction is available for an additional \$30, must be scheduled in advance. Information and registration: [benedictinn.org/programs](http://benedictinn.org/programs), 317-788-7581, [benedictinn@benedictinn.org](mailto:benedictinn@benedictinn.org).

## January 8

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Pilgrimage: Peace**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., walking hike pilgrimage lead by Conventual Franciscan Father Vince Petersen, bring water bottle and lunch, rain or shine, \$30. Information and registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/pilgrimage](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/pilgrimage) or 812-923-8817.

## January 10

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$35 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of the common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$28 per person, dinner additional \$9. Registration: [cutt.ly/fatimaretreats](http://cutt.ly/fatimaretreats), 317-545-7681 or [jburger@archindy.org](mailto:jburger@archindy.org).

## January 14-16

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **TOBIT-Marriage Preparation Weekend**, Fri. 7 p.m.-Sun. 11:45 a.m., includes rooms, meals, \$298 per couple. Registration: [cutt.ly/](http://cutt.ly/)

[fatimaretreats](http://fatimaretreats), 317-545-7681 or [jburger@archindy.org](mailto:jburger@archindy.org).

## January 21

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$70 with spiritual direction. Information and registration: 812-934-6437, [www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org](http://www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org).

## January 24-28

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Winter Chant Workshop**, for directors of liturgical music, Benedictine Brother John Glasenapp presenting, \$750 single, \$835 double, \$200 commuter. Registration: [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats).

## January 28

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Painting with Padre**, 6-9 p.m. last Friday of each month, led by Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, includes painting supplies and snack, bring beverage, \$40. Information and registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/painting-with-the-padre](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/painting-with-the-padre) or 812-923-8817. †

# Wedding Anniversaries

## GEORGE AND MARGARET WINTERS



**GEORGE AND MARGARET (WOODS) WINTERS**, members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Nov. 15.

The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 15, 1966. They have five children: Annette Allen, Ann Masters, Christopher, Michael and Nicholas Winters. The couple also have eight grandchildren. †

## SONNY AND EVELYN IBARRA



**SONNY AND EVELYN (GAURANO) IBARRA**, members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 18.

The couple was married in Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Quezon, Philippines, on Dec. 18, 1971. They have two children: Sherman and Sherwin Ibarra. The couple also have five grandchildren. †

## JIM AND JUDY SAUNDERS



**JIM AND JUDY (BACON) SAUNDERS**, members of St. Patrick Parish in Salem, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 18.

The couple was married in St. Rita Church in Louisville, Ky. (Archdiocese of Louisville), on Dec. 18, 1971. They have two children: Jill Little and Adam Saunders. The couple also have five grandchildren. †

## Learn about St. Benedict's 'Vision for a Spiritual Life' via virtual programs in January

The Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove will offer four independent virtual sessions via Zoom in a series called "Cave to Mountaintop: Benedict's Vision for a Spiritual Life" from 7-8:30 p.m. on Jan. 6, 13, 20 and 27.

Benedictine Sister Antoinette Purcelle will present the sessions. The topics are as follows:

- Jan. 6: "The Life and Miracles of St. Benedict"
- Jan. 13: "The Rule of Benedict:

Imitating Christ's Humility and Obedience"

- Jan. 20: "The Rule of Benedict: Imitating Christ's Prayer and Service"

- Jan. 27: "Living Benedict's Vision in the 21st Century"

The cost is \$25 per session or \$75 for four sessions. Check-in begins 30 minutes prior to each event.

To register, go to [cutt.ly/mountaintop22](http://cutt.ly/mountaintop22). For more information, e-mail [benedictinn@benedictinn.org](mailto:benedictinn@benedictinn.org) or call 317-788-7581. †

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to [cutt.ly/anniversaries](http://cutt.ly/anniversaries) or call 317-236-1585.



# Vatican Christmas stamps feature work of homeless artist

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Adam Piekarski, a homeless man from Łódź, Poland, never imagined that the sketches he would draw in his free time while waiting for the public showers near Bernini's Colonnade would lead to the opportunity of a lifetime.



Adam Piekarski

In November, the Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office announced that its 2021 set of commemorative Christmas stamps would feature images of the Magi and the Holy Family painted by Piekarski.

"Art is my passion even though I never studied it," Piekarski told Catholic News Service (CNS) on Dec. 1 from a quaint studio just across the street from St. Peter's Square.

"He went to a technical school in Poland and studied gardening in Łódź," added Redemptorist Father Leszek Pys, known by many as Father Ruben, a fellow Pole who was among the first to realize Piekarski's talent.

Piekarski left Poland six years ago and, like many migrants, made his way to Rome seeking a better life.

The Eternal City, he explained, is a place that remains in the heart of many Polish people as a source of inspiration for some of Poland's greatest artistic icons, such as Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of "*Quo Vadis*," and Henryk Siemiradzki, whose paintings often depicted life in ancient Rome.

However, upon his arrival, the harsh reality of finding work, coupled with a fondness for Italian wine, led Piekarski down the dark path of alcoholism that he continues to fight each day.

With Father Ruben serving as translator, Piekarski told CNS that his life began to change after meeting the Polish priest while waiting in line for the public showers for the poor at the Vatican.

Father Ruben told CNS that, at the time, he was trying to figure out a low-cost option for a painting of St. Clement Mary Hofbauer, co-founder of the Redemptorist congregation, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his death.

Explaining his dilemma to Pallottine Sister Anna, a nun who volunteers helping the poor at the public showers, he was introduced to Piekarski, who would often spend his time sketching while waiting for his turn at the showers.

Father Ruben then provided Piekarski with paints, brushes and found a workspace in the crypt of the

Church of Santa Maria in Monterone, where the burgeoning artist honed his artistic abilities.

His work drew the attention of Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, papal almoner, who then introduced Piekarski to Father Francesco Mazzitelli, then-deputy director of the Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office.

Father Ruben told CNS that, when asked by Father Mazzitelli to design the 2021 Christmas stamps, Piekarski's answer was an emphatic "no." However, the Italian priest's persistence finally moved the Polish artist to finally do it.

For the painting of the three Magi, Piekarski based their likeness on two friends who are also homeless; the third, he explained, was an original image meant to represent all homeless men and women.

Father Mazzitelli, who was appointed on Nov. 27 as an official in the Office of the Papal Almoner, told CNS that Piekarski's story was an example of Pope Francis' call to "nurture tomorrow's hope by healing today's pain."

"What has happened to Adam is a sign for everyone, because each one of us knows someone who has hidden gifts and talents," Father Mazzitelli said. "The pope saying that we must nurture hope means he has given us a mission—to the Church and to each one of us—that we must build up hope in others."

Father Ruben noted that installing showers for the homeless at the Vatican was more than just an act of charity for the poor during the 2015 Jubilee Year of Mercy, but a fundamental gesture that gave homeless men and women dignity.

"You can't give back someone's dignity by giving them a sandwich or a euro nor even by asking them their name. That is more of a philanthropic gesture that makes



An image of the Holy Family is featured on one of the Vatican's 2021 Christmas stamps. The images on the stamps were painted by Adam Piekarski, a homeless man from Poland currently living in Rome. (CNS illustration/courtesy Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office)

us feel good about ourselves," the Polish priest said.

"But for that person that sandwich, that euro, doesn't change anything," he added. "But allowing them to clean themselves means giving them back their dignity."

Piekarski credits the public showers for not only being the starting point of his journey as an artist, but the place where he decided to confront his battle against alcoholism.

"For someone who is suffering from alcoholism or who is slightly drunk," Father Ruben recalled Piekarski telling him, "it is embarrassing to show up to clean themselves. But going there is the first step in getting out of alcoholism because, once they are at the showers, they want to change their lives."

While he continues to paint from a small studio at Palazzo Migliori, the Vatican's homeless shelter, Piekarski now works as an evening security guard at a property owned by the Knights of Malta.

"Life is a mystery, and God wanted it this way," Piekarski told CNS. "What has happened is a dream, and I still can't believe it. God has a great sense of humor." †

## SERVICE OF THE *Longest Night*

Saturday, December 18, 2021

6:00 p.m. CT

Saint Meinrad Archabbey  
Guest House Chapel

Join us for prayers, scripture and music that acknowledge God's presence for those who mourn and struggle with loss during the holidays. Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB, will offer a message of God's hope to shine light into the darkness.

