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Legacy of success

Seniors and bond of love lead Providence to state championship, page 16.

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Heather Simon, left, and her mother, Colleen Simon, share smiles as they pose for a photo behind the counter of God's Embrace Coffee Shop, a business that strives to help people with disabilities find their purpose. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

A 'good to the last drop' feeling overflows inside a coffee shop called God's Embrace

By John Shaughnessy

Sitting across from each other over a cup of coffee, people often share joy, heartbreak and the depths of their soul.

On this day, emotions pour from Colleen Simon as she talks about a reality that connects all of us, a reality that she is especially hoping to create for a group of people who are close to her heart.

"Each person in this world, God has a purpose for them," Simon says. "We can all help each other find that

purpose and help them use their gifts."

A short while later, tears start to flow from the member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis as she talks about her efforts to help people with disabilities find their purpose.

"I want people to realize the blessings that people with disabilities bring to the world—not just within their families but also within the greater community. From them, I've learned to accept people for who they are. And they have an honesty and an integrity that we all need. We need to

See COFFEE, page 8

U.S. bishops open fall assembly with prayer, reflection and Mass for peace

BALTIMORE (OSV News)—Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), led his brother bishops in prayer for wisdom as they began their fall plenary assembly in Baltimore on Nov. 13 with a Mass for peace.



Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

The archbishop was the homilist for the Mass at the historic Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the first Catholic cathedral in the United States. The Mass followed a morning of prayer, reflection and confession.

The morning also included a welcome to the Baltimore Archdiocese, the first Catholic diocese in the United States, by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, who is vice president of the USCCB.

"Living our faith, we open our plenary session in this historic basilica, home to so many meetings and councils of the vibrant Church in the United States," said Archbishop Broglio in his homily. "At the beginning of our plenary session, we beg for wisdom because we recognize that we are servants of the truth and charged to find ways to help those entrusted to our care welcome that truth, see its logic, and embrace the way of life that Christ holds out for us," he said. "We do so in many ways as we work in synodal fashion to serve the Church in this part of the world."

The prayers of the Mass were offered for peace and reconciliation in a troubled world, and Archbishop Broglio pointed out the significance of the plenary opening on the feast of St. Frances Cabrini, patron saint of immigrants.

"It seems supremely eloquent that our [nation's] first saint came over on

See BISHOPS, page 2

Joy and challenge await as 12,000 youths come to Indianapolis for NCYC

By John Shaughnessy

At 27, Katie Tipker is experiencing the joy of being a mother for the first time—with her now-5-month-old daughter, Eden.

As the director of discipleship for St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, Tipker also hopes there will be an extra element of joy for the 12,000 youths from across the country who will attend the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18.

See NCYC, page 2

Katie Tipker, left, her daughter Eden and her mother Becky Kruer share a joyful generational moment. As the director of discipleship for St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, Tipker will lead a youth group to the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)





Veronica Rogers models a hat that youths from the archdiocese will be given to wear during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18. As the director of youth faith formation and teen ministries for St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes in Terre Haute, Rogers will lead a youth group from those faith communities to the conference. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

NCYC

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For Tipker, it's the great joy that can come from a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and a closer connection to the Catholic faith.

"My hope is that they come back with a renewed appreciation of being Catholic," she says. "That's what I received as a teen, and that spurred my lifelong desire to stay Catholic when there were times when maybe I could have faltered in my faith. It helps me to know there are like-minded people my age who love Christ."

She's already thrilled to share the conference with the 13 youths from St. John Paul II, who are among the 1,113 teenagers from across the archdiocese who will attend the event that has been life-changing for many.

"When I went to conferences in high school, just to see the overwhelming number of young Catholics together was such a cool experience," Tipker says. "So, I'm really looking forward to see how my teens experience that, and what they have to share about that pin-drop silence during adoration and being there for Mass with so many people. Those are the things I'm really looking forward to."

While Tipker will lead a group to NCYC for the first time, it will be the third experience for Veronica Rogers, director of youth faith formation and teen ministries for St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes in Terre Haute.

One moment from the last biennial conference—in 2021, in Indianapolis—already has Rogers excited for the start of NCYC, which this year has the theme, "Fully Alive."

"I think the biggest impact for me is when I get to see these teens get hit by the Holy Spirit," Rogers says. "We had 15 girls crying, emotionally moved by the Holy Spirit during adoration. It's such a moving moment in their faith. I love to see that."

Rogers also knows the powerful impact that the conference has on adult group leaders, chaperones and volunteers, because it's happened in her own life.

"When I went with my son as a chaperone many years ago, it changed my faith. It really did," recalls Rogers, who will lead a group of 20 youths and six other adults from her two parishes to this year's conference. "It really sparked everything. It led me to be

with teens and get this job."

Rogers is especially pleased that several youths who attended NCYC in 2021 have led the charge to sign up more youths for this one.

"They've been my biggest cheerleaders for this, telling others, 'You *have* to go,'" Rogers says. "They really enjoyed the bonding experience of getting closer individually within our group because they all go to different high schools. They loved adoration. They enjoyed just being a part of this experience with everything that was happening with all these kids from all over the nation."

When the conference ends, Rogers always stresses to the youths who attend, "Let that fire, that ember, keep burning. When you have a bad experience, reflect on what was good in the conference and bring it back in."

That's the challenge post-conference, according to Rachel Gilman, director of youth ministry for the archdiocese—to channel all the emotion, electricity and excitement of NCYC into a sustained faith for the youths.

"It's utilizing the experience of NCYC to bring it back to their own regular life, and engaging in prayer more, getting involved in their youth ministry programs, and allowing it to impact their faith going forward," she says.

At the same time, Gilman loves all the positives that NCYC creates during the three-day event. She knows its impact from the three times she led youth groups there from Holy Spirit at Geist Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

"The impact of seeing so many other teens around the country who have the same exact faith, living the same lives as them, I think that was the greatest 'a-ha' moment for my kids," Gilman says. "And then coming back to their public school with the feeling, 'I'm not alone.' It's so rewarding to watch them find that confidence and use that experience to make their faith more of a commitment in their life."

She has one great hope for the youths who attend this year's conference.

"My hope is that teens can see the face of God more clearly through the experience, especially for teens who haven't had a relationship with Christ. I hope they have an awakening—to come from [the conference] knowing God loves me, God cares for me, God wants a relationship with me. And to use it to propel them going forward." †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

November 16–30, 2023

November 16-18
National Catholic Youth Conference at Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis

November 21 – 11 a.m.
College of Deans meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

November 27 – 10 a.m.
Clergy Advent Day of Prayer at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

November 28 – 1 p.m.
Council of Priests meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

November 29 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass for archdiocesan high school seniors at St. Malachy Church, Brownsburg

November 30 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

November 30 – 3 p.m.
Finance Council meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, followed by Mass and dinner at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, Indianapolis

BISHOPS

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a ship in the 19th century like many of our grandparents. She can only bless the tireless work to ensure a dignified welcome, which is a constant care of this assembly of bishops," he said.

Archbishop Broglio also reminded his brother bishops of the current situation in the Middle East.

"The suffering and death of the innocent on both sides continues to horrify people of goodwill as well, as Pope Francis reminded us yesterday," he said, referring to the pope's words during the *Angelus*.

The pontiff said on Nov. 12 that every day he remembers the suffering Palestinians and Israelis, prays for them and offers his "embrace" at this "dark moment." He appealed for a stop to the violence, immediate rescue efforts and humanitarian aid for all.

Archbishop Broglio said, "We pray for world leaders that they might find solutions to bring peace to every troubled corner of the world."

St. Frances Cabrini "even obliged the poor to give from their poverty to help those more needy than they," the archbishop said in concluding his homily. "It was also a way of insisting on the dignity of all and the common responsibility for others. It is a message that is very appropriate today and every day. ... Charity demands our attention to the little ones, the weak, the simple, fraternal correction and unlimited pardon to those who ask."

The two public days of the assembly, Nov. 14 and 15, promised a packed agenda for the bishops.

Archbishop Broglio gave a presidential address to open the public sessions on the morning of Nov. 14.

But before his remarks, the apostolic nuncio to the U.S. spoke to the bishops for the first time as a cardinal. Cardinal Christophe Pierre received his red hat

from Pope Francis at a consistory held on Sept. 30, days before the start of the Synod on Synodality that met from Oct. 4-29. His address emphasized the importance of synodality to the Church's mission entrusted to it by Jesus Christ.

Three delegates who attended the first session of the synod also were scheduled to share their experiences with the U.S. bishops: Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind.; and Father Iván Montelongo, a priest from the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.

Among the tasks facing the U.S. bishops was taking the 41-page synod synthesis report back to the faithful of their local churches for consultation and feedback that can help inform the discernment of the synod's second and final global session in October 2024.

The U.S. bishops also were set to elect their new secretary, and also chairmen for six standing committees on Catholic education, communications, cultural diversity in the Church, doctrine, national collections and pro-life activities.

Also on Nov. 14, the U.S. bishops' chair of the Committee on Divine Worship, Bishop Steven J. Lopes of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, was scheduled give a preliminary presentation on U.S. adaptations to the Liturgy of the Hours and also drafts related to the blessing of an abbot or abbess, and the consecration of virgins, for votes the next day by the Latin Church bishops.

On Nov. 15, Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., was slated to give updates on the National Eucharistic Revival, its three-year initiative to renew Catholic belief in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, and the National Eucharistic Congress planned for Indianapolis on July 17-21, 2024. †

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The Criterion

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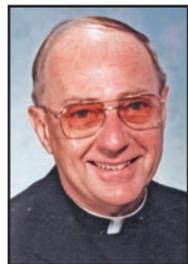
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Father Joseph Sheets served for 22 years at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour

By Sean Gallagher

Father Joseph Sheets, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, died on Nov. 5 at Franciscan Hospice House in Indianapolis. He was 91.



Fr. Joseph Sheets

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 9 at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant, Father Eric Johnson was the homilist.

Burial followed at Garland Brooks Cemetery in Columbus.

A priest for the archdiocese for 66 years, Father Sheets served in parishes across central and southern Indiana. But it was his ministry at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour that left a mark on him, and he on the faith community.

Father Sheets served there for 22 years, four as associate pastor from 1957-61 and then as pastor from 1983 until he retired from active ministry in 2001. He was also administrator of the former Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown during that same 18-year period.

In retirement, Father Sheets continued to live in Seymour and maintained close ties to the St. Ambrose community, says Father Daniel Staublin, its pastor for the past 13 years.

"This kind of felt like home for him," said Father Staublin. "He probably spent more time in Seymour than any other place throughout his life. He was always part of the [parish] family."

Even in retirement, Father Sheets valued those family connections, being present at the parishioners' important moments.

"He would concelebrate almost every funeral, because he knew the people," Father Staublin said. "The folks here really appreciated that he stayed connected to their lives even in retirement by a ministry of presence."

Father Sheets remained attentive to the changing needs of his parish family in Seymour. Late in his time there, there emerged a need for ministry to a then-newly growing Hispanic community at St. Ambrose.

"He was the first one to reach out to the archdiocese to see if we could have a priest who speaks Spanish come here occasionally and [offer] Mass," Father Staublin said. "He was pastor here at the time. He knew that there was a need developing."

Today, the Hispanic households are an integral part of the broader

St. Ambrose Parish community.

"He left a very good mark on St. Ambrose," Father Staublin said.

Father Eric Johnson, archdiocesan episcopal vicar for clergy and parish life coordinators, saw up close how much Father Sheets valued serving as a priest in a parish community.

When Father Johnson served as archdiocesan vocations director, he was also sacramental minister for St. Agnes Parish in Nashville. For several years, Father Sheets regularly celebrated Mass there on weekends when Father Johnson's duties as vocations director required him to spend time in other archdiocesan parishes.

It was hard for Father Sheets when health challenges made that no longer possible for him.

"He got very emotional," Father Johnson recalled. "The community valued him and cared for him. He loved being at that parish. He loved the opportunity to engage in sacramental and pastoral ministry."

And as a priest, Father Sheets made spending time with other priests a priority.

"In retirement, he wanted to stay connected to the archdiocese," Father Staublin said. "He would go on priest retreats and go to the priest convocations. The fraternity of the priesthood was very important to him."

Joseph Burns Sheets was born on Nov. 25, 1931, to the late Edward and Helen (Burns) Sheets in Columbus.

Baptized and confirmed at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus, he and his family moved to Martinsville.

After graduating from the eighth grade in Martinsville, Father Sheets became an archdiocesan seminarian and received 12 years of priestly formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Father Sheets was ordained a priest on May 3, 1957, by Archbishop Paul C. Schulte at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad. He celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving two days later at St. Martin of Tours Church in Martinsville.

Father Sheets served in his pastoral assignment from 1957-61 as associate pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour.

From 1961-68, he ministered as associate pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute while also serving as an instructor at the former Archbishop Paul C. Schulte High School there.

For three months in 1968, Father Sheets served as associate pastor pro-tem of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis. After that, he ministered from 1968-69 as associate pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

From 1969-83, Father Sheets ministered as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville.

In 1983, Father Sheets began his last pastoral assignment, serving as pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and administrator of the former Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown until his retirement in 2001.

Memorial gifts can be sent to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105, or made at stjude.org. †

How are your Catholic schools celebrating the Eucharistic Revival?

The Criterion is inviting teachers and principals of Catholic schools in the archdiocese to share their stories and photos of how their classrooms and/or their school communities are celebrating this year of the National Eucharistic Revival. We hope to

include these special celebrations of the Eucharist as part of our Catholic Schools Week supplement in January and in our regular issues.

