



The

Criterion

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Vatican says men with 'deep-seated homosexual tendencies' can't be ordained

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A long-awaited Vatican document said the Church cannot allow priestly ordination of men who are active homosexuals, who have "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies or who support the "gay culture."

Such people have serious problems relating properly to men and women and present a risk of "negative consequences" that should not be underestimated, the document said.

The Vatican published the nine-page instruction from the Congregation for Catholic Education on Nov. 29 after more

than eight years of internal discussion and debate.

The document did not define what it meant by "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies, but contrasted them with the "transitory" problems of adolescence.

Such transitory tendencies must be clearly overcome at least three years before ordination as a deacon, it said. It did not explain what was meant by "overcome" or how that could be determined.

The document was leaked to the Italian press earlier in November.

In the United States, Bishop William S.

Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a statement on Nov. 29 that the instruction showed a "Christian realism" about what is expected in candidates for the priesthood when it comes to their "affective maturity."

Bishop Skylstad urged bishops and major superiors to have a "prayerful and honest" discussion of the new norms with their priests and seminarians. He also made a point underlined by several other bishops: that many homosexually inclined men are, in fact, good priests.

Indianapolis Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein said the instruction "sets clear expectations for and reduces ambiguity about who may be admitted to holy orders."

"I was pleased to see that the document allows for some discretion to be exercised by those close to the situation who would best know the individuals seeking ordination. In the United States, this instruction will serve as a useful supplement to the recently revised *Program of Priestly Formation*, which was approved by the

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Indiana Supreme Court upholds waiting period for abortion

By Mary Ann Wyand

Pro-life supporters are celebrating the Indiana Supreme Court's Nov. 23 ruling upholding the legality of informed consent and an 18-hour waiting period for women seeking an abortion in the Hoosier state.

The state court's 4-1 decision overturned a decade-long challenge to a 1995 Indiana law that requires women to receive in-person counseling about the medical risks of abortion and alternative choices available to them then wait 18 hours before undergoing the surgical procedure that terminates pregnancy.

The informed consent law introduced by State Sen. R. Michael Young (R-Indianapolis) was passed by the Indiana Legislature 10 years ago then was vetoed by former Democratic Gov. Evan Bayh. Legislators overrode the governor's veto, but implementation of the law was delayed by a series of appeals from abortion providers on the state and national levels.

The Clinic for Women in Indianapolis and other abortion providers have opposed the law since its passage on the grounds that the waiting period violates women's right to privacy and creates a hardship by requiring two trips to an abortion clinic.

Pro-life supporters argued that women have the right to be told what happens to

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Kristine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education regional representative, speaks to the students, faculty, staff and parents of Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Indianapolis during a Nov. 28 ceremony in which she presented the school's 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award. Immaculate Heart of Mary School is one of five archdiocesan schools to receive the national award this year.

U.S. Department of Education representative praises archdiocese's Blue Ribbon schools for their excellence

By Brandon A. Evans

Kristine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education regional representative, visited some of the archdiocese's five 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence this week to congratulate the teachers and students on their commitment to learning.

The Blue Ribbon schools are Holy Family School in New Albany, St. Michael School in Greenfield, and Immaculate Heart of Mary School, St. Simon the Apostle School and St. Thomas Aquinas School, all in Indianapolis.

Cohn is visiting some of the public and private schools in her region—which is made up of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota—that received the national award. The schools were officially notified in late September that they had been named Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.

She visited the Indianapolis-area Catholic schools on Nov. 28, and was

accompanied by Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director of Catholic education and faith formation for the archdiocese.

The schools held assemblies, offered prayers, played music and accepted an official recognition plaque from Cohn.

The high-energy events are a highlight of the year for Lentz.

Whenever there are challenges for those who work in education administration, she said, the best thing they can do is spend a little bit of time at a school assembly.

"Then you realize what you do and why you do it," Lentz said.

The special events also let the students celebrate their school's achievement.

Lentz said that even the young children who don't understand what a Blue Ribbon award is know that an assembly with music and special guests isn't organized for just any reason.

"[The students] see themselves as part of a larger picture, a larger community," Lentz said.