Everyone is welcome. Light refreshments will follow.

Visit [www.abbeycaskets.com](http://www.abbeycaskets.com) for more information or contact us at 800.987.7380 or [info@abbeycaskets.com](mailto:info@abbeycaskets.com).

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A Work of Saint Meinrad Archabbey



# NATIVITY

continued from page 1

Christmas is all about. I thought, ‘Why don’t I get one?’ ”

Liston not only got one—and loved it—he also had the grand idea to make central Indiana the “Outdoor Nativity Scene Capital of the United States.”

He set his plan in motion this year with a two-part approach. He contacted the manufacturer that made his Nativity scene to see if he could negotiate a reduced price for a large order. He also reached out to all the Catholic schools in the Indianapolis deaneries and in nearby Hamilton County to have them ask their families who would be interested in buying a Nativity scene to display in front of their homes.

“I thought it would be a good project for any Catholic school for Advent,” Liston says. “I thought that if we could sell 150 to 200, that would be a good first year. Then I got a call from Roncalli High School [in Indianapolis], and they wanted 170.”

## Making an impact in more ways than one

In all, Liston ordered 520 Nativity scenes this year. Besides Roncalli, orders came from a combination of central Indiana schools and parishes.

Participants from the archdiocese’s Indianapolis deaneries included Our Lady of the Greenwood, St. Joan of Arc, St. Luke the Evangelist, St. Roch, St. Thomas Aquinas and Cathedral High School.

Schools and parishes from the Lafayette Diocese were St. Alphonsus in Zionsville, St. Elizabeth Seton in Carmel and Guerin Catholic High School in Noblesville.

“More than 500 Nativity scenes are being set up in central Indiana that weren’t there last year,” Liston says. “That’s going to have an impact.”

Each school and parish that

participated also received an extra financial impact. Liston negotiated with the manufacturer to reduce the usual \$105 cost for the Nativity scene to \$80. Then \$20 was added to the price—money that each school and parish could use for a project of their choice.

St. Thomas Aquinas School will use the \$20 profit for each scene to help defray the cost of a trip to Washington for its eighth-grade class. St. Luke Parish used the profit to help with costs for youths who attended the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis in November. Cathedral High School put the profits from its 70 scenes into its tuition assistance program for students in financial need.

As the coordinator for the Nativity scene project at Cathedral, Dave Worland purchased one for his home. He put it up in his front yard on the first day of Advent, which drew a mix of compliments and questions from neighbors taking a walk or walking their dogs.

One of the questions came from some boys in the neighborhood. They saw Mary and Joseph kneeling as part of the scene. They wanted to know where baby Jesus was. Worland explained that Jesus will be added on Christmas Eve, telling them that “right now, we’re anticipating, we’re waiting.” The boys said they would return to see the Nativity scene then.

“It gives us an opportunity to talk about it, and hopefully even educate people about it, whether they’re Christian or not,” says Worland, Cathedral’s senior vice president for mission and advancement and a member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

## ‘The simple presence of our Savior’

The project has also received an enthusiastic response in St. Roch Parish, where 53 Nativity scenes were purchased.

“I know people are really excited about having the Nativity scene,” says



A light illuminates a Nativity scene on a December night in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. (Photo by Mike Krokos)

Jamie Riedeman, the communications coordinator for St. Roch Parish. “People are looking forward to see who else has one. Everybody keeps saying, ‘I’m going to drive around the south side to see how many I can find.’ It’s a neat way to connect with people.”

The Nativity scene project is an effort of the Catholic Business Exchange, a group that Liston founded with the three-fold mission of promoting faith, friendship and business.

“We pride ourselves on doing projects that no one else in the community is doing,” he says. “This seems so logical, it makes so much sense, but no one had ever done it. I do

think there’s room for growth. People have asked me countless times about getting one. We’ve had at least five or six schools or parishes who say we’re in for next year.”

For Liston, it all goes back to the purpose of the project and the simplicity of the Nativity scene.

“There’s the outline of the stable, Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus in the crib. No sheep, no cows. It’s the Holy Family.

“This is to remind people of what Christmas is truly about, to get back to the basics of what this season is all about—the simple presence of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The simplicity of the Nativity scene says it all.” †



# Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

Like the women and men religious shown here, thousands of elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests spent decades ministering in Catholic schools, hospitals, and more—usually for little pay. Today, many religious communities struggle to care for aging members due to a lack of retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious helps provide nursing care, medicine, and other necessities. Please be generous.

Please donate at your local parish  
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Indianapolis IN 46202

Make check payable to Mission Office  
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[retiredreligious.org](http://retiredreligious.org)



## SCOTUS

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await the court's decision in this case."

Pro-life advocates and supporters of keeping abortion legal gathered outside the Supreme Court rallying for their respective positions on the issue as the justices heard oral arguments in the case inside the court.

Beyond the court building's steps, statements about the Mississippi law and predictions about the outcome of the case came from all quarters.

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., predicted there would be "a revolution" if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned.

Shaheen, who is on record as a supporter of widespread access to abortion, said that young people in particular would find it unacceptable if the court strikes down the legal precedent set by *Roe* in 1973 legalizing abortion nationwide.

U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., called on the Senate to Pass the Women's Health Protection Act. The measure, passed by the House on Sept. 24, codifies *Roe* and establishes the legal right to abortion on demand at any stage of pregnancy in all 50 states under federal law.

"The Mississippi case brought before the Supreme Court is a product of Republican attacks on reproductive rights spanning decades," said DeLauro, a Catholic. If *Roe* is overturned, the court will be "depriving individuals across the country of their right to choose to have an abortion," she said.

Many pro-lifers hoping *Roe* will be overturned emphasized how many scientific advances have been made in the nearly 50 years since that decision was handed down, advances they argued that have led to unprecedented information on the developmental stages of the unborn child from conception to birth.

At the rally outside the court, Grazie Pozo Christie, a radiologist and a senior fellow with The Catholic Association, commented that "incredible advances in science and fetal medicine have rendered viability a totally incoherent legal standard."

"Science and common sense tell us children in the womb are as undeniably human as the rest of us," remarked Brian Burch, president of CatholicVote, an independent political advocacy group. "We know for instance that by 15 weeks they already have beating hearts, can suck their thumbs, and even feel pain.

"It is time to overturn *Roe* and allow Americans to once again pass laws that reflect these basic values," he said in a statement.

He added that "millions of faithful Catholics across the nation are hopeful after today's oral arguments that the Supreme Court of the United States will restore sanity to its abortion jurisprudence which has enabled over 62 million American children to be aborted since 1973 when *Roe v. Wade* was decided.

"Protecting innocent life is the pre-eminent moral issue for Catholics, but it is also the condition of any just society, and abortion robs our most vulnerable citizens of that most basic human right," Burch said.

Not all eyes on the court were in the nation's capital.

The day before the oral arguments, Indiana Right to Life President and CEO Mike Fichter said in a statement, "The Supreme Court has its most significant opportunity since 1973 to end the faulty and unscientific framework of *Roe v. Wade*. The *Roe* decision undercut the right of Indiana to determine its own abortion laws while relying on a viability standard completely out of step with today's science."

Advancements in medical technology, Fichter noted, reveal "we know far more about the humanity of children in the womb in 2021 compared to 1973."

"Mississippi, just like Indiana, should have the right to determine its own laws when it comes to protecting children in the womb and empowering women with abortion alternatives, support and protection from coercion," he continued. "*Roe* is outdated and unworkable. It's time to let Indiana decide."



Mike Fichter

In Illinois, Tom Brejcha, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Society, said the country has "the first real legal opportunity in over a decade to topple" *Roe*, which "has left a tragic trail of human carnage: more than 62 million dead children and countless broken families and wounded souls."

He said the Thomas More Society, a public interest law firm, has assisted thousands of clients, including some of the nation's leading pro-life figures, "all of whom have either spoken to the opportunity now facing the Supreme Court or are actively engaged in the cry to 'Overturn *Roe*.'"