Please send your stories and photos to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org. †

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Editorial



Sadie Jacobs smiles as she helps distribute food to people in need in advance of Thanksgiving at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish in Wyandanch, N.Y., on Nov. 19, 2017. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Live like Jesus, give thanks generously and joyfully

November is often called “gratitude month.” We Catholics begin this month by remembering with grateful hearts all those who have gone before us—both the saints (known and unknown) and the “poor souls,” who require the assistance of our prayers before they can enter their heavenly homeland.

During November, we also celebrate Thanksgiving Day, a national holiday that challenges us to be grateful for God’s blessings on our country. And, as November passes, we begin preparing for the coming again of our Lord at Christmas—a time of immense gratitude and joy.

Gratitude is an essential component of Christian spirituality. It calls our attention to the goodness of God, and it reminds us that our most appropriate response to God’s love is *eucharistia*, the Greek word for “giving thanks.” As Christians, our most significant act of divine worship is the holy Eucharist, where we give thanks to the Father for the precious gift of his only Son and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Generous people are often the first to say “thank you.” Frequently, they give out of gratitude, out of a genuine sense of appreciation for all the ways that they themselves have been blessed. As strange as it sounds to ask this question, could it be that God feels the same way?

If God is the supreme giver, the being who is filled to overflowing with love and goodness and the one who creates and sustains life out of an abundance of creative power, might it not be that the heart of God is so filled with gratitude that the outpouring of grace (pure goodness freely given) is his way of giving thanks?

This is not the way we normally think of things. God gives. We receive, and we ought to say thank you. Certainly, there is no “ought” in God’s case. He doesn’t have to say thank you to us (the way we owe God a debt of gratitude).

But isn’t it possible, or even likely, that God says thank you to us because he loves us and respects us—and because he knows how hard it is for us to do the right things (even with the help of his grace)?

What might God be grateful for? Certainly, we can say that God is grateful for the pure and unconditional

love that exists among the three members of the Blessed Trinity. And if this is true, perhaps we can say—in some analogous sense—that God gives thanks for the love that is returned to him by the angels and saints and by all of us who manage in our limited ways to worship God with grateful hearts and to serve him in our daily lives.

We know that God is infinitely generous, and that leads us to suppose that he is also infinitely grateful. Why? Because even the most basic reflection on Christian stewardship reveals that gratitude and generosity are inseparable. Generous people express their gratitude by sharing everything they have with others. This is exactly what God does when he exercises his creative love and goodness. By giving us the gift of life, God expresses the gratitude that is inseparable from his generosity.

Responsible Christian stewardship flows from a keen awareness that all we have and all we are comes to us from a generous and loving Father. But God isn’t a steward, is he? He’s the Creator and, therefore, the owner of all things. God owns everything. We human beings are called to be God’s faithful stewards.

True enough, but God became a man—like us—in all things but sin. That means that Jesus Christ became a steward. He became a human person who was grateful, responsible, generous and willing to give back to his Father with increase. God’s only Son became human to show us how to live—to free us from our ingratitude, our irresponsibility, our selfishness and our abuse of God’s generosity. To live as Jesus did, we have to cast off self-centeredness and learn to give thanks generously and joyfully.

Gratitude is God’s gift to us. Saying thank you keeps us from being what Pope Francis calls “sourpusses”—ungrateful people who are bitter, stingy or vindictive.

Saying “thank you” is our way of sharing in the life of the Holy Trinity. It is the way of holiness lived by Mary and all the saints who gratefully and generously followed in the footsteps of Jesus. Let’s give thanks to God for all his goodness to us.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Archbishop William E. Lori

‘High Anxiety’ need not win

Mel Brooks’ movie, *High Anxiety*, was released in 1977. It was a comical satire of Alfred Hitchcock’s horror movies, such as *Psycho*, *The Birds* and *Vertigo*. But today, anxiety is no laughing matter. It has spread through our culture more widely



and pervasively even than COVID. It dominates many lives and is characteristic of our whole culture.

I say this not as a mental health professional, but as a pastor. In my ministry, I often encounter people

who suffer from anxiety. To one degree or another, almost everyone, including me, suffers from it. It’s not my place to offer a clinical description of anxiety or a diagnosis, but I will reflect on how it affects us spiritually.

What is anxiety? And how is it related to our everyday worries and concerns?

Let’s start with the latter. When we are worried about something specific, we do well to take it to prayer, to ask the Lord to help us discern the path forward, to show us with whom we should be working, and then we roll up our sleeves and address it. We may or may not solve the problem, but in taking steps in the right direction, our worries lessen.

Anxiety is related to our everyday worries, but not identical with them. Sometimes, as our worries accumulate and the world changes in ways that are difficult to cope with, our lives seem to spin out of our control. We may find ourselves overtaken by a generalized sense of sadness and unease about the future. We may feel that no one will listen to us, no one cares.

Those who experience heightened and persistent anxiety should not hesitate to seek professional help. The mental health initiative in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the efforts of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops aim to put such help in everyone’s reach. I am especially grateful that there are more

than 1,000 trained volunteers in our parishes and schools who can recognize the signs of mental illness and help those who are suffering to connect with the professional services they need. (In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, mental health services are also available. Visit bit.ly/ArchindyMHRsources for more information.)

Whether or not it is necessary to seek professional help, we should always recognize the spiritual dimension of anxiety. Religion, rightly understood and practiced, is not the cause of anxiety but rather a life-giving way to address it, for often anxiety arises when we try to deal with our problems independently of others, including God. We feel that relying on God and other people is somehow a sign of weakness and inadequacy. What we fear is, in fact, nothingness. So, we go it alone, as if to prove to God and to others that we are worthy and deserving of respect and love.

God doesn’t ask us to do that. On the contrary, the Lord is real, personal and ready to listen to us. That is why the psalmist says, “Cast your cares upon the Lord and he will support you” (Ps 55:23). Into the interior void created by our anxious efforts to prove ourselves and to be master of our fate, the Lord pours the love of the Holy Spirit. He asks not that we justify ourselves in his sight but that we give him our cares, our worries, our weaknesses and, yes, the nothingness that we fear so deeply. “When cares increase within me,” says Psalm 94, “your comfort gives me joy.”

The only way to cast our cares upon the Lord—including our worries, insoluble problems and formless anxiety—is by daily prayer. Listen joyfully and gratefully as the Lord says to you and me, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). Let us exchange our anxiety for the yoke of his love!

(A native of New Albany, Archbishop William E. Lori is the 16th archbishop of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.) †

Letter to the Editor

Reader: Gospels have appropriate examples of Catholic contempt

In its July 14, 2023, issue, *The Criterion* published an editorial with the headline, “Contempt is not Catholic.” Since that editorial was published, many of the Sunday Gospel readings have had examples of appropriate Catholic contempt.

The Nov. 3, 2023, issue of *The Criterion* published an editorial whose headline read, “Peace on Earth.”

In the last paragraph, the editorial states, “May the Prince of Peace who sacrificed his whole life to bring justice, mercy and compassion to our world, show us the way to achieve lasting peace on Earth.”

There is no doubt Jesus possessed

the qualities of justice, mercy and compassion. But for the sake of accuracy, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus clearly states, among other things, “I have come to bring not peace but the sword” (Mt 10:34).

I urge the staff of *The Criterion* to read the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation.” It can be found in a foreword of The New American Bible (St. Joseph Edition) beginning on page 11.

Accuracy is an important part of teaching.

Emery Mapes
Lawrenceburg

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.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Thank God for your gifts—share and increase them

The Gospel reading for the Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 25:14-30) includes the Parable of the Talents. Jesus tells his disciples about a man who was going away on a journey. Before he left, he gathered three trusted servants and gave them money to invest for him. “To one, he gave five talents,” St. Matthew writes. “To another, two; to a third, one—to each according to his ability. Then he went away” (Mt 25:15).

The parable’s outcome is familiar to us. According to St. Matthew’s Gospel:

The one who received five talents went and traded with them and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master’s money. (Mt 25:16-18)

After a long time, the owner returned and asked each of his servants to render an account of his stewardship. The two who were given the most money to invest reported significant returns on their investments. But the one who was given the least—the one who buried his talent—had nothing to show for his efforts except the amount he was given originally.

It’s not surprising that the two productive servants received high praise for their responsible stewardship of the owner’s property. To each in turn, he says, “Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master’s joy” (Mt 25:21). But, as we know, the third servant is harshly rebuked:

You wicked, lazy servant! So, you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return?

Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth (Mt 25:26-30).

In fact, we may be tempted to think that the faithless servant is too harshly treated. Yes, he has been irresponsible,

and perhaps wicked and lazy as the owner suggests, but does he really deserve to be cast into darkness “where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth” (Mt 25:30) which, of course, is a biblical image of hell?

Parables are rarely stories to be taken literally. They are frequently exaggerations that are made for emphasis. And yet, it’s also true that the parables of Jesus are meant to be taken seriously. Our Lord spoke in parables to help us understand that his way is challenging and difficult. The gifts that we each received at our baptism are meant to be taken care of responsibly and shared generously with others. This is what Christian stewardship means: to thank God for all his gifts, to care for them, share them, and return them to God with increase.

The great failure of the faithless servant was his misunderstanding of what was expected of him as a steward of the owner’s property. Instead of receiving the one talent gratefully and investing it wisely, he neglected it. He abused his responsibility as a trusted servant, and he squandered the one opportunity he was given to give it back with even a modest increase.

The two responsible stewards are invited to share in the owner’s joy. The faithless one is miserable (“weeping and grinding his teeth”).

By means of this parable, Jesus is telling his disciples (and all of us) that responsible stewardship is a source of great joy. If we take the gifts and talents we have been given, care for them responsibly and share them generously with others, we will grow them beyond anyone’s expectations. In this way, we will return God’s gifts with increase, and so share in his joy.

God is never mean or vindictive. His love and mercy are always available to us if we repent and seek his forgiveness. But if we neglect the gifts God has given us and fail to be grateful, generous or responsible stewards, our own actions (or failure to act) will result in our unhappiness. This parable tells us that good stewardship leads to joy while irresponsibility can only bring misery.

If we’re faithful in small matters, we will be given even greater responsibilities. Let’s pray for the grace to recognize God’s blessings. And let’s ask our loving God to help us be good stewards of all his abundant gifts. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Agradezca a Dios por sus dones, compártalos y multiplíquelos

La lectura del Evangelio del trigésimo tercer domingo del tiempo ordinario (Mt 25:14-30) incluye la parábola de los talentos, en la que Jesús habla a sus discípulos de un hombre que se iba de viaje. Antes de partir, reunió a tres sirvientes de confianza y les dio dinero para que lo invirtieran en su nombre. “A uno le dio cinco mil monedas de plata”—escribió san Mateo—“a otro, dos mil; y a otro, mil, a cada uno conforme a su capacidad; y luego se marchó” (Mt 25:15).

El desenlace de la parábola ya lo conocemos, según el Evangelio de san Mateo:

El que había recibido cinco mil monedas negoció con ellas, y ganó otras cinco mil. Asimismo, el que había recibido dos mil, ganó también otras dos mil. Pero el que había recibido mil hizo un hoyo en la tierra y allí escondió el dinero de su señor (Mt 25:16-18).

Al cabo de mucho tiempo, el señor regresó y pidió a cada uno de sus sirvientes que rindiera cuentas de su gestión. Los dos que recibieron más dinero lo invirtieron y obtuvieron importantes beneficios. Pero el que recibió menos, el que enterró sus monedas—llamadas talentos—, no tenía nada más que mostrar por sus esfuerzos que la cantidad que se le dio en un principio.

No es de extrañar que los dos

servientes que invirtieron el dinero recibieran grandes elogios por haber administrado tan bien y responsablemente la propiedad del señor. A cada uno por turno, le dice: “Bien, buen siervo y fiel; sobre poco has sido fiel, sobre mucho te pondré. Entra en el gozo de tu señor” (Mt 25:21). Pero, como sabemos, reprende duramente al tercer sirviente:

Sirviente malo y negligente, si sabías que yo siego donde no sembré, y que recojo donde no esparcí, debías haber dado mi dinero a los banqueros y, al venir yo, hubiera recibido lo que es mío más los intereses. (Mt 25:26-27)

Así que, ¡quítente esas mil monedas y dénselas al que tiene diez mil! Porque al que tiene se le dará, y tendrá más; pero al que no tiene, aun lo poco que tiene se le quitará. (Mt 25:28-29)

En cuanto al siervo inútil, ¡échenlo en las tinieblas de afuera! Allí habrá llanto y rechinar de dientes. (Mt 25:30)

De hecho, quizá nos sintamos tentados a pensar que se trata con demasiada severidad al sirviente desobediente. Sí, ha sido irresponsable, y tal vez malvado y perezoso como dice el señor, pero ¿realmente merece ser arrojado a las tinieblas “donde habrá llanto y rechinar de dientes” (Mt 25:30) que, por supuesto, es una imagen bíblica del infierno?

Las parábolas rara vez son historias que deban tomarse al pie de la letra. Con frecuencia son exageraciones que se hacen para destacar una enseñanza. Y, sin embargo, también es cierto que las parábolas de Jesús están pensadas para ser tomadas en serio. Nuestro Señor habló en parábolas para ayudarnos a comprender que su camino es difícil y está lleno de desafíos. Los dones que cada uno recibió en el bautismo están destinados a ser administrados con responsabilidad y compartidos generosamente con los demás. Eso es lo que significa la corresponsabilidad cristiana: dar gracias a Dios por todos sus dones, cuidarlos, compartirlos y devolvérselos a Dios con creces.

El gran fracaso del sirviente desobediente fue que no comprendía lo que se esperaba de él como administrador de la propiedad del señor. En lugar de recibir esa única moneda—el talento—con gratitud e invertirlo sabiamente, lo descuidó. Abusó de su responsabilidad como servidor de confianza y desaprovechó la única oportunidad que se le brindó de devolvérsela aunque fuera con un modesto interés.

A los dos administradores responsables se les invita a compartir la alegría del señor. El que no tiene fe se siente desgraciado (“llorando y

rechinando los dientes”).

Mediante esta parábola, Jesús les dice a sus discípulos (y a todos nosotros) que administrar de manera responsable es fuente de gran alegría. Si tomamos los dones y talentos que se nos han dado, los cuidamos con responsabilidad y los compartimos generosamente con los demás, los multiplicaremos más allá de toda expectativa. De este modo, devolveremos con creces los dones que recibimos, y participaremos de la alegría de Dios.

Dios nunca es mezquino ni vengativo. Su amor y su misericordia están siempre a nuestra disposición si nos arrepentimos y buscamos Su perdón. Pero si descuidamos los dones que Dios nos ha dado y no somos administradores agradecidos, generosos o responsables, nuestras propias acciones (u omisiones) provocarán nuestra infelicidad. Esta parábola nos dice que la buena administración conduce a la alegría y la irresponsabilidad solo puede traer miseria.

Si somos fieles en lo pequeño, se nos darán responsabilidades aún mayores. Oremos por la gracia de reconocer las bendiciones de Dios y pidámosle a nuestro Dios amoroso que nos ayude a ser buenos administradores de todos sus abundantes dones. †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

November 23

Downtown Depot 1401 J St., Bedford. **Becky's Place Run for Hope 5K**, registration 8-8:45 a.m., start time 9 a.m., \$20 ages 18 and younger, \$25 adult, \$15 for one-mile fun walk. Information: 812-275-5773.

November 26

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

November 27

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Jesus and the Eucharist Bible Study**, 6:30-8 p.m., last of seven Monday evening stand-alone sessions, content also available through formed.org, free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, cacdiehr@gmail.com.

November 30

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis.

Jesus and the Eucharist

Bible Study, 1-2:30 p.m., last of seven Thursday afternoon stand-alone sessions, content also available through formed.org, free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, cacdiehr@gmail.com.

December 1

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, 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 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

December 1-3

Theater at the Fort, 8920 Otis Ave., Indianapolis. **Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Jr.**, Fri. and Sat. 7:30-8:30 p.m., Sun. 3-4 p.m., performed by Agape Theater Company youth actors, tickets \$5.13-\$15.38. Information, tickets: tinyurl.com/RudolphAgape.

December 1-January 6

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, 23345 Gavin Lane, Bright. **Bright Lights Drive-thru Christmas Light Display**, 6-10 p.m., free. Information: 812-512-1941, brightlightsdcc@gmail.com.

December 2

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

December 2-22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Shop INN-Spiced**

Christmas Sale,

Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Dec. 2, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Dec. 9, 16 and 23, 9 a.m.-noon; many items 25-75% off. Information: 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

December 6

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

December 7

Monthly Prayer with Sisters of Providence: "Prayer on Christmas," for single Catholic women ages 18-42, via Zoom, 7-7:45 p.m., seventh day of each month. Information, registration: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org.

December 9

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence,

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Christmas Fun at the Woods and Bake Sale, bake sale 12:30-4:30 p.m., Christmas Fun 1:30-4:30 p.m., event includes Santa Claus and North Pole Zone with alpacas. Information: 812-535-2812, spsmw.org/events, amiranda@spsmw.org.

December 10

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

December 11

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Leave the Light On**, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., priests available for sacrament of reconciliation, no appointment needed. Information: 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

December 12

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-

the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: Taize.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952.

December 15

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, presenter TBA, 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. 12. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg

December 20

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

December 21

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc. †

Advent and Christmas concerts will help spread joy in the archdiocese in December

It's the time of year when parishes celebrate the seasons of Advent and Christmas with sacred music concerts. Below are the events reported to *The Criterion* as of Nov. 14.

December 3

—**St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.** Advent Evening of Music and Reflection, 6 p.m., featuring choirs, handbell choir, readings and reflections, followed by refreshments in parish café, free. Information: 317-257-4297, ssulka@saintmatt.org.

December 6

—**Marian University Hall Theater, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis.** Advent Concert, 6:30 p.m., Catholic composer John Angotti with Marian University Sacred Choir, followed by penance service during holy hour with praise and worship music in Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel, free. Information: 317-955-6000, jgarcia@marian.edu.

December 10

—**St. Mary Church, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg.** Come Home for Christmas: Christmas Cantata, 5 p.m., Christmas story shared through song, freewill donations accepted. Information: 812-663-8427, parishoffice@stmarysgreensburg.com.

—**Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove.** 59th Annual Christmas Concert, 5 p.m., adult and children's choirs perform traditional and sacred Christmas music with orchestra, tickets \$5. Information, tickets: 317-784-5454, parishadmin@holyname.cc.

December 12

—**St. Malachy Church, 9833 E. County Road 750 N., Brownsburg.** A Most Wonderful Christmas, 7 p.m., Christmas concert by the Indianapolis Symphonic Band and St. Malachy choir, featuring St. Malachy organist Hector Sacedo, free. Information: 317-852-3195.

December 16

—**Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad.** Organ Recital, 3 p.m., Nolan Snyder organist, free. Information: 812-357-6611.

—**St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis.** Sacred Music Festival and Caroling, 6 p.m., three parish choirs perform sacred music of Palestrina, Bainton, Duruflé, Lauridsen and more, followed by caroling through the streets of Indianapolis, hot drinks and light refreshments provided, free. Information: 317-635-2021, office@stjohnsindy.org.

—**St. Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holliday Dr., E. Indianapolis.** "How Far is it to Bethlehem?," 7 p.m., featuring the archdiocesan *schola* Vox Sacra performing the works of Anton Bruckner, Domenico Bartolucci, Gerald Near, *4 Motets pour le temps de Noël* (4 Motets of Christmas) by Francis Poulenc and more, free. Information: amotyka@archindy.org.

December 17

—**St. Mark the Evangelist Church, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis.** Holy Season Concert, 7 p.m., Advent and Christmas concert featuring more than 80 singers and musicians including adult, children, bell, ensemble and brass choirs, free. Information: 317-787-8246, aegan@stmarkindy.org. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

The Village Dove to host book signing with author Ken Ogorek on Dec. 1

Ken Ogorek, co-author of *Breaking the Bread: A Biblical Devotion for Catholics*, will be at The Village Dove, 6935 Lake Plaza Drive, B3, in Indianapolis, for a book signing from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Dec. 1.

The executive director of the Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Ogorek co-wrote the book with Scripture scholar Scott Hahn.

The new devotional reflects on the lectionary cycle for Year B of the Sunday Masses. Year C and Year A are

in production.

The easy-to-use devotional also includes carefully selected passages from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that provide an overview of the Church's basic doctrinal and moral teachings, and challenges its readers to greater fidelity to Christ.

A Scott Hahn-autographed copy of *Breaking the Bread* will also be raffled off for charity at the book signing.

For more information, go to www.thevillagedove.com or call 317-845-5487. †

Wedding Anniversaries

ROBERT AND MARGUERITE (HAMILTON) NANGLE, members of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 16.

The couple was married in St. Luke Church in Belmont, Mass., on Nov. 16, 1963.

They have three children: Elizabeth Ryan, John and Robert Nangle.

The couple also has three grandchildren.



WILLIAM, SR., AND MARGARET (COSTELLO) BEIKES, members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 17.

The couple was married in Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 17, 1973.

They have two children: Joseph Beikes and William Beikes, Jr.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



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

Catholics from around the world living in the archdiocese celebrate St. Martin de Porres

By Sean Gallagher

Catholics from around the world have come to Indianapolis to live and practice their faith.

Their great diversity in culture, language and experience of the faith was on display as they came together as one on Nov. 3 at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis for a Mass to honor St. Martin de Porres on his feast day.

The saint was a Dominican brother who died in 1639 in Lima, Peru. The son of a Spanish father and a mother who was a freed African slave, he is a patron saint of racial justice.

Taking part in the Mass were many African-Americans and Catholics from numerous countries in Africa, Central and South America and the Philippines.

Marianhill Father Jean Bosco Ntawugashira, administrator of St. Rita Parish and a native of Rwanda in eastern Africa, reflected on how the spiritual gifts that St. Martin shared with the sick and poor whom he served flowed from his relationship with God in prayer.

“We need to pray,” Father Jean Bosco said. “The more we pray to God, the more we relate to God, the more we will see our spiritual gifts. We’ll have strength from God.”

Calling St. Martin “an elder brother supporting us to love one another,” Father Jean Bosco encouraged his listeners to imitate the saint’s example of giving loving service to all people regardless of their racial or ethnic background.

“As we celebrate St. Martin de Porres, let this great man be our example of faith so that we’ll all feel that we’re all children of God,” Father Jean Bosco said. “We are called to live in peace and love so that kind of love can be a manifestation of Christ’s presence.”

Proclaiming the first reading at the Mass was Andres Pecho, who helps lead catechetical ministry at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. Pecho and his wife Ena moved to Indianapolis five years ago from Lima, Peru, where St. Martin de Porres lived and where there is a great devotion to him today.

“It felt so good,” said Pecho of being at the Mass. “This country is multicultural. I’m learning to share with people from other communities.”

He spoke of the lessons that people in Indianapolis and around the world can learn from the saint from his home country.

“In these days, the world is a little bit materialistic,” Pecho said. “But this man was always teaching others to share with everybody. I love that.”



Marianhill Father Jean Bosco Ntawugashira elevates a chalice during a Nov. 3 Mass at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis honoring St. Martin de Porres, a patron saint of racial justice. Joining him as concelebrants at the Mass are, from left, Father Jack Wright, Father John McCaslin, Father Michael O’Mara, Father Vincent Gilmore and Father Jose Neri. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Sally Stovall, a member of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis and a native of Nigeria, has attended many St. Martin de Porres Masses through the years organized by the archdiocesan Office for Intercultural Ministry. She appreciates how the liturgy brings together diverse Catholics from across central and southern Indiana.

“The Church is made up of different cultures, of people from every ethnic community,” Stovall said. “So, it makes sense for us to be able to come together as one in unity. We display our cultural heritage. Right from the beginning, the African community has been a part of this.”

Felix Navarrete, archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic

Ministry, helped to organize the Mass and the reception that followed.

“It was very exciting seeing such a diverse congregation—Filipinos, Africans, African-Americans, Anglos and Hispanics worshipping one God,” said Navarrete. “Seeing our diversity reflected in the celebrants not only in terms of nationality but also in terms of age was fascinating.”

“I appreciate the openness of our communities to congregate together in the celebration of the memory of a great saint such as Martin de Porres. I believe that today we are called to humility.” †

Católicos de todo el mundo residentes en la Arquidiócesis celebran a San Martín de Porres

Por Sean Gallagher

Católicos procedentes de todo el mundo han venido a Indianápolis para vivir y practicar su fe.

Su gran diversidad cultural, lingüística y de experiencia con la fe se puso de manifiesto al congregarse el 3 de noviembre en la Iglesia de Santa Rita de Indianápolis para celebrar una misa en honor a san Martín de Porres.

El santo era un hermano dominico que murió en 1639 en Lima, Perú, hijo de padre español y madre esclava africana liberada, hoy en día patrono de la justicia racial.

Participaron en la misa muchos católicos afroamericanos de numerosos países de África, Centro y Sudamérica, así como de las Filipinas.

El padre Jean Bosco Ntawugashira de Marianhill, administrador de la parroquia de Santa Rita y oriundo de Ruanda, en África oriental, reflexionó sobre cómo los dones espirituales que san Martín compartió con los enfermos y los pobres a los que servía surgieron de su relación con Dios en la oración.

“Debemos rezar”—afirmó el padre Jean Bosco—.

“Cuanto más oremos a Dios, cuanto más nos relacionemos con Él, más veremos nuestros dones espirituales. Tendremos la fuerza de Dios.”

Calificando a san Martín de “hermano mayor que nos ayuda a amarnos los unos a los otros,” el padre Jean Bosco animó a sus oyentes a imitar el ejemplo del santo de prestar un servicio amoroso a todas las personas, sin distinción de origen racial o étnico.

“Al celebrar a San Martín de Porres, dejemos que este gran hombre sea nuestro ejemplo de fe para que todos nos sintamos hijos de Dios”—afirmó el padre—.

“Estamos llamados a vivir en paz y amor para que ese tipo de amor pueda ser una manifestación de la presencia de Cristo.”

La primera lectura de la misa la realizó Andrés

Pecho, quien ayuda a dirigir el ministerio de catequesis en la parroquia de Santa Mónica de Indianápolis. Pecho y su esposa Ena se trasladaron a Indianápolis hace cinco años desde Lima, Perú, donde vivió san Martín de Porres y donde hoy existe una gran devoción por él.

“Fue maravilloso”—dijo Pecho con respecto a participar en la misa—. “Este país es multicultural. Estoy aprendiendo a compartir con gente de otras comunidades.”

Habló de las lecciones que la gente de Indianápolis y de todo el mundo puede aprender del santo oriundo de su país natal.