Louisiana Right to Life associate director Angie Thomas said that while no one can predict the outcome of a Supreme Court case on the basis of oral arguments, she was heartened that at least six of the nine justices asked questions that seemed to support Mississippi's ban.

In a news conference outside the pro-life organization's New Orleans headquarters, Thomas noted that Justice Brett Kavanaugh stressed the court should remain "scrupulously neutral" on issues "that are just this complicated and this divisive," allowing



People pray during eucharistic adoration at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis on the morning of Dec. 1, the day the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, an appeal to overturn Mississippi's ban on most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

those issues to be decided by individual states and their elected representatives.

In addition, Thomas said, Justice Samuel Alito interjected during the nearly two hours of oral arguments that the rights of the unborn child had to be considered along with the rights of the mother.

"Alito mentioned that the fetus has an interest in life, too, when the other side was talking about the women's interest," she said. "He mentioned how there are two interests there that actually are difficult to hold together.

"These justices are really digging into the difficult issues of where there is an objective line of protection [for the unborn child] and how do you truly balance these interests, and should the court even be doing that?" Thomas said after the news conference. "It's more important that the Supreme Court just remain neutral and allow the states to work this out.

"New York is going to be very different than Louisiana, but it is the power of the people to make that decision," she told the *Clarion Herald*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Thomas said advances in science have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt about the humanity of the unborn child from its earliest stages.

"At 15 weeks, the child is moving, the child has a beating heart, and the child's organs are formed," she said.

"We have the chance to protect that child. ... We could have a significant change in abortion law in America today," Thomas added. "And, if that change happened, in Louisiana we are ready to be a post-*Roe*, abortion-free community where women are truly helped and babies are protected." †

## POPE

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Mavrovouni refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos and in remarks to reporters flying with him back to Rome the next day, Pope Francis also made it clear that in calling for outstretched hands he was not ignoring the complexity of the migration issue or the limits of what some governments can do.

In other words, he does not expect people to look at migration with rose-colored glasses, but he does expect them



A woman wearing a protective mask feeds her baby as she waits for Pope Francis to arrive for an ecumenical prayer with migrants in the Church of the Holy Cross in Nicosia, Cyprus, on Dec. 3. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

to look at the actual migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers as brothers and sisters.

The tie of kinship is what should tip the balance when a community or a country weighs whether it has the resources needed to "welcome, protect, promote and integrate" the newcomers.

A focus on the people, not the numbers, has been constant since the beginning of Pope Francis' papacy, said Cardinal Michael Czerny, undersecretary of the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

"Pope Francis keeps on denouncing the despicable violations of human dignity carried out in the name of a misguided view of national security and tolerated by a culture of indifference," the cardinal told Catholic News Service.

Meeting with migrants on Dec. 3 in a Catholic church in Nicosia, Cyprus, Pope Francis' passion and compassion were on full display as he repeatedly departed from his prepared text.

"How many desperate people have set out in difficult and precarious conditions but did not arrive?" he asked those who had crossed the Mediterranean and made it to Cyprus. "We can think about this sea, which has become a great cemetery. Looking at you, I see the suffering caused by your journey; I see all those people who were kidnapped, sold, exploited and who are still on the journey, we know not where."

The tragedy is not hidden, he said, even if people prefer to look the other way.

"We see what is happening, and the worst thing is that we are becoming used

to it. 'Oh yes, today another boat capsized, so many lives were lost,' " people say to themselves. "This 'becoming used' to things is a grave illness, a very grave illness, and there is no antibiotic for it," the pope said. "We have to resist this vice of getting used to reading about these tragedies in the newspapers or hearing about them on other media."

In the end, he even apologized for going on so long and in such detail, particularly about what he described as "lagers"—government-run detention centers in Libya where many migrants pushed back from Spain, Malta or Italy end up.

"Excuse me if I have spoken of things as they really are," he said, "but we cannot remain silent and look the other way amid this culture of indifference."

Those words were not much different from what he had said eight years earlier in Lampedusa, when he mourned the thousands who had died trying to cross the Mediterranean in search of a dignified life for themselves and their families, Cardinal Czerny noted. The pope had said: "We are no longer attentive to the world in which we live; we don't care; we don't protect what God created for everyone, and we end up unable even to care for one another!"

Pope Francis stuck closer to his prepared text on Dec. 5 when he visited Lesbos for the second time, even though before giving his speech, he had spent half an hour walking through the camp, past the tents and pre-fab shelters, greeting hundreds of asylum-seekers.

"I am here to see your faces and look into your eyes: Eyes full of fear and

expectancy, eyes that have seen violence and poverty, eyes streaked by too many tears," he told them.

In the presence of Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou and both Greek and U.N. officials, Pope Francis said the global community has rallied to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change—though perhaps without much success—but it has done very little to come together to assist migrants and the countries hosting them.

"Yet human lives, real people, are at stake!" he said in Lesbos. "The future of us all is at stake, and that future will be peaceful only if it is integrated. Only if it is reconciled with the most vulnerable will the future be prosperous. When we reject the poor, we reject peace."

While the pope was on the shores of the Mediterranean, it was clear his gaze was broader, and his concern went much further, especially northward where thousands of hope-filled migrants are shivering in a Belarus winter hoping to cross a newly barbed-wired border into Poland.

"Today it is the fashion to put up walls and barbed wire and concertina wire to impede migration," he said.

Certainly, governments have a "right" to say how many migrants they can take in, the pope said. But they do not have a right to condemn them to exploitation and even death.

"Migrants must be welcomed, accompanied, promoted and integrated," Pope Francis said. "If a government cannot take in more than a certain number, it must enter into dialogue with other countries who can take care of the others, all of them." †



# Cathedral's 40 seniors lead the way to a state football championship

By John Shaughnessy

The numbers are impressive. During its past two seasons, the football team of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis has achieved a record of 27 wins and two losses.

Their latest victory occurred in the Indiana High School Athletic Association's Class 5A state championship game on Nov. 26, with the Irish earning a convincing 34-14 win over the team from Zionsville High School.

It was the second straight championship in football for Cathedral and their 14th overall in the sport.

All impressive statistics, yet there's one more number that may be even more defining about this year's team.

Consider that there are 40 seniors on this year's Cathedral team that has 117 players. That's 40 teammates who have worked and played together for four seasons—with some of them getting to play sparingly in games and others often

just watching and cheering from the sidelines.

That's a number—and a quality—that stands out to Cathedral's head football coach, Bill Peebles.

"It's not normal to have 40 seniors," Peebles says. "Usually when kids don't play, they move on to other things. It's what makes this group special. They love each other."

"We had a bunch of seniors who never started a game. Some of them didn't play a lot. Some were on special teams, and some didn't play at all, but they helped us in practice. They accepted their role. They're a really tight-knit group, which obviously has a lot to do with so many kids sticking it out."

Most of all, their coach says, the seniors embraced the motto of their team.

"We say, 'It's not what you get. It's what you become from Cathedral.' It's how you grow as a person—to become a better man and a better football player, of course. We had a lot of

people who bought into that."

One of the Cathedral seniors who embraced that attitude is Cooper Koers who was honored as the Phil N. Eskew Mental Attitude Award winner for Class 5A football. The award is presented to a senior who has "demonstrated excellence in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability during his four years of high school."

While he is grateful for the honor, Cooper's thoughts focus on his senior teammates and their role in leading Cathedral to the state championship.

"It means the world to me and this senior group," he says. "We dreamed of this since freshman year and being able to make it a reality is amazing. These boys have become my best friends through the last four years. We have been able to motivate each other and keep each other focused on the main goal, which we were able to achieve."

Peebles also credits his assistant coaches for helping to create an

atmosphere for the team to succeed—and for so many seniors to continue wanting to be part of their team.

"You have to have an incredibly supportive staff who understands what our priority is—to make sure the kids feel wanted and appreciated even if they're not great players," Peebles says. "The assistant coaches have that philosophy. If my staff didn't treat the kids the right way, we wouldn't have that impact."

The head coach then returned his thoughts to the seniors and the impact they've had.

"We have a tradition every year—a senior meal on Thursday night. This year it was at the house of Michael Page, a senior and a captain. The entire senior class would go to their house every Thursday, and they never missed it."

"This will be a group, 30 years from now, where they'll all come back for reunions because they'll want to see each other. That's how they are. They are a very special group." †



The seniors on the football team of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis share the joy after their squad won the Indiana High School Athletic Association's Class 5A state championship on Nov. 26 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

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# Faith *Alive!*

A supplement to Catholic newspapers published by Catholic News Service, 3211 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. All contents are copyrighted © 2021 by Catholic News Service.

## Saint offers Advent lessons on finding God in daily life

By Lindsey Weishar

The second reading for the Third Sunday of Advent is a place of personal resonance:

“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:6-7).

Never before have I understood the “why” behind these words. Verse 5 lends an answer: “The Lord is near.”

As we approach the feast of our Lord’s birth, I imagine many of us are tired.

Grief has perhaps etched itself into many of our stories since the start of the coronavirus pandemic nearly two years ago, but holidays in their association with joyous celebration also have a way of bringing old griefs into greater relief.

And yet, in all things the Lord is near.

Edith Stein knew this well. A convert from Judaism to Catholicism, she became a Carmelite nun in 1934 in Germany, taking on the religious name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

She lived in tumultuous times—the reality of anti-Semitic laws in Nazi Germany necessitated a move from a convent in Germany to one in Holland. After German troops invade the country, Teresa was taken in 1942 and killed at Auschwitz.

Yet, for her, God offered a place of rest, which could be accessed in all circumstances, even in the midst of the fear, terror and unrest of her age.

“The work of salvation takes place in obscurity and stillness,” Teresa said in her essay, “The Prayer of the Church.” “In the heart’s quiet dialogue with God the living building blocks out of which the kingdom of God grows are prepared.”

How are we making room in our hearts and minds for him this Advent?

At times, I’ve found it difficult to “prepare him room.” The anxiety of days weighs down my spirits and, amid the busyness, I sometimes pause long enough to glimpse the frenetic pace of my life. It is in this place that I’m called to listen at the door of my heart for Christ’s gentle knock.

Teresa suggests beginning the day in the presence of God. This can be both a way to combat our anxieties about “the terror of things to be done” (in the words of a poem of St. John Paul II) and to regain peace.

Teresa simply says, “My first morning’s hour belongs to the Lord. I will tackle the day’s work which he charges me with, and he will give me the power to accomplish it.”

To lean on the Lord in this way, to rest in him as we go through our days, is not an easy task. Teresa notes that in our day’s work we often run into roadblocks to peace and rest:

“We cannot achieve in each hour what we want, perhaps in none. We must contend with our own fatigue, unforeseen interruptions, shortcomings of the children, diverse vexations, indignities, anxieties.”

I am reminded of the crowds who turned to St. John the Baptist with the question “What should we do?” (Lk 3:10). They thirsted for the One who would “baptize ... with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Lk 3:16).

As they listened to John’s call to leave behind old patterns of living, “the people were filled with expectation” for the Christ (Lk 3:15).

Their expectation is ours. Meeting the Lord in prayer, Teresa says, gives us the strength to take the next step on our journeys with him:

“And it [the soul] sees clearly the next part of the path before it; it does not see very far, but it knows that when it has arrived at that place where the horizon now intersects, a new vista will then be opened.”

This image feels so true to discernment. The path may sometimes seem steeped in fog. Though we dwell in a world of many uncertainties, Teresa highlights our most brilliant certainty—our God, who is not only near, but is “the support and ground of my own unsupported and groundless being.”

Her confidence gives answer both to those still waiting for the Lord in the time of John the Baptist and to those awaiting his second coming both at the time of St. Paul and today.

In response to the various anxieties and uncertainties that populate our modern day, Teresa gently presses into these tender places:

“And when he tells me through the mouth of the prophet that he stands more faithfully at my side than my father and my mother, yea that he is love itself, then I begin to understand how rational is my trust in the arm that carries me and how foolish is my fear of falling prey to nothingness.”

He asks only that we abide with him. We may sometimes need to renew our yes hour by hour, but in saying yes, we open ourselves to his transformative love.

In this treasured time of the Church year, where the extraordinary takes up residence in the ordinary of our lives, I pray our hearts may be oriented toward rest, toward the tranquility a more vivid confidence in his love brings.

May it embolden us to throw open the doors to him, to greet him at the thresholds of our hearts with joy.

(Lindsey Weishar is a poet and freelance writer from the Diocese of Peoria, Ill.) †



St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, whose name before entering religious life was Edith Stein, is pictured in an undated photo. St. Teresa converted from Judaism to Catholicism in the course of her work as a philosopher, and later entered the Carmelite order. She died in the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz in 1942. (CNS files)



Six-year-old Phillip Marino and his 4-year-old brother Nicholas make an Advent wreath during an activity at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Greece, N.Y. The second reading for the Third Sunday of Advent for this year states: “Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God” (Phil 4:6-7). (CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier)



## Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Life's marathon keeps us sprinting toward God

Six-hundred fifty miles and 100 hours of training to run a 26.2-mile race. It was absolutely amazing to watch my 57-year-old husband prepare for and run his first marathon—even more so when you consider he almost didn't survive colon cancer 15 years ago. I was in awe of his stamina, determination and resolve. And, I thought, there is no way I could ever run a marathon.

Then I realized we are all running a marathon of some sort. Maybe your marathon is getting through college, surviving a chronic or life-threatening illness, raising children, or tackling an addiction of some sort. Whenever you face a demanding, long-term challenge, you, my friend, are running a marathon.

I could see both mountains and valleys during my husband's training routine. He would be elated as he accomplished his milestone goals. Conversely, there were days when he dreaded the next run. He ran

in upper 90-degree heat and in pouring rain. He continued running on days when he didn't feel great. He even ran when working out of town, or when we were on vacation. He just kept running. He persisted because he stayed focused on a goal. He ran the marathon to raise monies for a scholarship fund we established in our late son's memory years ago. Attaching a cause to the marathon also helped him persevere.

As I gave it more thought, I decided my marathon is a lifelong pursuit of being a good person, someone who lives up to the expectations God has for me. Of course, I fail daily, but I persist in improving who I am and in making better decisions as I journey toward God. That may sound easy but, honestly, it is the hardest challenge of my life.

I try to focus on obeying the Ten Commandments as well as the teachings of the Church, even when I experience temptations that lead me astray. I attempt to be kind to others, even when they are not kind to me. And I ask for forgiveness from God and others when I fall short. It requires me to persevere each and every day.

In fact, one could view life itself as a

marathon. From a Catholic perspective, our life's marathon is a sprint to God and eternal life. Sometimes we run full throttle in that direction. Other times, we find pacing ourselves will help us attain our goal. Every once in a while, we slow down and walk part of the way. Sometimes, we might give up altogether for a spell before taking up the path once again. Staying focused on the reward of eternal life keeps us moving forward.

And on that day when we cross the finish line, I pray we all experience not the accomplishment of running the marathon, but our reward for a life well-lived.

St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy sums up a life's marathon perfectly: "I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance" (2 Tm 4:7-8).

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †



## Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

## Bread, wine and a Norway spruce: the sacramental life

Before the buildings in Rockefeller Center, there was a Christmas tree.

At the peak of the Great Depression, construction workers hungry for holiday cheer pooled their money to buy a 20-foot balsam fir and placed it in the center of the construction site. They decorated the tree with whatever they could find: strings of cranberry

their wives made, paper garlands, tin cans, even foil gum wrappers.

The men lined up at the tree to receive their paychecks. Their spirits were buoyed and a tradition was born.

Each tree brings a story. In 1951, it drew national attention when NBC televised the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree lighting for the first time. In 1969, it was given 12 metal wire angels made by an immigrant woman. After 9/11, it was adorned in red, white and blue.

Last year, it carried a tiny owl from upstate New York on a 170-mile ride to New York City. The stowaway was named Rocky, short for Rockefeller, wrapped in an orange blanket and nursed by veterinarians before being released. In the process, she became an Internet sensation and the subject of a new children's book, *The Christmas Owl*.