“En estos tiempos, el mundo es un poco materialista”—comentó Pecho—. “Pero este hombre siempre enseñaba a los demás a compartir con todo el mundo. Me encanta.”

Sally Stovall, feligresa de la parroquia de los Santos Ángeles de Indianápolis y natural de Nigeria, ha asistido a lo largo de los años a muchas misas de san Martín de Porres organizadas por la Oficina de Ministerio Intercultural de la Arquidiócesis. Valora la forma en que la liturgia reúne a católicos de todo el centro y el sur de Indiana.

“La Iglesia está formada por diferentes culturas, por personas de todas las comunidades étnicas”—aseguró Stovall—. “Así que tiene sentido que podamos reunirnos como uno solo cuerpo unido. Mostramos nuestro patrimonio cultural. Desde el principio, la comunidad africana ha formado parte de esto.”

Félix Navarrete, coordinador arquidiocesano del Ministerio Hispano, ayudó a organizar la misa y la recepción posterior.

“Fue muy emocionante ver una congregación tan diversa: filipinos, africanos, afroamericanos, anglos e hispanos adorando a un solo Dios”—expresó Navarrete—. “Ver nuestra diversidad reflejada en los celebrantes, no solamente en cuanto a nacionalidad sino también edad, fue fascinante.”

“Valoro la apertura de nuestras comunidades para reunirse a celebrar la memoria de un gran santo como Martín de Porres. Creo que hoy estamos llamados a la humildad.” †



César, a la izquierda, Julio y Margarita Zúñiga se arrodillan en oración durante una misa celebrada el 3 de noviembre en la Iglesia de Santa Rita de Indianápolis en honor a San Martín de Porres, patrón de la justicia racial. (Fotografía de Sean Gallagher)

COFFEE

continued from page 1

give them the opportunity to live their purpose.”

That’s just what 73-year-old Simon and others are trying to do in an unlikely setting—a coffee shop on the east side of Indianapolis that is called God’s Embrace.

“We wanted to make it God-centered because we are trying to do God’s work,” Simon says.

“To me, God embraces everyone. We want to embrace all the people who come to see us whether they’re patrons or whether they’re people who are part of our program. The coffee shop is giving the people in our program a purpose. You see them come alive with joy from being able to do things they never thought they could.”

Serving a cup of joy

Simon’s words come to life on an autumn afternoon at God’s Embrace, a place that constantly strives to live one of its goals: “We hope you will join us not just for your favorite beverage, but a cup of joy.”

Since the coffee shop opened in September, Simon’s cup has overflowed with moments of joy from seeing people with special needs embrace the opportunity to learn new skills, to grow in independence, to work at a place where they feel they belong.

Joy radiates from the face of Simon’s daughter, Heather, one of the workers at the coffee shop. At 50, Heather has an intellectual disability that puts her at a first- or second-grade learning level, according to her mom, “but she

is extremely social and loves to talk to everyone.”

That quality comes through in a conversation with her.

“I like to work here,” Heather says, flashing a smile that makes it seem she is being embraced by God. “I like the customers. And I like to make drinks, lots of drinks!”

At 27, Savina Lind also glows when she talks about working at the coffee shop.

“It’s nice to make friends and see the same customers,” she says. “It’s nice to get familiar with them. The people are caring, and I get to do things I’ve never done before. I’ve never made coffee like this, the fancy stuff.”

Dylan Woods calls God’s Embrace “a good place.” He talks with the same pride about doing some of the hard work at the coffee shop—“cleaning and sweeping the floors”—as he does about participating in basketball and bowling in Special Olympics.

On this afternoon, all three of them, plus their quiet, hard-working friend, Vince Dunn, are being supervised and trained by the coffee shop’s energetic manager, Franny Tremmel.

“I enjoy bringing people together,” Tremmel says. “I just try to meet them where they’re at and accept them for who they are. I have that approach with all people. I feel if Jesus can do that, we can do the same for the people around us.”

Simon has seen the impact that Tremmel has on the workers, including Heather.

“I love the fact that Franny is so loving and caring,” says Simon, who also has a younger daughter, Angela, with her husband of 51 years, Richard. “Heather had an incident where she

didn’t turn the hot water off on the machine, and it scared her. Right away, Franny went and calmed her down. Franny walked her through it, and Heather finished making the drink. It was just a beautiful thing to watch.”

There’s also a splash of beauty—and generosity—in the connection between God’s Embrace and the organization that has made it possible.

‘God has been driving me to do this’

God’s Embrace is located at the Fatima Event Center at 1040 N. Post Road, the center that is



Franny Tremmel, left, the manager of God’s Embrace Coffee Shop, and Savina Lind, one of its workers, bring a welcoming presence to their service of coffee creations at the business that strives to help people with disabilities learn new skills. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

operated by the Knights of Columbus Fatima Council 3228.

“We started on a shoestring budget,” Simon says. “Some men from the Knights of Columbus at Fatima are on our board. They came up with the idea for the coffee shop. Their building has been renovated and one of the rooms looks like a coffee shop and has an outside entrance. They’re sponsoring us. We pay nothing for the use of this building or utilities. We just pay for what we need for the coffee shop, which has been such a blessing.”

The blessings didn’t stop there. In need of some capital to open God’s Embrace, Simon approached a potential donor that a friend had introduced her to, and when she showed the man their business plan, he wrote a check to fund it.

The coffee shop, which also serves food items, is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. It reverts back to an event center at the end of each day, but the commitment of the Knights to God’s Embrace is long-term.

“The Knights have always been behind special-needs individuals, so this is just another opportunity to try to help them,” says Steve Day, president of the Fatima Home Association, the corporation that operates the Fatima Event Center for the Knights. “God’s Embrace is a less secular, more Catholic-based way to help the special needs community.”

Both Day and Simon view the coffee shop as the starting point for the long-term vision of God’s Embrace—a God-centered residential and vocational campus for individuals with special needs who don’t have the ability to live independently.

That goal stems from the concern that people with special needs, such as Heather, and the family members that care for them, such as the Simons, are getting older and will eventually need housing options for the individuals with special needs.

Toward that goal of “building a community one cup at a time,” Simon says she has surrendered herself and that dream to God’s plan and his timing.

“God has been driving me to do this,” she says. “I don’t know where it will go. I have Mother Teresa’s philosophy, which is, you have to be faithful to your mission, you don’t have to be successful. That’s how I’ve been living all these years. And it energizes me. So, the people you meet along the way, whether it’s in the disabled community or the greater community, it’s just wonderful.”

‘We’re trying to live the values of our Catholic faith’

That connection to the larger community shows in one defining section of God’s Embrace—the “Prayers and Praises” area that was created by woodworker Mark Fornefeld, who is autistic. With a cross from the Holy Land, the “Prayers and Praises” area is a place where patrons can leave their prayer requests, with the promise that the team at God’s Embrace will pray for such intentions.

Simon has her own list of prayers. She prays in thanksgiving for all the people and all the blessings that God has provided so far.

She prays in the hope that people will accept each other for who they are, that people will come to understand that we all have our limitations, we all have our gifts, and we can all learn from each other.

She prays in the belief that we all have a purpose, and she continues to ask God to guide her and the other parent volunteers to help their children with special needs live their purpose.

“I feel like we’re trying to live the values of our Catholic faith—mercy, joy, compassion, understanding,” Simon says. “We’re trying to be wise in all that God has given us to put this together.”

“He has given us so much.” †



One defining section of God’s Embrace Coffee Shop is its “Prayers and Praises” area where patrons can leave their prayer requests and the shop’s team members will pray for those intentions. (Submitted photo)

Parents teach Christian values best by example, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The only way for parents to teach their children the beauty and importance of marriage and of accepting children as a gift from God is through their example, Pope Francis said.

Children “are immersed” in a media and cultural environment extolling virtues and practices that are “at odds with what, until a few decades ago, was considered ‘normal’ but is no longer the case,” the pope told members of the European Parents’ Association.

“Parents thus find themselves constantly having to show their children the goodness and reasonableness of choices and values that can no longer be taken for granted, such as the importance of marriage and the family or the decision to accept children as a gift from God,” the pope told the group on Nov. 11.

In his talk, Pope Francis reiterated the Church’s strong

support for the right of parents “to raise and educate their children in freedom, without finding themselves constrained in any sphere, particularly in that of schooling, to accept educational programs contrary to their beliefs and values.”

While the culture and its values change, “the needs of the human heart remain the same,” the pope said, and that is the place where parents must start in educating children to be good Christians and responsible citizens.

“God himself has planted in our nature an irrepressible need for love, truth and beauty, an openness to others in healthy relationships and an openness to himself as our Creator,” he said. “These yearnings of the human heart are powerful allies of every educator.”

Parents must help their children recognize “the beauty of life in this world and grow confident and enthused about the prospect of embarking on the adventure of

life, convinced that they too have a mission to carry out, a mission which will bring them great fulfillment and happiness,” Pope Francis said.

To instill that in children, he said, they must know that God loves them.

“When we realize that at the root of our being is the love of God our Father, then we see clearly that life is good, that being born is good and that loving is good,” the pope said.

Firm in the knowledge that one is loved by God and is a gift to one’s family gives a person the strength he or she needs to avoid “a demeaning tendency to hoard material goods, a constant concern not to run risks, not to get overly involved, not to get our hands dirty.”

Instead, he said, they learn to see how “life blossoms in all its richness and beauty” when it is shared with others. †

Many reasons to truly celebrate at this year's Celebrate Life dinner

By Natalie Hoefler

Each year, Right to Life of Indianapolis (RTL) hosts a fundraiser dinner called Celebrate Life. And each year, there have been small victories and progress to celebrate in the battle to save unborn lives and promote a culture of life.

But this year, the cause to celebrate exceeded all years past.

"This year, Indiana has joined the ranks of those states with strong protections for the preborn," said RTL executive director Marc Tuttle.



Marc Tuttle

"It has been a rocky road getting there," he said, referring to the legal challenge by Planned Parenthood and others to a 2022 law restricting most abortions in the state. The law was upheld by the Indiana Supreme Court on June 30.

"But finally we can announce that, [according to the new law] in Indiana, abortion is only allowed to save the life of the mother or in cases of rape,

incest or fatal fetal anomaly, and that will end about 98% of the abortions."

His comments were followed by a rousing round of applause by the nearly 900 people present at the Celebrate Life event held on Sept. 20 at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown.

The evening included speakers, awards and a keynote address by Christian filmmaker Alex Kendrick, known for such movies as *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof*, *Courage*, *War Room* and *Lifemark*.

"None of these accomplishments would have been possible without each of you standing up for life," Tuttle said. "Now that the law has been set, the culture is our focus."

'No legislation can cure' culture of death

It is a culture that allowed about 8,000 babies to be aborted each year in Indiana prior to the new law, Tuttle noted.

"Those are 8,000 women who need our assistance," he said. "Those are 8,000 women who are looking for alternatives, who are looking for help. It's up to us to be the generous, warm, kind Hoosiers to offer them something other than the horrible choice of abortion."

Such assistance received a boost with "about \$11 million set aside in this last [state] budget specifically to help pregnant mothers," he noted.

State Attorney General Todd Rokita praised the work of "courageous legislators" who made the new Indiana law and the financial assistance possible.

"You can't imagine how difficult it was at the statehouse right after *Roe v. Wade*" was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2022, he said. "But those legislators got in the ring and did the right thing."

Indiana Right to Life to host Christmas Gala on Dec. 5

Indiana Right to Life will hold a Christmas gala at the Ritz Charles, 12156 N. Meridian St., in Carmel, Ind., on Dec. 5. A VIP sponsor reception will begin at 5:30 p.m., and the dinner and program will follow at 6:30 p.m.

Super Bowl champion, ESPN commentator and author of *The New Fight for Life* Benjamin Watson will serve as keynote speaker. The evening also includes music performed by Christian artist Jordan St. Cyr.

The cost is \$100 per person or \$1,000 for a table of 10. Several levels of supporting sponsorships are available that include VIP tickets.

For more information or to register, go to irtl.org/gala or call 317-413-9123. †

He noted the value of every life, including his and his wife Kathy's son, Teddy, who has Angelman syndrome.

"He doesn't speak, and his capacities are severely diminished," said Rokita. "Some people think disabilities like Teddy's should be cause for abortion."

"But he wears a big smile, and he would give anyone in this room the biggest hug. It's through those hugs that Kathy and I know that Teddy is going to change the world."

He cautioned that, despite the abortion-restricting law, the fight for a culture of life "isn't over, not by any stretch."

"We have to think not just about the innocent unborn, but also the mother and the whole family. Whatever our social issues are, whatever our economic issues are, they can be traced back to whether or not we have a strong family unit. There's no legislation that can cure that. Only we can cure that."

"We must not weary in doing good," he said, quoting Galatians 6:9. "We must stay strong in [God's] strength and face the adversaries who believe in the culture of death."

'How many more souls will you let go missing?'

To nurture the next generation of pro-life advocates, RTL offers annual art, essay and speech contests and a scholarship.

The work of this year's art contest winner graced the cover of the event program, while the writings of the essay contest winners were included inside the program.

Maria Thomas of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis was recognized as the Joan Byrum Pro-Life Scholarship winner for her four years as co-president of the Right to Life Club at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis. She is now a student at Indiana University in Bloomington.

This year's oratory contest winner, Sara Cabrera of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, delivered her speech to the crowd of nearly 900.

She said that, according to the pro-choice Guttmacher Institute, more than 73 million abortions take place globally per year (bit.ly/GuttmacherStats).