This year, the Rockefeller tree makes history as the first one from Maryland. The 79-foot Norway Spruce was wrapped with more than 50,000 multi-colored lights on five miles of wire and then topped with a 900-pound Swarovski star.

But my favorite part of the story is what happens when the star is removed and the lights are unplugged. When Christmas ends, the tree's story is just beginning. Its trunk is milled into two-by-fours and used by Habitat for Humanity to build a house. The one-time Christmas icon becomes a forever home.

This speaks to me as a Catholic surrounded by sacramentals—physical objects that take on spiritual significance. They are blessed by prayer and priests and patterns. Rosary beads handled every morning. Candles burning at night. Medals dangling from the neck. And at the source and summit of our faith, bread and wine consecrated.

Sacramentals are hopeful. They see not just what is but what can be. They reflect Jesus' promise: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rv 21:5). They assure us that, like the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree, we can make of ourselves something beautiful, something lasting. Our weary bones can become a home.

Sacramentals offer a special kind of comfort in hard times, and we are marking the end of another hard year. A year of darkness and division. A year of resignations and aimlessness. A year of uncertainty. We can relate to those construction workers back in 1931 who fashioned a dreary construction site into a Christmas scene.

I recently chatted with a Catholic dad who heads to the same tree farm my family visits each December. He joked about how long the tree remains perched in their house—weeks after Christmas, until his wife finally declares, "Enough!" Then he sticks the tree in a snowbank until it's warm enough for a bonfire.

"It's quite fun to put a dry pine tree on fire because it crackles and explodes," he said. "I think about the sacramentality, the resurrection of this tree: There's this thing that has a new purpose."

Maybe you're feeling used up and dried out, like an old Christmas tree stuck in the snow. Maybe God is preparing your next chapter. Maybe 2022 will be your year, when people watch you and say, "There's someone who has a new purpose."

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †



## Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## Parents show their child the depth of their love

(The following story shared by a client demonstrates how she grew up in a poor family blessed with the true riches of life.)



Deborah was 7 when she went into her parents' bedroom and saw her mother sitting at her sewing machine making doll clothes. Her mother was a beautiful seamstress and was always sewing items for the church bazaar and making clothes for people.

Deborah asked who the doll clothes were for. Her mom told her that they were for the poor people, so Deborah never gave it another thought.

On Christmas morning, when Deborah opened her present, there were those beautiful doll clothes that she had seen her mother making. Deborah said, "I thought the doll clothes were for the poor people." Her mother smiled and said, "They are for the poor people. We're poor."

When Deborah was 9, her greatest desire in life was to own a pogo stick. She had recently learned to walk on a pair of stilts her dad made for her, and she thought that if she also mastered a pogo stick that surely the circus would want to hire her for her incredible feats.

When Christmas rolled around again, Deborah told her mother that the only thing she wanted was a pogo stick. Her mother told her it was way too expensive and that they simply couldn't afford one. On a Saturday afternoon a few weeks before Christmas, her mom and dad told her they needed to go to Sears to pay their revolving credit bill.

While her mother and Deborah were at the counter paying the bill, her dad said, "I'll be right back, I need to see something in the tool department." After the bill was taken care of, Deborah and her mother walked back to their truck. Shortly

thereafter, her dad came walking out with a long slender box. Deborah remembered wondering if it was a pogo stick.

When they arrived back at home, her dad put the box in the barn. While her parents were busy with their chores, Deborah snuck out to the barn and found the box. She was so excited and knew that as soon as she opened that magical box her bright, shiny pogo stick would appear.

No such luck! Inside the box was an old broom. Thus, Christmas morning was both great and disappointing. Deborah got some nice gifts, but she didn't get the present she really wanted.

After the wrapping paper was cleaned up, her dad said he needed to tend to something in the barn. When he came back in, he had a beautiful pogo stick.

Deborah couldn't believe how they were able to scrape the money together for it and how they tricked her with the broom. She was so excited that she couldn't let the pogo stick out of her sight. When she went to bed, she made sure it was on the floor next to her. She was surprised she didn't fall out of bed because she slept on the edge so that she could hold onto her pogo stick as she fell asleep.

Although Deborah's family didn't have much money, her parents gave her the most important gift of all: an abundance of love. They had love and they had joy. Her dad worked hard to provide for the family, and her mother knew how to stretch a dollar. Although their home was old and small, it was immaculate, and they always had plenty to eat and clean, and warm beds to sleep in at night.

That was more than 60 years ago, and Deborah still relives those cherished Christmas memories every year. She will never forget all the joy her parents brought into her life.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at [dbethuram@archindy.org](mailto:dbethuram@archindy.org).) †

## Guest Column/Jesus Figueroa

## St. Martin de Porres and his witness of faith

Many saints show us being lowly is a fundamental virtue in human life and for many in the Christian life.

Jesus said: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29).

We need to accept our weakness and internal poverty to be filled with the love of God; those who don't accept it and cannot recognize their weaknesses and shortcomings will despise others and won't be able to understand other human beings or forgive their weaknesses.

St. Martin de Porres, a native of Lima, Peru, stands before us as an example of lowliness and meekness. The Lord allowed that during his life he was so humiliated he became an example of God's love on Earth. We know how despised he was because of his mixed

race—he was born to a Spanish father and a freed Black slave. His life should continue to serve as a lesson for us that no one should be discriminated against for any reason. God's work through St. Martin confirmed, as St. Paul stated, we "are all one in Christ" (Gal 3:28).

Every time St. Martin de Porres was insulted or humiliated, he answered with a smile and a kind word. He did not feel worthy to become a priest in the Convent of Santo Domingo in Lima, where he was admitted as a lay brother. He felt called to minister to the poor and homeless, which is why he has a broom as a symbol of his lowliness and holiness.

In the Bible, it is written "to each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit" (1 Cor 12:7). It is a signal of how merciful our Lord is in giving charisms to the saints.

God gave to our humble brother St. Martin de Porres the gift of being able to perform miracles during his life and after he died. There are many who have witnessed

the extraordinary miracles he performed and still does for the glory of God.

As Catholic Christians, we believe saints are also a source of Christ's witness and his Gospel message. Each of them offers a spiritual connection to the grace of Jesus.

Through St. Martin's life and ministry, our Church, even in these tumultuous times, can follow his example: it is a message of unity of races, and of service and commitment to the poor and those in need.

St. Martin's multicultural background was not enough to stop the blessings God had prepared for him. He is the patron saint of hairdressers, race relations, innkeepers, African-Americans, public schools, interracial harmony, Peru, people of mixed race, social justice and more.

St. Martin was always willing to help others, and that is the best example to follow to receive the graces of God.

(A native of Peru, Jesus Figueroa is a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis.) †





Third Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 12, 2021

- Zephaniah 3:14-18a
- Philippians 4:4-7
- Luke 3:10-18

For centuries, this Sunday has been called *Gaudete* Sunday, the name coming from the first word of the original



entrance antiphon for Mass on this day. In English, *gaudete* is translated as a command to rejoice. We do that on the third Sunday of Advent because the Lord's arrival into human experience will be soon.

While violet is the color prescribed for liturgical vestments in Advent, during this weekend priests may choose to wear rose vestments. Rose represents the darkness of night broken by the mellow rays of the impending dawn of Christ's birth.

The first reading is from the Book of Zephaniah. This book was composed in the seventh century before Christ. It is a rather short work, just three chapters in length, but its language and message are powerful.

Its theme is similar to that of the other prophets. Human sin has brought great hardship and heartbreak into the world. Sin is the worst calamity, and people have no one to blame but themselves for their sins. God is always faithful, forgiving and good. He rescues people by showing them the way out of their sin and by renewing the call to righteousness. Thus, this reading exclaims in anticipation and joy. All is forgiven! A savior is on the way! All will be right!

Even so, God imposes nothing on

people. He does not coerce them into reluctant obedience. He overwhelms no one as a conqueror overwhelms.

Rather, the people are to freely turn to God and reform their lives, although certainly aided by God's grace.

For its second reading, the Church presents a reading from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. As in the first reading, the theme is joy. Christ is the long-awaited Redeemer. He reunites humanity with God. In Jesus is life and hope.

St. Luke's Gospel is the source of the Gospel reading. The principal figure is St. John the Baptist, one of the more striking figures of the early Church. A cousin of Jesus, he was a widely known prophet who called people to God. Quite realistic in his understanding of Jesus, John knew that he himself was only the precursor of the promised Savior. Indeed, John said that he was not even worthy to untie the Savior's sandal strap.

It was a testimony to John—but also to the Redeemer. John was regarded as a holy man. If John could not even perform such a menial task on behalf of the Savior as to untie a sandal strap, then the Savior most certainly was of God.

This reading would have been especially meaningful in the first century to anyone familiar with Jewish tradition and with the environment surrounding Jesus. All the Gospels appeared against the backdrop of God's relationship with the Jews. Supreme in this relationship was God's constant mercy, a mercy perfected when a Savior would appear.

## Daily Readings

### Monday, December 13

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr  
Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a  
Psalm 25:4-5b, 6, 7bc, 8-9  
Matthew 21:23-27

### Tuesday, December 14

St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church  
Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13  
Psalm 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23  
Matthew 21:28-32

### Wednesday, December 15

Isaiah 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25  
Psalm 85:9ab, 10-14  
Luke 7:18b-23

### Thursday, December 16

Isaiah 54:1-10  
Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b  
Luke 7:24-30

### Friday, December 17

Genesis 49:2, 8-10  
Psalm 72:1-4b, 7-8, 17  
Matthew 1:1-17

### Saturday, December 18

Jeremiah 23:5-8  
Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19  
Matthew 1:18-25

### Sunday, December 19

Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Micah 5:1-4a  
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45

### Reflection

No New Testament writing more splendidly presents the great majesty of Jesus, the Christ, the Savior, the Son of God and true Christian faith, than does St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. This weekend's second reading so well captures this quality of Philippians.

The message is majestically proclaimed. Jesus is Lord! He is everything.

Opposite this wondrous figure of perfect love and resurrected life, Jesus the Lord, is human sin and the destruction sin creates. Zephaniah alludes to this sin and

its consequences, as does John the Baptist in the Gospel.

Christians can rejoice, however, because they are not doomed to the eternal consequences of their sin. They are redeemed. God, through and in Jesus, will forgive their sins if they renounce their sin and ask for forgiveness. Then, assured of forgiveness, they can live forever in Christ.

Christmas is near. Jesus is near. Reject sin. Be forgiven. Then, the Lord soon will be with us personally and forever. Security will be found. Life is fulfilled! Thus, the Church calls us to rejoice. *Gaudete!* †

### Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

## The way Communion is received has changed through the centuries

My sister claims that receiving Holy Communion in the hand is disrespecting the Eucharist. I told her that it must be OK because the first sacrament of the Eucharist was received in the hand (at the Last Supper). So, I was wondering when the practice of receiving on the tongue started. (Location withheld)



It is safe to assume that at the Last Supper, when Jesus said, "Take and eat; this is my body" (Mt 26:26), the Apostles received that first Eucharist in their hands. And that practice continued during the early centuries of the Church.

At a Church council in Constantinople in 692, Christians were instructed that "if anyone wishes to be a participator of the immaculate body ... and to offer himself for the communion, let him draw near, arranging his hand in the form of a cross." That practice was the norm throughout the early Middle Ages.

But by the 13th century, St. Thomas Aquinas wrote in the *Summa Theologiae*: "Out of reverence toward this sacrament, nothing touches it but what is consecrated; hence the corporal and chalice are consecrated, and likewise the priest's hands, for touching this sacrament. Hence it is not lawful for anyone else to touch it except from necessity, for instance, if it were to fall upon the ground."

In 1969, the Church document "*Memoriale Domini*" outlined Pope Paul VI's decision to maintain the practice of receiving the Eucharist on the tongue: "Communion [on the tongue] must be retained ... not merely because it has many centuries of tradition behind it, but especially because it expresses the faithful's reverence for the Eucharist."

But in 1977 permission for administering Communion in the hand was granted by

the Holy See to the United States, and the "General Instruction of the *Roman Missal*" now reads: "The communicant ... receives the sacrament either on the tongue or, where this is allowed and if the communicant so chooses, in the hand" (#161). The option belongs to the individual. Both can be done with reverence, and neither way is more noble.

Our son and his wife-to-be are not practicing Catholics. They have a little girl, now 20 months old, who needs to be baptized. How do we as parents approach the subject—without turning them against the faith completely or against us? (Saskatchewan)

Let me say first that I admire very much your love for Catholicism and your desire to pass on the benefits of the Catholic faith to your granddaughter. My goal is the same as yours: to bring her parents back to regular practice of the faith so they can offer strong religious support to their child.

Canon 868 of the Church's *Code of Canon Law* states that "for an infant to be baptized licitly ... there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion."

Right now, as you describe the situation, that sounds doubtful. If you see an opportunity in a quiet way to speak to your son about the religious path he might be considering for their daughter, then do it.

But be careful not to force it. To strong-arm your son about his religious responsibility could have a negative effect, including jeopardizing your relationship with him for a long time.

Do you think it might be better for now simply to pray for them, that they will reach the choice of baptism on their own? And remember that God cares about the baby's salvation even more than you do.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

## My Journey to God

# Christmas Presence

By Sandra Marek Behringer

I promise you this year  
an unhurried heart.

I promise to step down  
from my merry-go-round  
and look at you  
when you talk  
and really listen  
and take the time  
to walk with you  
sometimes  
in the silent  
falling snow.

I promise to take you  
someplace  
you love to go  
and wait until  
you're ready  
and not complain.  
I promise to bring you  
steaming coffee  
if we get caught  
in winter rain.

I promise I'll gift wrap  
your package myself  
and help hang memories  
on our tree.  
I promise to sing  
carols with you  
and build a fire



and string  
the blinking lights  
patiently.

I promise we'll open  
presents at midnight  
and when the bells  
are ringing  
Christmas Day  
I promise Mary's child  
will find me kneeling  
close beside you  
on the hay.

(Sandra Marek Behringer is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. The poem is from her book *Only a Passage*. Photo: Palestinian Catholic Karen Najjar from Fassuta, Israel, touches the baby Jesus figurine following Christmas Mass in St. Catherine Church in Bethlehem, West Bank, on Dec. 25, 2013. St. Catherine's is adjacent to the Church of the Nativity, the traditional site of Christ's birth.) (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)



# Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

**AMRHEIN, Evelyn C.**, 68, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 10. Mother of Faye Cossins, Dale, Lyle and Paul Amrhein. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of one.

**BEAGLE, Mary**, 86, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 13. Wife of Ray Beagle. Mother of Karen Meyer, Kathy Porter, Chris and Rick Beagle. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of seven.

**BIRCHLER, Mary Rose**, 92, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 16. Mother of Angela Aumage and Samuel Beavin, Jr. Stepmother of Mary, Susan, Donald and John Birchler. Sister of Rita Brockman, Carol Dauby and Paul Strobel. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of four.

**BORHO, Leonard**, 79, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Nov. 19. Father of Michelle Borho Bhattarai and Frances and Theresa Borho. Brother of Elizabeth Hatcher, Firmina Young and Nicholas Borho. Grandfather of one.

**BROWN, George**, 94, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Nov. 11. Husband of Jeane Brown. Father of Gayle Driver, Diane Green,

Elaine Palmer and Jeff Brown. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of eight.

**CONNER, Joan L. (Sabelhaus)**, 90, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 17. Mother of Christine Kanneberg, Julie Kohnert, Mary Riley, Theresa, David, Stephen and Tim Conner. Sister of Jerry, Pat and Steve Sabelhaus. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 12.

**CUMMINS, Mary A.**, 90, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Mother of Mary Sue Skillman, Annie Voelkel, Danny and Jimmy Cummins. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 10.

**DEVINE, Jamie J.**, 29, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Daughter of Patrick and Susan Devine. Sister of Jake, Joe and John Devine.

**DOLL, Daniel**, 73, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 17. Husband of Marilyn Doll. Father of Lisa Sawyer. Brother of Clete and Jake Doll. Grandfather of two.