Considering that 6 million people were killed during the Holocaust, "That's the Holocaust over 12 times each year," said Sara. "This is a sign of a dying civilization."

She also noted that in the United States she can "get an abortion at my age [16] without my parents ever finding out, but I can't [legally] buy Wite-Out at the store, get a tattoo or even see an abortion at an R-rated movie without them."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 827,609 abortions took place in the U.S. in 2007, the year Sara was born.

"That's how many people my age are missing," she said. "How many more souls will you let go missing from this next generation?"

'Go after the next generation'

Two awards were also presented to adults that evening. Donnita Smith received the Charles E. Stimming, Sr., Pro-Life Award for her 14 years volunteering as the organization's human resources specialist, and Melissa Coles of the Columbus area was honored with RTL's Respect for Life Award.

"Melissa didn't start off seeking to have a profound impact on life," said Tuttle. "She simply said yes, and she simply continued to say yes as her story began to unfold



Christian filmmaker Alex Kendrick addresses nearly 900 people at Right to Life of Indianapolis' Celebrate Life event on Sept. 20 at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. (Submitted photo by Maria Hernandez)



Melissa Coles and her husband Shawn pose with the Respect for Life Award Melissa received from Right to Life of Indianapolis during the organization's Celebrate Life event on Sept. 20 at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. (Submitted photo by Maria Hernandez)

and as God began to use her in ways that she could have never imagined to be able to touch hearts and to eventually save lives."

Coles called her husband Shawn to the podium to receive the award with her, noting "he was the one who really encouraged me to start using the word 'yes.'"

That "yes" led to her pro-life story being made into the documentary *I Lived on Parker Avenue* and the 2022 theatrical film *Lifemark*, as well as *Lifepoint: The Power of One Yes*, her autobiography that was independently published in October.

Coles introduced the keynote speaker Alex Kendrick of Kendrick Brothers, which produced *Lifemark*. He shared the story of how he became a Christian filmmaker, the role God played in his journey and the lessons he learned along the way.

He encouraged those present to pursue the next generation.

"Whoever wants the next generation the most is going to get them," Kendrick said. "The world wants their hearts, their minds, their loyalties, their perspectives, their morals."

"The body of Christ that loves the Lord has to go after the next generation. Whatever your sphere is, ... wherever you are, that's where you go after them ... with a desire to honor and glorify God, and let God be the hero of your story." †

Look away from your screen and into your heart, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Like replenishing the oil that fuels a lamp, Christians must nourish their interior lives by paying attention to the movements of their hearts, Pope Francis said.

"Many times, we are very careful about our appearance," he told some 20,000 people gathered on Nov. 12 to pray the *Angelus* with him in St. Peter's Square. "But Jesus says that the wisdom of life lies elsewhere: in taking care of what cannot be seen, but which is more important, taking care of the heart, nurturing the inner life."

"This means knowing how to stop and listen to one's heart, to keep watch over one's own thoughts and feelings," he said. "Wisdom means knowing how to make room for silence, so as to be capable of listening to ourselves and others. It means knowing how to give up some of the time passed in front of the telephone screen to look at the light in the eyes of others, in one's own heart, in God's gaze upon us."

Reflecting on the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew, in which Jesus shares the parable of 10 virgins

awaiting a bridegroom—five who brought extra oil for their lamps and five who did not—the pope said that the difference between the two groups in the parable was in the preparation of the "conspicuous" oil, without which their lamps have no light.

Pope Francis said the Gospel "gives us the right advice for not neglecting the oil of inner life" or the "oil of the soul," which requires one to be prepared.

"The inner life cannot be improvised," he said. "It is not a matter of a moment, of once in a while, of once and for all; the inner life must be prepared

by dedicating a little time every day, with constancy, as one does for every important thing."

The pope urged Christians to reflect on what they are preparing for at this moment in their lives. "Perhaps I am trying to put aside some savings, I am thinking about a house or a new car, concrete plans," he said.

"They are good things. But am I also thinking about dedicating time to the care of the heart, to prayer, to service to others, to the Lord who is life's destination?" he asked. "In short, how is the oil of my soul?" †

Share joy of God's love, sow seeds of hope in world, pope tells youths

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Embrace God's unconditional love and live in a way that is based on and radiates hope, Pope Francis told Catholic young people.

Christian hope “is the celebration of the love of the risen Christ, who is always at our side, even when he seems far from us,” the pope said in his annual message for local celebrations of World Youth Day.

Hope is nurtured by prayer and the concrete choices one makes every day, he said in the message, published on Nov. 14 at the Vatican.

“I urge all of you to choose a style of life grounded in hope,” he wrote. For example, instead of sharing negative things on social media, share things that inspire hope.

“Each day, try to share a word of hope with others. Try to sow seeds of hope in the lives of your friends and everyone around you,” the pope wrote.

He also encouraged all young people, especially those engaged in youth ministry, to reread the final document of the 2018 Synod of Bishops on young people, the faith and vocational discernment, and the apostolic exhortation “*Christus Vivit*” (“Christ is Alive”), published in 2019.

“The time is ripe to take stock of the situation and to work together with hope for the full implementation of that unforgettable synod,” he wrote.

While the next international celebration of World Youth Day will be held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2027, Pope Francis has asked Catholic young people around the world to prepare for the Holy Year 2025 and its Jubilee of Young People in Rome, which will be part of the Holy Year celebration.

In the two years preceding the Jubilee of Young People, dioceses around the world are to celebrate World Youth Day on a local level on the feast of Christ the King, which will be on Nov. 26 this year and on Nov. 24, 2024. The papal messages for both years are dedicated to Christian hope in preparation for the jubilee year whose theme is “Pilgrims of Hope.”

“Rejoice in hope,” the theme of this year’s message, “was St. Paul’s encouragement to the community of Rome at a time when it was undergoing harsh persecution,” the pope wrote.

This “joy in hope,” he wrote, “is not a product of our human efforts, plans or skills, but of the energy born of an encounter with Christ. Christian joy comes from God himself, from our knowledge of his love for us.”

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis said Christian hope comes from a “certainty based on faith: I am wanted. I have a task in history. I am accepted, I am loved. ... Ultimately we need a sense of being accepted unconditionally. Only if God accepts me and I become convinced of this, do I know definitively: it is good that I exist ... even in hard times.”

Pope Francis urged young people to be part of God’s answer to the problem of so many tragedies and difficulties humanity faces today. “Created by him in his image and likeness, we can be



Pope Francis and an international group of young people look out over an estimated 1.5 million people who came to the World Youth Day prayer vigil at Tejo Park in Lisbon, Portugal, on Aug. 5. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

signs of his love, which gives rise to joy and hope even in situations that appear hopeless.”

The pope pointed to SS. Maximilian Kolbe and Josephine Bakhita as well as Blessed Józef and Wiktoria Ulma and their seven children as people who “were witnesses of hope even amid the most horrid examples of human evil.”

He also recalled the Italian film *Life is Beautiful*, in which a young Jewish father helps his small son to see things with “eyes of hope,” protecting him from the horrors of the concentration camp, preserving his innocence and preventing human malice from robbing him of a future.”

Hope must be nurtured, he added, so it will not be “extinguished by the worries, fears and pressures of daily life.”

The Holy Spirit, prayer and everyday decisions all nurture hope, he said, as hope is “a virtue that is built up day by day.”

“Each of you can be such a beacon” of hope, he wrote, “to the extent that your faith becomes concrete, rooted in reality and sensitive to the needs of our brothers and sisters.”

“Dear young people, do not be afraid to share with others the hope and joy of the risen Christ! Nurture the spark that has been kindled in you, but at the same time share it,” he wrote.

“Stay close in particular to your friends who may be smiling on the outside but



Young people pray while Pope Francis celebrates Mass for World Youth Day at Tejo Park in Lisbon, Portugal, on Aug. 6. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

are weeping within, for lack of hope. Do not let yourselves be infected by indifference and individualism. Remain open, like canals in which the hope of Jesus can flow and spread in all the areas where you live,” the pope wrote.

(The text of the pope’s message in English can be found at: bit.ly/PopeYouth2023. The text of the message in Spanish is at: bit.ly/PopeYouthSpanish2023. Both links are case sensitive.) †

Pope Francis removes Bishop Strickland from governance of Texas diocese

(OSV News)—Pope Francis has removed Bishop Joseph E. Strickland from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Tyler, Texas, the Holy See Press Office announced on Nov. 11. Simultaneously, the pope has appointed Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin as apostolic administrator to oversee the diocese until a new bishop is appointed.

No reason was given for the bishop’s removal.

The pope’s decision, however, followed a May post by Bishop Strickland on X (previously known as Twitter) in which he accused the pope of “undermining the deposit of faith.” Bishop Strickland also gave an address on Oct. 31 in Rome in which he read from a letter attributed to a “dear friend” describing Pope Francis as “a usurper of [St.] Peter’s chair. Later, the bishop himself said that

the pope was supporting “an attack on the sacred” coming out of the Vatican.

Speculation about Bishop Strickland’s future was accelerated by a June 19-24 apostolic visitation of the Diocese of Tyler conducted by retired Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., and Bishop Dennis J. Sullivan of Camden, N.J.

On Nov. 11, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston released a public statement on the bishop’s removal, explaining that after the apostolic visitation of the Tyler Diocese took place—which he described as “an exhaustive inquiry into all aspects of the governance and leadership of the Diocese of Tyler”—it was recommended “the continuation in office of Bishop Strickland was not feasible.

“After months of careful consideration by the Dicastery for Bishops and the Holy Father, the decision was reached that the resignation of Bishop Strickland should be requested,” Cardinal DiNardo said in his statement. “Having been presented with that request on Nov. 9, 2023, Bishop Strickland declined to resign from office. Thereafter, on Nov. 11, 2023, the Holy Father removed Bishop Strickland from the Office of Bishop of Tyler.

“Let us keep Bishop Strickland, the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Tyler, and Bishop Vasquez in our prayers,” Cardinal DiNardo concluded.

OSV News was told by Elizabeth Slaten, communications director for the Diocese of Tyler, that Bishop Strickland is “not available for comment at this time.” †

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

John Paul II reflected on freedom and conscience in ‘Veritatis Splendor’

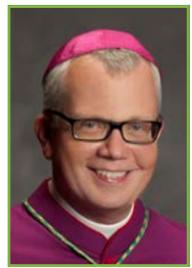
By Bishop Donald J. Hying

Second of two parts

(OSV News)—In his groundbreaking encyclical letter on Catholic moral principles issued 30 years ago in 1993, “*Veritatis Splendor*” (“The Splendor of Truth”), St. John Paul II dedicates many paragraphs to the question of freedom, articulating it as an authentic gift from God.

The Lord gives us the freedom to choose how to live. We are not puppets on some divine string, because we are created in the image and likeness of God, who is radically free.

Authentic love is the fundamental purpose of our existence, and love can never be coerced. Faith as well must be a free act of one’s will and conscience. Our freedom is a sacred gift and an expression of our dignity as children of God.



Bishop Donald J. Hying

In today’s culture, many people understand freedom as an absolute, as mere license, the ability to do whatever I want, as long as no one else gets hurt.

“*Veritatis Splendor*” points to the Genesis narrative of original sin as the primal illustration of freedom’s misuse. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents the one limit

which humanity cannot pass: We cannot be God! We are children of God, dependent on him for existence. But we are not him.

When Adam and Eve grasp and eat the forbidden fruit, they profoundly misuse the freedom given to them by God. They want to be their own gods, arbitrating good and evil for themselves, living apart from God and their deepest identity as his son or daughter.

In this context, God’s prohibition against eating the fruit of the tree is a merciful action, seeking to protect human freedom and integrity. The siren song of the serpent’s lies and temptations in Genesis should sound familiar to us, for they are the rallying cry of many current ideologies: “You can create your own identity. You can define your own truth. You can be whatever you want to be.”

In this distorted view, life is no longer a gift but a thing to manipulate. Freedom is no longer a striving for moral excellence, but a radical autonomy which leads to mere selfish willfulness.

The moral life is the fruitful union of faith and reason, the revelation given to us by God directly and the natural law which St. John Paul, quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, calls “the light of understanding infused in us by God, whereby we understand what we must do and what we should not do. God gave this light and this law to man at creation” (#12).

Modernity may dismiss natural law as a theological construct, but the Church insists that the nature of the human person, the dignity of life and the meaning and intention of sexuality can all be discerned even by an atheist who is open to the truth. Abortion is not wrong because the Church says it is wrong—the Church proclaims that it is wrong because it is inherently wrong to willfully take the life of another. One can know this apart from faith through the natural law inscribed upon the human heart.

In a morally congruent convergence, God’s revelation, natural law and human reason illuminate the truth of the human person and specify what actions we should embrace and which we should avoid.

In this way, St. John Paul says, “human freedom and God’s law meet and are called to intersect” (#41). In living the law of God, we show proper reverence and worship to our loving Father and the source of all being. Obedience to the Lord does not negate human freedom, but expresses its true reality and purpose.

The encyclical points out that modern thought often treats “nature” as simply pliable material, upon which humanity can exercise its unlimited freedom. Here, “nature” refers to the material world, but also the human body, its make-up and its processes. If our bodies and the world are simply things which we can define, control and refashion, then human freedom has lost its proper respect for what the Lord has created and offered to us as a sheer gift.

We clearly see the implications of this fundamental error in the current ideologies, which seek to redefine human life, sexuality and marriage. Disconnected from the divine law, freedom simply becomes the imposition of power on the human person and creation. Pope Francis speaks often about the need to respect and nurture both

our human ecology and the natural world around us.