**FULLERTON, George L.**, 79, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Nov. 9. Husband of Barbara Fullerton. Father of George Fullerton, Jr. and Mark Fullerton. Brother of Laura Kille and Ralph Fullerton, Jr. Grandfather of five.

**GILPIN, Jerry**, 75, St. Mary, Rushville, Nov. 22. Husband of Bettigene Gilpin. Father of Christopher Gilpin. Brother of Pamela Etzy and Mark Gilpin.

**GORMAN, Mark E.**, 80, St. Anne, New Castle, Nov. 16. Husband of Joyce Gorman. Father of Amy McCormack, JoEll and Troy Gorman. Brother of Kathleen Wallace. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of six.

**HINTON, Anna Mae**, 95, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Nov. 11. Mother of Allan, Bradley and Marc Hinton. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of seven.

**HOFFMAN, Cornelia C.**, 78, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, Nov. 14. Wife of Conrad Hoffman. Mother

of Cathy Hoffman and Amy Wissel. Sister of Eileen Weisenbach. Grandmother of four.

**HOFFMAN, Louise**, 96, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 4. Mother of Jenny Banker, Nancy Flint, Maury and Ron Hoffman. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 17.

**HOFFMEIER, Wilma A. (Kuhn)**, 84, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, Nov. 19. Wife of Clifford Hoffmeier. Mother of Beverly Fisher, Sheila Knollman, Jeff and Ron Hoffmeier. Sister of Dave Kuhn. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 11.

**KOLB, Virginia C.**, 85, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 13. Wife of Edward Kolb. Mother of Donna Talbert, Dennis, Mark and Randy Kolb. Sister of Ruth Sizemore. Grandmother of 21. Great-grandmother of 17. Great-great-grandmother of five.

**LONGO, Eric C.**, 52, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Oct. 29. Husband of Melany Longo. Father of Anabella, Madeleine and Maximilian Longo. Son of D. Thomas Longo, Jr. and Liliana Longo. Brother of Mark Longo.

**MOORE, Elizabeth**, 89, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Nov. 12. Mother of Peggy Chopra, Kathy Layden, Pattie, Daniel and Michael Moore. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of five.

**MULLIS, Rose Marie**, 83, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Nov. 11. Mother of Diana Cox, Becky Miller, Charlene Rickenbaugh, Allan, Dean, Gary, Leon, Richard and Stanley Mullis. Grandmother of 30. Great-grandmother of 16.

**PERRY, Mary E. (Wagner)**, 83, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Mother of Denise Eickhoff and

Tammy Himsforth. Sister of Joan Rippy. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 14.

**PRICE, Jack M.**, 81, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Husband of Elizabeth Price. Father of Jennifer McAvene, Dale and Jack Price II. Brother of Judy Strader, Kathy Wyatt, Robert and Thomas Price. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of 17. Great-great-grandfather of two.

**RISK, Richard L.**, 54, St. Mary, Rushville, Nov. 12. Father of Jaylee Davis. Son of Carolyn Risk. Brother of Tracy Cesare.

**ROSS, Russell G.**, 92, St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, Oct. 19. Husband of Ellen Ross. Father of Julie Cooper, Janet Jones, Jane Schneider, Jennifer and James Ross. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of 23.

**SCHREINER, Sr., Frank R.**, 91, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 12. Husband of Dorothy Schreiner. Father of Paula Bales, Patricia Matus, Edward and Frank Schreiner, Jr. Brother of Joan Tebbe and Donald Schreiner. Grandfather of eight.

**STRIECKER, Mary**, 98, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 15. Mother of Betty Burkhart, Marlene Daeger, Paulene Feldman-Hurt, Sue Wilds and Thomas Striecker. Sister of Lowell Waltermann. Grandmother of 20. Great-grandmother of 21. Great-great-grandmother of 20.

**TOLAR, Lorraine T.**, 84, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City, Nov. 15. Mother of Kathy Dattoli, Mary Rose, Jack and James Tolar. Sister of Elsie Edney. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 28. Great-great-grandmother of four.

**WAGNER, Agnes J.**, 88, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 10. Mother of Susan

## Owl in Judy



A barred owl perches on a fence in Indianapolis on Nov. 25. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Geis, Lisa Huff, Dennis and Michael Wagner. Sister of Kathleen Berkemeier, Lucille Case, Margaret Greiwe, Ruth Steinkamp, Mary Ann Sullivan, Virginia Wamsley and Ronald Schoetmer. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 10.

**WAGNER, Dolores**, 92, St. Maurice, Napoleon, Nov. 9. Mother of Theresa Rork, Alan, Brian, Joe, John, Mark, Mike and Steve Wagner. Sister of Marilyn Buening, Dorothy Stier and Paul Gehl. Grandmother of 26. Great-grandmother of 30. Great-great-grandmother of two.

**WANINGER, Dennis P.**, 82, St. Boniface, Fulda, Nov. 21.

Husband of Carol Waninger. Father of Debra Al-Hajeri, Nancy Barker, Cheryl and Connie Klumper and Mark Waninger. Brother of Pauline Gogel, Anna Mae Peters, Agnes Witte, Clarence, Norman and Robert Waninger. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 12.

**WERNE, Ruth O. (Aders)**, 89, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Oct. 26. Mother of Sally Gravatte, Diane Mooney, Michael, Richard and Steve Werne. Sister of Judy Dial, Ida Kelley, Eleanor Lasher, Gerald and Maurice Aders. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 19. †

## Cardinal Pell says his time in prison helped him to understand the suffering of Jesus Christ

PHOENIX (CNS)—Australian Cardinal George Pell, jailed for more than a year for sex abuse crimes he ultimately was cleared of, said the experience enabled him to understand suffering as a redemptive process that allows one to identify closely with Christ.

“Suffering accepted in faith can be good and useful. Like gold, it can be used for good purposes,” Cardinal Pell told a gathering of Catholic medical professionals and their guests in Phoenix on Nov. 20.

Reminding his audience that Jesus told his followers, “whoever does not accept his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple” (Lk 14:27), the cardinal said “that makes it difficult for Christians.”

But, he added, “It is through his suffering and death while a powerless victim that the Lord redeemed us.

“All this only makes sense if we accept in faith that suffering can be redemptive—turned to a good purpose when united with Jesus’ suffering and death,” the cardinal continued. “It is through his suffering and death while a powerless victim that the Lord redeemed us; released the grace so that our sins and the worst crimes could be forgiven.”

The former prefect of the Vatican’s Secretariat of the Economy, Cardinal Pell left the position in 2017 to defend himself. The office oversees Vatican finances, and the cardinal was eyeing several reforms at the time.

He was convicted by an Australian jury in late 2018 of molesting two choirboys in 1996 while archbishop of Melbourne. He served 405 days behind bars, including five months in solitary confinement to protect him from jailhouse attack.

Cardinal Pell had maintained his innocence, but after the verdict was made public in February 2019, he was sentenced to a maximum of six years in prison—with a possibility of parole after three years and eight months. It wasn’t until April 7, 2020, when Australia’s High Court, acting on the cardinal’s appeal, found the trial jury had failed to give proper weight to witness testimony.

The high court overturned the conviction. It cited a reasonable doubt in the testimony of Cardinal Pell’s lone accuser, stating there was “a significant possibility an innocent person [was] convicted because the evidence did not establish guilt to the requisite standard of proof.”

In a statement the day of his release, Cardinal Pell said that he holds “no ill will” toward his accuser.

During Cardinal Pell’s Phoenix visit, he was hailed by local Church leaders and laity.

“For more than 13 months, he was a prisoner for a crime he did not commit. His witness to the religious freedom and rights of conscience—remaining steadfast to the truth—certainly is something we are all grateful for,” Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix told Catholic News Service. †

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### REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**  
Confidential, Online Reporting  
[www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[carlahill@archindy.org](mailto:carlahill@archindy.org)



# Indianapolis ordinariate parish seeks to build up Church unity

By Sean Gallagher

After the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, many of the Apostles went forth from Jerusalem to lands far and wide to carry out Jesus' parting command to them: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15).

Father Jeffrey Moore finds himself in Indianapolis in a similar position to the Apostles.

A priest of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, Father Moore had ministered for many years at Our Lady of the Atonement Parish in San Antonio, Texas. It is a large, well-established faith community, now a part of the ordinariate, made up of former Anglicans, Episcopalians and Methodists who have been received into the full communion of the Church.

The ordinariate was established in 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI as a diocese-like structure for such Catholics in the U.S. and Canada. It features a form of the Mass that draws from the spiritual and liturgical heritage of the Church of England.

In 2020, Bishop Steven J. Lopes, who leads the ordinariate, sent Father Moore to what might seem like a far corner of the ordinariate world—to Indianapolis to minister to and grow a fledgling ordinariate community that is now St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne Parish.

"It's certainly a completely new experience for me, going from a parish that was established, one of the largest in the ordinariate, to come here to try to start something from scratch," said Father Moore in an interview with *The Criterion*.

The parish meets for worship and other community activities at Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis, where Father Moore also serves as sacramental minister for archdiocesan Catholics.

Additionally, he ministers as a chaplain at St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis. The salary that this ministry

provides helps Father Moore support his family; he is married and is a father of four children.

Since 1982, former married ministers in the Anglican, Episcopal, Methodist and Lutheran traditions who have been received into the Church have been able to be ordained as priests.

Father Moore was ordained an Episcopalian priest in 2004, was later received into the Church and was ordained a Catholic priest in 2010 for the Archdiocese of San Antonio. He became a priest of the ordinariate in 2017.

Though very different from his experience in San Antonio, Father Moore sees his ministry in Indiana as an expression of the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel to every creature.

"It's what we're about," he said. "The whole Church is missionary. It's especially so with the Ordinariate."

Father Moore's arrival in Indianapolis was "an answered prayer" for Ordinariate members in the area, said Lee Ashton, a member of St. Cuthbert and a deacon candidate for the Ordinariate.

"We'd been praying for this for years," said Ashton. "We prayed and prayed that something would break loose and we'd actually be able to be our own entity. And it did."

A few dozen members of St. Cuthbert gather for Sunday Mass at 11:30 a.m. at Good Shepherd. They gather for Evening Prayer and eucharistic adoration weekly at 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. Bible studies, inquiry classes and marriage preparation programs are all also being started at St. Cuthbert. And they gather for fellowship and pitch-in meals after their liturgies.

"Since we're a missionary [community] and want to encourage other people to join the Catholic Church," said Ashton, "we've got to be able to be attractive and approachable to them and not feel like a cliquey place where they're not welcome."

Matt Nelson has enjoyed the welcome he's experienced



Father Jeffrey Moore celebrates Mass for St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne Parish of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, which worships at Good Shepherd Church in Indianapolis. Assisting him at left is Lee Ashton, a deacon candidate for the ordinariate. (Submitted photo)

at St. Cuthbert since making the faith community his spiritual home in January.

He was drawn to the parish by its distinctive, traditional liturgy and sacred music. But the math teacher at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis also values the "sense of fellowship" he's experienced at St. Cuthbert.

"The members introduced themselves to me," Nelson said. "We have fellowship after Mass. It means a lot to me. ... I hope that we continue to grow and continue to bring souls to Christ. That's really what it's all about in the Ordinariate."

Other young adults have been drawn to St. Cuthbert and are helping to build up its community. Nelson helps lead some of them and other parishioners in a choir.

To help build up St. Cuthbert even more, Father Moore, Ashton and other parish leaders are exploring various opportunities to let the broader community learn about it—from distributing leaflets in neighborhoods to using Catholic radio.

"Getting the word out is the biggest thing that I'm focusing on," Ashton said. "Once the word gets out, people will come. We've seen it with young people."

"Any Catholic is welcome to attend our Mass," said Nelson. "I've gotten a lot out of it and invite anyone who is curious to check us out on Sunday. Join us for fellowship afterward."

The effort to build up St. Cuthbert, said Father Moore, is ultimately directed at strengthening the unity of the Church for which Christ prayed at the Last Supper.

"That's what we're called to," he said. "And that's why we're here. It's to make that unity real and make it happen."

(For more information about St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne Parish, visit <https://stcuthbertindy.org>.) †

## Advent penance services continue to be scheduled at parishes throughout the archdiocese

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

### Batesville Deanery

Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at Camp River Ridge, 6145 Harvey Branch Road (A-frame house), Oldenburg.

Dec. 12, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora

Dec. 12-14, 7-7:50 a.m. and 6-6:50 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood

Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, St. John the Evangelist Church, Decatur County

Dec. 15, 6 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County

Dec. 15 and 16, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg

Dec. 17, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2:30-6:30 p.m. for St. Louis, Batesville and St. Anthony of Padua, Morris at St. Louis

Dec. 17, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville

Dec. 21, 6-7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville

Dec. 22, 7 p.m. for St. Louis, Batesville and St. Anthony of Padua, Morris at St. Louis

Dec. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County

*Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery are as follows:*

Half-hour before all Masses at Oratory of SS. Philomena and Cecelia, Oak Forest

Expanded reconciliation times at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan; St. Maurice, Napoleon; and St. Nicholas, Ripley County. Contact parishes for details.

### Bloomington Deanery

Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer

Dec. 16, 6 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville

Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville

### Connersville Deanery

Dec. 14, 6 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Holy Family Church, Richmond

Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville

### Indianapolis East Deanery

Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Holy Spirit

*Additionally, reconciliation in the Indianapolis East*

*Deanery is available on the following dates:*

Dec. 14, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St.

### Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for St. Jude, St. Mark the Apostle and Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ at St. Jude

Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd, Indianapolis at Holy Name of Jesus

Dec. 18, 8:30 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

### Indianapolis West Deanery

Dec. 10, noon-1 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg

*Additionally, recurring Advent opportunities for reconciliation in the West Deanery are as follows:*

Sundays: 8-8:30 a.m. at St. Anthony; 9:30-10 a.m. at Holy Angels; 1:45-2:45 p.m. at St. Monica; 3 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

Mondays: 5:15-5:35 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel

Tuesdays: 5-5:45 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel;

6-7 p.m. at St. Monica

Wednesdays: 5:30-5:50 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield;

6 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel; 6-7 p.m. at

St. Monica; 6-7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville

Thursdays: 6-7 p.m. at St. Monica; 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg

Fridays: 4-5 p.m. at St. Christopher; 5-5:45 p.m. at

St. the Archangel; 5:30- 6 p.m. at St. Susanna,

Plainfield; 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

Saturdays: 10-10:30 a.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield;

3-4:30 p.m. at St. Anthony; 3:45-4:30 p.m. at Mary,

Queen of Peace, Danville; 4 p.m. at St. Gabriel the

Archangel; 4-4:45 p.m. at St. Monica; 4-5 p.m. at

St. Michael the Archangel; 4:30-5 p.m. at St. Christopher

### New Albany Deanery

Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville

Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany

Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton

Dec. 19, 4 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Dec. 21, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

Dec. 22, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County

### Seymour Deanery

*Parishes in this deanery are expanding reconciliation periods and priest availability. Contact parishes for information.*

### Tell City Deanery

Dec. 12, 1-2:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

### Terre Haute Deanery

Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. "Twelve Hours of Grace" at St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute

Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton

Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute

Dec. 16, 1:30 p.m., Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute †

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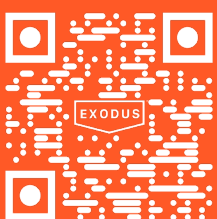
Roncalli High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, is accepting applications for a position in the Office of Institutional Advancement.

The Office of Institutional Advancement is seeking an individual(s) to be a part of a dynamic team. **We are seeking a candidate to manage our school website (app management, day to day web updates, proficient at HTML, CSS, JavaScript and SQL). We are also seeking someone to do videography/video production and also do broadcast and streaming for our Roncalli Media Network.** This position(s) could be full-time or part-time and is a 12 month position. Interested and qualified candidates should contact Terese Carson at [tcarsen@roncalli.org](mailto:tcarsen@roncalli.org) or at 317.788.4098.



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