Christian anthropology has always held the human person to be a soul-body unity, an incarnate spirit. Our bodies are not simply appendages of our minds and wills. Rather, they are an intrinsic part of our very selves. Accordingly, how we act in our bodies is an intrinsic expression of our spiritual and moral being, profoundly impacting our relationship to God and others.

The body is not simply raw material, some sort of malleable clay, which unlimited freedom can refashion according to its own willfulness. Our bodies are sacred, indeed temples of the Holy Spirit! As St. Paul says, “You are not your own; you were bought at a price, so glorify the Lord in your body!” (1 Cor 6:19-20). Thus, “a doctrine which dissociates the moral act from the bodily dimensions of its exercise is contrary to the teaching of Scripture and Tradition” (#49).

In this context, we can understand the true meaning of the natural law, for it refers to “man’s proper and primordial nature ... the person himself in the unity of soul and body,” St. John Paul says (#50). Human nature does not change, nor, consequently, does the moral law.

Many today would argue that cultural differences, shifting moral norms or the current spirit of the age make the Church’s teachings obsolete, as if human nature has changed or even varies in multiple cultural expressions. Such thinking has led to great moral and social confusion.

St. John Paul goes on to reflect upon conscience, viewing it as a person’s interior dialogue with both himself and God. According to St. Paul, St. John Paul says, conscience “confronts man with the law, and thus becomes a ‘witness’ for man: a witness of his own faithfulness or unfaithfulness” (#57). We experience conscience as that interior voice telling us what is right and wrong, yet paradoxically, that voice also originates from outside of us, as it mediates the gentle yet urgent will of the Lord for our life.

Every person has the obligation to form his conscience in light of the truth revealed to us by the Lord and the Church. “Conscience is not exempt from the possibility of error,” St. John Paul says (#62). If a particular doctrine or moral teaching puzzles or confuses us, we need to study and ponder what the Church, as the voice of Christ, is revealing to us and to pray for understanding and insight.

The encyclical makes the important point that ignorance, circumstances, intentions or lack of freedom may reduce the culpability of a person who is committing a sinful act, but that those mitigating factors do not change the intrinsic evil nature of the act committed.

“Situation ethics,” which seeks to define the moral rectitude of a particular action through its context, and “fundamental option,” which looks only at the long-term trajectory of a person’s moral life, rather than every particular action, are fundamental errors, which seek to reduce humanity’s moral responsibility in the specificity of their daily actions and choices.

The pope upholds the reality of intrinsic goodness and evil; the human person’s ability to know and choose the good, even in difficult circumstances; and the importance of individual and specific moral decisions. A mortal sin, in this context, is one of a grave matter, committed with full knowledge and committed with full consent. Such a sin ruptures one’s relationship with God, causing the loss of sanctifying grace, and requires sacramental confession to be absolved.

The pope reiterates the Church’s constant teaching, in the light of much contemporary commentary to the



Pope John Paul II prays during a pastoral visit to Abuja, Nigeria, in March 1998. His groundbreaking 1993 encyclical on Catholic moral principles, “*Veritatis Splendor*” (“The Splendor of Truth”), explored themes related to the nature of freedom and the human conscience. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano)

contrary, that mortal sin is possible and that an individual can lose eternal salvation if such grave sins are not repented of and confessed.

“*Veritatis Splendor*” is a long, dense and nuanced document, flowing from the keen intellect and expansive heart of St. John Paul. In the encyclical, the pope affirms the love of God for humanity; the dignity of the person; our ability, helped by grace, to know the truth and live the good; the need to understand the proper relationship of truth, freedom, conscience, law and nature; the importance of individual moral actions; the intrinsic relationship between the Ten Commandments of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Beatitudes of the Gospel; the social, political and cultural implications of living God’s truth in the public square; and Jesus Christ as the Word who reveals all which the Lord asks of us in a life of discipleship and virtue, and the one who saves us from sin and death through his life, death and resurrection.

In a moving conclusion, St. John Paul proposes martyrdom as the profound exaltation of the inviolable holiness of God’s law. Despite persecution, torture, suffering and death, the martyrs remained true to God and his law, willing to give up their earthly lives rather than to betray or deny their faith.

Every martyr reveals the sacred intersection of God’s grace and human obedience, for they are willing to sacrifice even life itself in order to uphold the truth and to embrace the good.

Because of the power and victory of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and his saving resurrection, we can profoundly hope in the love and grace of God, entrusting our human weakness to the mercy of the Father, as we strive to heroically live the Gospel and make our way to the Father’s house.

“*Veritatis Splendor*” affirms that God loves us enough to take us seriously, especially in our moral actions, as he calls us to live in relationship with him and to grow in his love and likeness.

(Bishop Donald J. Hying is bishop of Madison, Wis. He previously served as the bishop of the Diocese of Gary, Ind., from 2014-19.) †

Evangelization Outreach/Ken Ogorek

I'm part of the problem; will you be part of the solution?

I have a confession to make. I sometimes consume media that includes violence.

I'm not much of a video game guy, so the graphic violence featured in several popular video games isn't part of my media diet. And I certainly acknowledge the right of unborn babies to be born, as well as that of all folks to live until dying a natural death.

But I like cops and robbers shows. Good guys bringing bad guys to justice. And yes, some of these programs and movies include people getting blown away—indiscriminately at times.

Cheaper by the dozen

Why the big confession? Because violence saturates our culture. Dozens of people—young and old alike—are getting blown away in mass shooting incidents. The lives of unborn babies are still being snuffed out using surgical tools and morning-after pills. Human life has become cheap.

When playing a video game necessitates simulated murder of multiple people; when streaming a show to unwind exposes our senses to shooting, stabbing, neck-breaking—whatever; when civil law allows the sweetest of creatures—innocent, defenseless, unborn children—to be exterminated and discarded like medical waste, we become desensitized to unnecessary, pointless death. Murder becomes routine. Human life loses its preciousness.

Connecting the shots

The psyche of a society is negatively affected when human life is devalued in multiple ways. In the backs of our minds, dark thoughts can creep in, unspoken, unnoticed. “Maybe some people just don't matter. Maybe it's OK if certain types of folks get put down and discarded. Shady characters. Blobs of tissue. Frail, useless elderly.”

Almost every time an incident like a

mass shooting occurs, we're quick to ask, “Why? How could someone *do* this?”

Yet it shouldn't surprise us when a person behaves in ways showing callous disregard for human life. He or she is only manifesting a message that saturates our culture, our entertainment, our laws. Human life is cheap. Some people don't matter. Ending a human life for no good reason is no big deal.

The fast lane

Back to my confession: I need to fast.

I should show penitential restraint in the media I consume. I ought to say “no” to folks who produce gratuitously violent content, profiting from customers like me.

Will you join me? Might you take an inventory of the role that senseless violence plays in how you play, relax, vote? Can we collaborate to reduce inconsistencies between, on the one hand, loving, respecting, defending and protecting each person and, on the other, allowing our minds and hearts to be filled with scenes—whether theatrical, computer-generated or unfolding within institutions—of human life being ended with no regard for its priceless value?

Evangelization involves proclaiming the Gospel. St. John Paul II reminds us that the good news includes the Gospel of life—cooperating with people of good will in building a civilization of love by professing the preciousness of each person.

I'm not very good at fasting—from food or violence in media. But I'll try, at least regarding the role violence plays in my life. Will you?

(*Criterion* readers: I'm open to your suggestions about cops and robbers shows that don't contain gratuitous violence. Please e-mail me, at the address below, your thoughts on programs and movies I might like. Thanks!)

(Ken Ogorek is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis. He can be reached at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Evangelization involves proclaiming the Gospel. St. John Paul II reminds us that the good news includes the Gospel of life—cooperating with people of good will in building a civilization of love by professing the preciousness of each person.

Guest Column/Kimberly Henkel

Radical solidarity through fostering kids, supporting their families

(November is National Adoption Month.)

Until my husband and I found ourselves struggling with infertility, we'd never thought much about foster care.



When we decided to begin fostering, it was primarily in hopes that we might eventually adopt. At that time, we did not understand why the goal of foster care was to reunify children with their birth families, especially when the

families were so obviously broken as to require their removal in the first place.

Then we got the call for our first placement. When we went to the hospital after Anthony had been born, I wondered about his birth mother who had just gone through nine months carrying him in her womb, and endured childbirth only to have her baby boy ripped from her arms and placed into mine. My heart ached for her. This woman who gave birth to the greatest joy of my life up to that point would return home with no baby. Yes, she had problems that made it unsafe for her to raise her child. Yes, it was clearly best for the child to be placed elsewhere.

But what would become of her?

As Catholics, we do a good job of supporting women in crisis pregnancies, and we've begun focusing more on walking with moms after they give birth. Yet many Catholics are still unaware of the urgent need to get further involved by fostering, supporting foster families (and reunification, when possible), by walking with moms and dads in a stance of radical love and solidarity.

After fostering and adopting four children, my husband and I founded Springs of Love, an apostolate to help Catholics discern and live out the call to foster and adopt. Part of our mission includes producing inspiring video stories of those touched by fostering and adoption, available on springsoflove.org, EWTN on-demand and Formed.org.

Our latest video, “One Big Family,” features a family whose story exemplifies radical solidarity. PJ and Kristina, hoping to grow their family of six through adoption, signed up to become foster parents. They didn't realize how inviting children in foster care into their home would stretch their hearts to love not only the children who came to them, but also the children's birth families.

After almost three years of fostering two young boys, it looked as if PJ and Kristina would be able to adopt them. However, the boys' father, Josh, notified the agency that he was being released from prison, had turned his life around, and would do whatever he needed to get his boys back. Within a few months, he met all of the requirements, and the boys went home with their father.

PJ, Kristina and their kids were heartbroken. Josh soon realized that PJ and Kristina's family genuinely loved his boys. He saw how they'd opened their hearts to him, too, and he grew to trust and rely on them for support. Now the boys spend at least one weekend a month with their former foster family, which brings PJ and Kristina great joy. Josh explains, “We are all one big family now.”

Fostering is challenging, and sadly, about 50% of foster families stop fostering after one year. The retention rate, however, increases to 90% when those families feel sufficiently supported. Every Catholic can stand in radical solidarity with families in crisis by

See HENKEL, page 14

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

‘Love of God’ is at the heart of many other people's faith traditions

(This month's column is written by Deacon John Cord, who is archdiocesan coordinator of Corrections Ministry and also serves at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour. As I have written before, interreligious dialogue has four



components. What Deacon Cord speaks to below is “Dialogue of Action,” a dialogue in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.)

A Muslim, a rabbi and a Catholic walk into a restaurant. No, this is not a joke. It really happened to me recently.

I met Rabbi Aaron Speigel at a Marion County re-entry coalition meeting. There were about 50 clergy from across central Indiana in attendance.

The room was quiet as we all took our turn to introduce ourselves. But when Rabbi Speigel stood, people started to clap and cheer before he even opened his mouth.

After the meeting, I chatted with him for several minutes.

Rabbi Speigel is the director of the Greater Indiana Multifaith Alliance (GIMA). He invited me to meet with him in Indianapolis at the Illinois Street Food Emporium.

We met at an outdoor table, and after we talked for a bit, we were joined by Hiba Alami, a leader in the Muslim Women Giving 100 group. She is on the board of GIMA.

We never talked about the major issues in Israel and Gaza. We focused on GIMA and how they work with the Indiana Catholic Conference and have a relationship with the archdiocese.

One of Rabbi Speigel's passions, and thus GIMA's focus, is on housing rights for low-income people in Indianapolis and central Indiana.

They are studying the causes of the extremely high rate of evictions.

Indiana is among the top five states for evictions. We also happen to be among the top five states of out-of-state, large-corporation-owned housing units.

Our state does not have laws regulating out-of-state housing ownership. We also have very lax laws on eviction without notice.

Housing corporations have created a business model of evicting people for profit. When they accept a renter, they charge a security deposit and the first and last month's rent. After several months of renting, they find a reason to evict the tenant. The reasons can be very mundane, such as they parked in the wrong spot, or called maintenance too many times for a broken appliance.

They take the person to court and get them evicted.

Our circuit courts have hundreds of eviction filings every week.

Rabbi Speigel and GIMA are working desperately to raise awareness of this issue. They lobby and testify in front of the Indianapolis City Council and the state legislature. They are determined to change our state laws so our poor people can have safe and secure housing at an affordable cost.

It was amazing to learn from Rabbi Speigel and Hiba. They are truly doing the work of God.

We too often stereotype people who are different from us. We are especially eager to put different religions in a box called “evil.” But this is a very lazy attitude.

When we take time to learn about people of other faith traditions, we will learn that they are doing some amazing things under the banner of the “Love of God.”

I am very excited about my new friends, Rabbi Speigel and Hiba. I hope you get to meet some amazing people like this soon.

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.) †

It was amazing to learn from Rabbi Speigel and Hiba. They are truly doing the work of God. We too often stereotype people who are different from us. We are especially eager to put different religions in a box called “evil.” But this is a very lazy attitude.

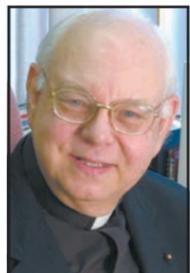
Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, November 19, 2023

- Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
- Matthew 25:14-30

The Book of Proverbs provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. This book was composed when God's chosen people had experienced massive changes as a result of the military conquest of the Holy Land, and indeed much of the Eastern Mediterranean world, by Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.), the young Greek king



from Macedonia.

Alexander did not live long enough to enjoy fully the successes of his victorious armies, but his conquests placed Greek and Greek philosophy at the summit of cultures all across the Middle East.

This Greek influence most often brought ideas that were contrary to traditional Hebrew theology. Committed Jews had to struggle to keep their faith alive, and they especially struggled to relay their tradition to oncoming generations.

Proverbs was written as a part of this effort. Along with other books of the Hebrew Scriptures, Proverbs attempted to blend human logic with Hebrew theology to say that ancient Jewish beliefs are not illogical. (In the Greek mind, human logic was supreme.)

The reading from Proverbs proclaimed by the Church on this weekend obliquely makes reference to the fact that marriages under the Greek arrangement usually were contrived.

Quite disturbing for Jews was the fact that wives were not much better than servants, even slaves. The concept of love, freely and gladly exchanged between spouses, was not expected by any means in Greek life.

Proverbs tried to elevate the Jewish notion of human dignity, a dignity including women as well as men.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the second reading. In the early days of the Church, the general presumption was that momentarily, very soon, Jesus would return to Earth to vanquish the evil and vindicate the good. Paul had to remind the Christians of Thessalonica that following the Gospel might be a long,

tiring and difficult process, as Christ might not appear as quickly as they would like.

For its third and last reading, the Church this weekend presents St. Matthew's Gospel. The story in essence also appears in Mark.

The story builds on the same theme as that given in First Thessalonians. The present order will end one day. Death comes for all people. No one can predict exactly when natural death will come.

Life suddenly and unexpectedly can produce unexpected and unwanted change, as Americans realized on Nov. 22, 1963, when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, or more recently when hurricanes devastated so many places.

The reading from Matthew counsels Christians to remember the uncertainty of life, as well as the perceptions and hope given them in their faith.

The ancient Jews, for whom Proverbs was written, and the first Christians, for whom First Thessalonians and Matthew's Gospel were written, drew great strength and confidence from their faith. It sustained them in many ordeals.

Reflection

When President John F. Kennedy was murdered, Americans, and especially American Catholics, were paralyzed with grief. Time stood still, but his campaign for the presidency affected American Catholic life more.

Kennedy knew that his major political problem was his Catholic religion. Anti-Catholicism was alive and well in the United States.

He turned his religion into an advantage, speaking of American Catholic patriots and of ordinary Catholic citizens who loved, served and bettered the nation.

Hearing him, Catholics in the United States felt a pride in their Church. This pride gave them security. Fewer hid their religion anymore. Many openly defended the moral positions of the Church.

For those who thought about it, they realized that their Church spoke the words of Jesus. In Jesus, the faithful learn how to live, what matters in life and why life is worth living, as did the ancients long ago. †

Daily Readings

Monday, November 20

1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63
Psalm 119:53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 158
Luke 18:35-43

Tuesday, November 21

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 Maccabees 6:18-31
Psalm 3:2-7
Luke 19:1-10

Wednesday, November 22

St. Cecilia, virgin and martyr
2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31
Psalm 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15
Luke 19:11-28

Thursday, November 23

St. Clement I, pope and martyr
St. Columban, abbot
Blessed Miguel Pro, priest and martyr
1 Maccabees 2:15-29
Psalm 50:1-2, 5-6, 14-15
Luke 19:41-44

Friday, November 24

St. Andrew Dũng-Lạc, priest and companions, martyrs
1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59
(Response) 1 Chronicles 29:10-12
Luke 19:45-48

Saturday, November 25

St. Catherine of Alexandria, virgin and martyr
1 Maccabees 6:1-13
Psalm 9:2-4, 6, 16, 19
Luke 20:27-40

Sunday, November 26

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17
Psalm 23:1-3, 5-6
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28
Matthew 25:31-46

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Victims of sexual assault do not commit a sin by not resisting their attackers

Q As a cradle Catholic, I was taught that the denial of Christ is gravely wrong and that Christians must be

prepared to die rather than apostatize.

However, now I've become aware of a claim that I am not sure about. It has been asserted by someone claiming to be Catholic that in the cases of attempted rape, a married

woman is obligated to resist to the point of death or else be guilty of breaking her marriage vows.

According to this person, any married woman who (in the hopes of surviving the ordeal) takes a passive approach to being violated would be guilty of grave sin. St. Maria Goretti was held up as the model for rape victims.

A No. It is never a sin to be a victim of rape, regardless of how actively one tries to resist. Sin requires knowledge of an action's sinfulness and a free choice to engage in the act. Rape, by definition, involves a lack of knowledge and consent—or both.

It is a horrifically grave sin to force sexual activity upon someone who does not consent to it. But the sinfulness of the one committing rape does not in any way impact the moral or spiritual status of the one who suffers from this kind of violence.

Despite what some individual Catholics may have said or thought through the years, the Church has never taught that rape victims are in any way guilty for what has happened to them. In the fourth century,

St. Augustine—who lived at a time of great civil instability, when foreign invaders would often abuse women during their plundering of Roman cities—taught that in many cases, a victim of rape should still be considered a virgin.

In Book I, chapter 18, of his massive work *The City of God*, he writes that “the sanctity of the soul remains even when the body is violated.”

Therefore, the Church does not teach that anyone is required to resist an attacker to the point of death. In terms of the Church's teachings on martyrdom in general, there is certainly a good argument that we should prefer death to denying Christ. Even so, being in a position where we must choose between martyrdom or actively committing a sin ourselves is very different from the situation of anyone, male or female, who is the sinned-against victim of an attacker.

But then what should we make of the story of St. Maria Goretti and the many other virgin martyrs?

First, in terms of St. Maria Goretti in particular, it's good to keep in mind that there is much more to her story than resisting her would-be rapist. There are many reasons why she was named a saint—most importantly for her demonstration of heroic mercy.

Pious and prayerful from a young age, she died while forgiving her attacker. After her death, she appeared to her attacker in prison, inspiring his sincere repentance and conversion.

In my own personal opinion, I think we can regard it as praiseworthy to resist an attacker to the point of death, even while fully understanding that a lack of resistance would *not* be a sin. “Martyrs of purity” did not die to avoid sinning (because being the victim of an assault was never a sin in the first place); they died to bear an exceptional, above-and-beyond witness to the sanctity of the human body.

We might look at these saints as being somewhat like those martyrs who died in order to prevent the profanation of the Eucharist, like St. Tarcisius. That is, a Catholic is not guilty of sacrilege if someone else profanes the consecrated host, but some saints have been called to take the extra, non-required step of preventing the destruction of the Eucharist even at the cost of their lives.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.) †

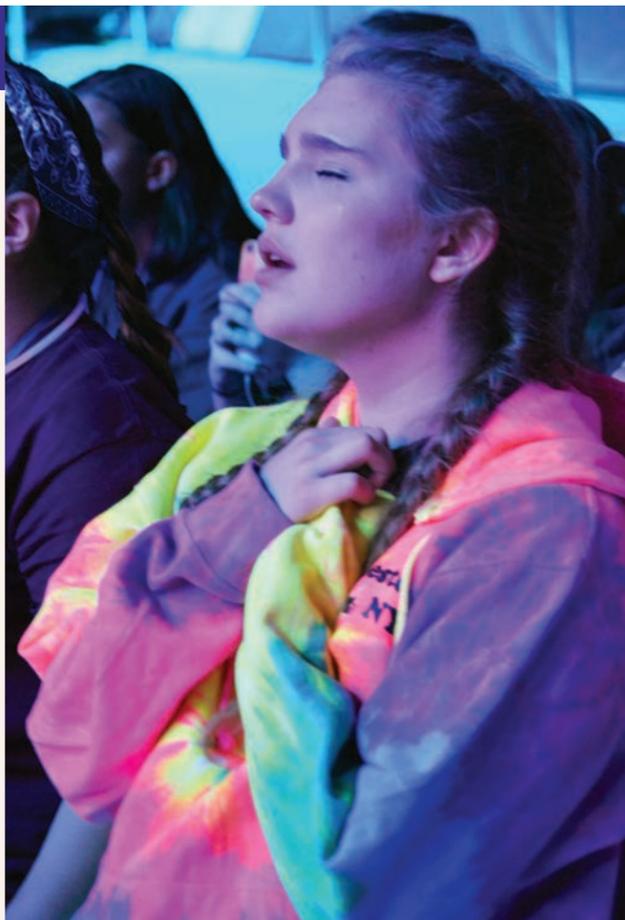
My Journey to God

I Call Out to You

By C.S. Likins

Cry cry cry, O Lord
Why why why
My Jesus, help to the helpless
Give hope to this hopeless sinner
Again and again a beginner
Alone lost and afraid
My life a debt to be paid
You took it all to the cross, every loss
Thank you my merciful Jesus
For seeing such a wretch as me
As having value to thee
My heart is humbled
And tears of joy now tumble
Across the smile you have put on my face

(C.S. Likins is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. Photo: A tear traces down the cheek of a young participant in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Nov. 16, 2017, during the National Catholic Youth Conference.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)



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.

BRAY, Michael W., 73, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 29. Husband of Kathy Bray. Father of Heather Bray, Katie L'hote and Amanda Zeunik. Brother of Marijane Ambruster, Kathleen Broderick, Bernadette Davidson, Andrew, Anthony, Matthew and Tim Hession. Grandfather of seven.

FARRAN, Rita M., 97, St. Mary, North Vernon, Nov. 2. Mother of Patty Everroad and Jill Hardwick. Sister of Leo and Paul Ebbing. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of 10.

FOX, Marianela Delaney, 93, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Oct. 31. Mother of Denise Hagerty, Michael, Robert and Vincent Delaney. Sister of Germaine Conwell, Rita Loesch and John Urrutia. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 15.

GLESING, Janet L., 79, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 5. Wife of Carl Glesing. Mother of Cyndi White and David Glesing. Sister of Anita Butler. Grandmother of four.

GROTE, Joe A., 83, All Saints, Dearborn County, Oct. 31. Father of Michelle Walker, Jeff and Richard Grote. Brother of Aloysius Grote. Grandfather of one.

JONES, Diana J., 76, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Oct. 29. Wife of Bill Jones. Mother of Dana Fisher and Tina Thomas. Sister of Rita Sappenfield. Grandmother of two.

KEISKER, Caryn (Armbruster), 37, St. Susanna, Plainfield,

Aug. 16. Wife of Dustin Keisker. Mother of Haylie and Logan Keisker. Daughter of Philip and Debbie Armbruster. Sister of Allyson Dotson, Courtne Leeper, Caitlyn Valdez and Alex Armbruster.

LIME, James, 83, Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Oct. 27. Husband of Dorothy Lime. Father of Angela Crumlin. Brother of Marion and Richard Lime. Grandfather of two.

MADDOX, Mary, 93, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Oct. 31. Mother of Monica Drew, Gary and Mark Maddox. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of three.

MEYER, Michael G., 76, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Oct. 30. Husband of Arlyn Meyer. Father of Lisa Gunyon and Sarah Overpeck. Brother of Margaret Schwallie, Fred and Steve Meyer. Grandfather of four.

MOSBAUGH, Phillip G., 85, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 25. Husband of Beth Mosbaugh. Father of Annie Knapp, Mary and William McTurran. Grandfather of three.

MYERS, Terry L., 77, St. Joseph, Corydon, Nov. 2. Husband of Judy Myers. Father of Sarah Johnson and Matthew Myers.

NEMETH, Alex, 81, Prince of Peace, Madison, Oct. 31. Husband of Patricia Nemeth. Father of Cathy Fink, Christine Perry, Cori Williams and Paul Nemeth. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of eight.

NOBBE, Robert W., 94, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Oct. 16. Husband of Darlene Nobbe. Father of Wilma Fryar, Mary Morken, Michael and Todd Nobbe. Brother of Paul and Werner Nobbe. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of five.

SMITH, Brian K., 61, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, Oct. 26. Brother of Brenda Dixon, Brent and Brett Smith. Uncle of several.

WITHEM, Matthew J., 65, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Oct. 12. Son of Mary Withem. Brother of Monica Davis and Joan Jacobs. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

YOUNGER, Jerry D., 84, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Nov. 2. Father of Melanie Barron and Jackie Luppi. Brother of Libby Younger. Grandfather of 11. †

Praying for the dead



Father Michael Keucher celebrates a Mass on Nov. 2, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day) at St. Joseph Cemetery in Shelbyville. He is assisted by altar server Daniel Barker. Father Keucher is pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County. (Submitted photo)



Father John Hollowell, who serves in the four parishes in Dearborn County, preaches during a memorial Mass for the dead on Nov. 8 at St Joseph Cemetery of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. (Submitted photo)

Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



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 or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

HENKEL

continued from page 12

supporting a foster family. Parishes can start a Springs of Love Foster Team to arrange a weekly meal, babysitting, help with material needs for a new placement, driving kids to appointments, and offering prayer support for a foster family. They can also offer this same support for a mother or father at risk of losing their children to foster care.

Children for whom it is unsafe to return home need loving families to adopt them. There are currently more than 100,000 children in the foster care system who are eligible for adoption. Many will age-out with no family to call their own—identifying another opportunity for radical solidarity by inviting them into our families. Of the young adults who age-out, many end up becoming victims of human trafficking, homelessness and drugs, and 71% of young women are pregnant within a year. Many go on to repeat the cycle of abuse and neglect that they grew up knowing.

Let's reimagine foster care as a pathway toward healing for hurting families. When we open our hearts and homes to love a child in foster care, we can extend our love to his or her birth parents to encourage and pray for them. If reunification occurs, we can continue our support and connection with that family.

The true goal of radical solidarity is to witness the profound love of God who invites us into his family as his adopted sons and daughters. Foster families emulate the heart of the Father when they welcome those who may never have known the love and warmth of a family. In this way, they help bring to fruition the promises of God who "sets the lonely in families" (Ps 68:6).

(Kimberly Henkel, Ph.D., has a doctorate in moral theology and is the founder of Springs of Love, an apostolate that encourages, educates, and equips Catholics to discern and live out the call to foster and adopt.) †

Advent message encourages Holy Land's Christians to 'stand strong'

JERUSALEM (OSV News)—Christmas in Bethlehem and the Holy Land this year will be one of solemnity, prayer and fasting as the patriarchs and heads of the Churches in Jerusalem called upon the faithful to forgo any “unnecessarily festive activities” during the Christmas season this year, and to “stand strong” with those facing the afflictions of war, focusing more on the spiritual meaning of Christmas.

“Since the start of the war, there has been an atmosphere of sadness and pain. Thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children, have died or suffered serious injuries,” they said in a Nov. 10 statement on the “Celebration of Advent and Christmas in the Midst of the War.” “Many more grieve over the loss of their homes, their loved ones, or the uncertain fate of those dear to them. Throughout the region, even more have lost their work and are suffering from serious economic challenges.”

Israel launched a military assault on Hamas after Hamas terrorists from Gaza breached a security fence on the southern border with Israel on Oct. 7. Thousands of heavily armed terrorists infiltrated the border and attacked some 22 civilian agricultural communities and cities inside Israel. Israel revised its official estimated death toll of the attack, lowering the number to about 1,200 people, down from the more than 1,400 initially cited, a spokesman for the country’s Foreign Ministry said on Nov. 10. More than 240 people, including babies and elderly, were kidnapped into Gaza.

Israel has continued with its military incursion against Hamas targets both on land and by air.

According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, which is governed by Hamas, more than 11,100 Palestinians have been killed since Oct. 7. Although there is no breakdown available distinguishing between Hamas members and civilians, the World Health Organization has said that most of the dead are women and children. Israel is charging that Hamas uses civilians as human shields.

Despite their repeated calls for a humanitarian ceasefire and a de-escalation of violence, the war has continued, said the Church leaders in their statement.

They said that though the sacred Advent season is normally one of joy and anticipation in preparation for the celebration of Christmas, including religious services as well as colorful public festivities, “these are not normal times.”

“We call upon our congregations to stand strong with those facing such afflictions by this year foregoing any unnecessarily festive activities,” the Church leaders said. “We likewise encourage our priests and the faithful to focus more on the spiritual meaning of Christmas in their pastoral activities and liturgical celebrations during this period, with all the focus directed at holding in our thoughts our brothers and sisters affected by this war and its consequences, and with fervent prayers for a just and lasting peace for our beloved Holy Land.”

They also invited the faithful to “advocate, pray and contribute generously” as they are able for the relief of victims of the war and the needy.

“In these ways, we believe, we will be standing in support of those continuing to suffer—just as Christ did with us in his incarnation, in order that all of God’s children might receive the hope of a new Jerusalem in the presence of the Almighty, where ‘death shall be no more, neither mourning, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things have passed away’ [Rv 21:4],” they wrote in their statement.

Meanwhile, bishops around the globe joined prayers for peace in the Holy Land and condemned the violence.

On Nov. 10, the Australian bishops’ conference issued a statement titled “Praying for a Lasting Peace.”

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe of Perth, president of the conference, said that “the Australian Catholic Bishops join with the Australian Catholic community in expressing our grief and anguish over the suffering of people in the Holy Land.” †



A pilgrim lights a candle in the grotto of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank. Amid the ongoing Israel-Gaza war, Christmas in Bethlehem and the Holy Land in 2023 will be one of solemnity, prayer and fasting, the patriarchs and heads of the Churches in Jerusalem said. (OSV News photo/Debbie Hill)

Employment



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CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis Office of Catholic Schools, located in downtown Indianapolis, is seeking a full-time Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education to serve as a resource to clergy, administrators, teachers, staff, students, and families in the areas of curricular support, communications, business management, policy guidance, and data analysis. The duties of this position also include serving as a member of the Archdiocesan Schools Team with the Superintendent and other Assistant Superintendents in a mission-driven, Christ-centered, and student-oriented environment.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis serves Central and Southern Indiana Catholics in over 120 parishes. There are 53 parish schools, 5 archdiocese schools, 6 private/religious order schools, and 3 consortium schools in the heart of Indianapolis. These 67 schools serve over 22,000 students in grades pre-kindergarten through grade 12. With open doors, open arms, and open hearts, the Office of Catholic Schools supports the formation of young people through holistic, engaging, and academically excellent programming that integrates faith, culture, and life as modeled by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The position requires a master’s degree in education, business, or a related field and at least five years of educational or business leadership experience, preferably involving school leadership (paid or volunteer) and preferably in Catholic education. Applicants should be professed and practicing Roman Catholics with a deep commitment to Catholic education. Candidates should also have experience in development and/or marketing efforts and be both proponents and role models of lifelong learning.

Applications are due by January 19, 2024. Candidates are expected to be available to assume the responsibilities of the position by July 1, 2024, or sooner.

Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to Dr. Brian Disney, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, at bdisney@archindy.org.

Seniors and bond of love lead Providence to state championship

By John Shaughnessy

In the days leading up to its state championship match, the volleyball team of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville was reeling emotionally.

Tears flowed when team members learned that an MRI exam showed that one of its key players, senior Nicole Stratford, had suffered a serious knee injury in the semi-state match and wouldn't be able to play against the top-ranked team of Belmont High School in Indiana's Class 3A state championship.

Knowing that Nicole's teammates were heartbroken for her, Providence's head coach Terri Purichia gathered the team together at the end of their last practice in their home gym and gave each player the same small gift—a gift to symbolically take Nicole on the court with them.

"We gave them a pink ribbon to put on their left shoe. That was a reminder of Nicole. Her favorite color is pink, and it was a hot-pink ribbon," Purichia recalled about the team's starting left-side hitter. "I told them this is always a symbol when people want to remember somebody that is either in pain, or they have a special circumstance that you want to remember to pray for them.

"I said, 'I want this to be a reminder of our strength and love. And every time you get nervous in the game or something doesn't go your way, I just want you to look down at your shoe and remember how much love you have for your teammate and how much support you have, and that should be a calming effect on you.' We kept reminding them to fight for each other, to never forget how powerful that love is."

Two days later—on Nov. 4—the Providence girls walked on the Worthen Arena court at Ball State University with their pink ribbons on their left shoes and won the state championship.

In defeating Belmont 25-19, 31-29, 23-25 and 25-21, the Providence girls especially dug deep in that breathtaking 31-29 game, which had 15 lead changes. And while their thrilling win was in part an emotional show of their love for Nicole, it was also a stirring reflection of the combined power and dedication of the other nine seniors who also led the team this year: Camila Adams, Ella Baldwin, Reese Carver, Avery Drury, Claire Gillespie, Lilly Kaiser, Anna Rodewig, Lilly Tappel and Makenzie Wagner.

"They're such a committed group, and



Players and coaches of the girls' volleyball program of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville are joined by school officials in posing for a celebratory photo after winning Indiana's Class 3A state championship in the sport on Nov. 4 at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. (Submitted photo)

their dedication just has shown in so many ways," Purichia noted. "They're also really good students. All 10 of them are Academic All State. They're the leaders of the school and leaders in the classroom. They're just great, great people who have done so many awesome things for our program."

In winning the state championship, the Providence girls continued the program's legacy of success in the sport. It's the second year in a row that the team has won a state championship. It's also the fifth one in the past 11 seasons under Purichia's leadership, making her the leader among active coaches in the state in that category. Still, the head coach steered the spotlight away from herself.

"It's always nice to be recognized, but these things aren't about me and for me. I coach for these kids," she said. "The most important thing for me was to see those kids hoist that trophy. That was just so special. And I would never be in this position without the people around me."

At that point, Purichia turned the conversation to her three varsity assistants—Brandy Denning, Charly Neal and Ryan Neal. She also praised the contributions of the parents in the program, former players and the coaches at the junior varsity and freshman levels.

"That's a lot of wins that people had a hand in," she said. "That's what makes me really proud."

Similar to the 24 other seasons she

has been the head coach at Providence, Purichia has filed away some special memories from this one.

She remembers the touching moment she shared with Nicole on the bus ride from Providence to Ball State University.

All week, despite her heartbreak, Nicole had been happy and supportive of her teammates, never showing them her disappointment about her injury and about not being able to play in the championship she had prepared for, for so long. Yet on the ride to Ball State, when her teammates were asleep, Nicole texted Purichia from the back of the bus.

"She texted me and asked me to come back there. She said, 'I need a hug,'" Purichia recalled. "I held her in my arms and let her cry. She never did that in front of her teammates."

The head coach also remembers the last practice session the team had on the morning before the championship match later that day.

"At the very end of the practice, we did this thing called, 'high-fives, handshakes and hugs.' That's where each member of the team goes around to each other, and they do those three things. Sometimes they say some really sweet things, too. You just feel that love.

"That was a really emotional session because everyone was in tears. I pulled them together at the end of that. I talked about how special we are in that circle—

and how we don't need to focus on anything except the love that we have for each other, and how we're going to fight as hard as we can for the person next to us."

Purichia also remembers the way that Nicole reacted that afternoon as her teammates pursued their shared goal of winning a state championship.

"She was the first one off the bench, yelling and screaming for them. She was so proud when we were able to pull it off. Because she knew they were really inspired to do it for her."

When Providence clinched match point and the state championship, the dancing, the celebration and the hugs began. The over-the-top joy flowed from the players and coaches on the court to the cheering sections filled with Providence students, family members and fans—the usual but never-taken-for-granted tremendous support that Providence teams have received for generations.

Remembering that scene, Purichia glowed with joy as she said, "So much excitement. Just so proud. We battled a very good Belmont team.

"In the locker room, I told them how proud of them I was. I said, 'I don't see a lot of tears because we're all cried out.' It was just absolute happiness and pride. They were laughing and loose and having so much fun."

Memories of a championship season to last a lifetime. †

Bishops' chair urges lawmakers to enhance protections for migrant children

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) migration committee has sent a letter to lawmakers in Congress urging enhanced protections be put in place for migrant children.

"In recent months, several concerning reports have emerged regarding incidents of migrant children in the United States suffering exploitative labor conditions and other harmful situations," Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, said in his Nov. 9 letter.

"Among migrants, unaccompanied children constitute the most vulnerable group," added the bishop.

His letter follows the Nov. 1 introduction of a bipartisan, bicameral measure that would add protections for minors to immigration courts, which do not currently have protocols specifically for processing children.

The proposal faces steep odds in a divided Congress, but is notable for its bipartisan nature on an issue where there is often a stark divide between Democrats and Republicans.

Sens. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, alongside Reps. Dan Goldman, D-N.Y., and Maria Salazar, R-Fla., introduced the Immigration Court Efficiency and

Children's Court Act, legislation they said would establish a Children's Court within the Executive Office for Immigration Review, which they argued would both combat the immigration court backlog and strengthen due process rights for unaccompanied migrant children.

Reps. Hillary Scholten, D-Mich., and Lori Chavez-DeRemer, R-Ore., are also original co-sponsors of the legislation.

"Since joining the Senate, I've fought to reform our broken immigration system, keep our country safe and protect innocent children who cross the border seeking asylum," Bennet said in a statement. "This legislation will ensure kids fleeing violence and persecution are able to understand and participate in immigration court proceedings and are treated with the dignity, respect and care they deserve. This bipartisan, pragmatic legislation demonstrates that we can find common ground and repair our broken immigration system to uphold the rule of law and honor our country's heritage."

In her own statement, Murkowski said the Biden administration "has failed on our southern border.

"Our country is facing nearly

3 million border crossings in 2023 and continued dysfunctional immigration policies," she said. "Each of these problems only exacerbates the severe backlog at our immigration courts and inhibits due process for individuals navigating the legal system. Unfortunately, these failures especially impact unaccompanied children, who are sometimes required to face a judge at their removal proceeding alone.

"No child should be left alone in court—and the United States of America can and should do better for vulnerable children," added Murkowski.

The USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) also recently sent a series of recommendations to lawmakers about ways to enhance protections for unaccompanied noncitizen children released from federal care. The lawmakers introduced their legislation before the USCCB agency sent its recommendations, but providing "robust funding for legal services" and establishing "a trauma-informed and child-centric process for immigration proceedings" were among the recommendations.

MRS also recommended fully funding post-release services and granting the

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) "authority to provide post-release services whenever it is determined to be in a child's best interests"; an "Officer for Child Trafficking Prevention" within that agency and mandating training for ORR staff "to identify the signs of child maltreatment and human trafficking; and supporting state-level coordinators for unaccompanied children."

"Undoubtedly, the plight of these children, including their ability to reunify with family and receive protection in the United States, is closely interconnected with our country's response to current migration-related challenges," Bishop Seitz said in his letter to lawmakers.

"Recognizing the unique needs of this population, MRS and its network of local, community-based care providers have long partnered with the federal government to offer home studies and post-release services, foster care and small-scale shelters to noncitizen children in need," Bishop Seitz added. "These programs are specifically designed to promote the safety, well-being and best interests of those served, while also integrating our unwavering commitment to abolishing the evil of human trafficking." †