She told the students gathered at

St. Michael School in Greenfield "how proud we are of you."

Cohn spoke to the students about the importance of an education—citing Benjamin Franklin to tell them that whatever a person learns is their treasure to keep forever; a good education is something that can never be taken away once received.

"An investment in knowledge always pays off," Cohn said. "Here at St. Michael School, you have invested well."

"You are one of only 11 schools in the state" to be honored as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, she said, which means that all those involved with the school have "taken a leadership role to do what is right."

Cohn said there are four things that make up a good school: a committed community, excellent teachers, involved parents and great students.

St. Michael School, she said, just like the other Blue Ribbon schools, is now a role model—and other schools

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DOCUMENT

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U.S. bishops last June," the archbishop said.

Archbishop Buechlein said the expectations presented in the instruction have been in effect in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for at least 13 years.

"My interpretation of what the instruction terms a man with 'deep-seated homosexual tendencies' would be someone whose homosexual orientation is his primary and preoccupying sense of identity," Archbishop Buechlein said.

The archbishop also noted that the instruction from the Vatican reminds us that "homosexuals are not to be unjustly discriminated against and that they are to be treated with respect, compassion and sensitivity. However, since homosexual

acts are closed to the transmission of life, they are contrary to natural law."

The Vatican document was signed by Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, prefect of the education congregation, which prepared the instruction for use by bishops, religious superiors and seminary rectors around the world.

The instruction, dated Nov. 4, was approved on Aug. 31 by Pope Benedict XVI, but not in *forma specifica*. That means the document carries the authority of the education congregation and does not have precedence over the existing Code of Canon Law, an informed Vatican source said.

In a letter accompanying the document, the Vatican made it clear that the instruction does not challenge the validity of previous ordinations of priests with homosexual tendencies, Vatican sources said.

The Vatican also communicated to bishops and seminary officials that homosexuals are not to be appointed as rectors or educators in seminaries.

"This is a logical consequence of the instruction, that those involved in formation of seminarians should have a personal situation in conformity with the norms," a Vatican official told Catholic News Service.

The document cited the Church's teachings that homosexual acts are gravely sinful and that homosexual tendencies are "objectively disordered."

In the light of those teachings, it said, the Church, while deeply respecting homosexuals, "cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.'"

"One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies," it said.

"Different, however, would be the case in which one were dealing with homosexual tendencies that were only the expression of a transitory problem—for example, that of an adolescence not yet superseded,"

it said.

"Nevertheless, such tendencies must be clearly overcome at least three years before ordination to the diaconate," it said. Ordination as a deacon precedes priestly ordination by at least six months.

In an interview with Vatican Radio on Nov. 29, Cardinal Grocholewski said "transitory" homosexual problems might include episodes of youthful curiosity, accidental acts related to a state of drunkenness, behavior by someone in prison for many years, or acts committed in order to "please someone in order to obtain favors."

"In such cases, these acts do not originate from a deep-seated tendency but from other transitory circumstances," he said.

The instruction emphasized that the final judgment on ordination of candidates for the priesthood fell to bishops and to major superiors of religious orders. The bishop or major superior must arrive at a "morally certain judgment" on the candidate's qualities, it said.

"In the case of a serious doubt in this regard, he must not admit him to ordination," it said.

The document also said seminary spiritual directors have an important task in discerning the suitability of priesthood candidates. While respecting their relationship of confidentiality with seminarians, they should seek to convince those with "disturbances of a sexual nature" to abandon a priestly vocation, it said.

"If a candidate practices homosexuality or presents deep-seated homosexual tendencies, his spiritual director, as well as his confessor, have the duty to dissuade him in conscience from proceeding toward ordination," it said.

The document said the candidate himself also has a primary responsibility for his own formation. It would be "gravely dishonest" for a seminarian to hide his homosexuality in order to reach ordination, it said.

The text urged bishops, bishops' conferences and seminary officials to make sure that the norms are faithfully observed "for the good of the candidates themselves and



Priests in Rome wait near the Vatican's press office on Nov. 29 for release of the official Vatican document on homosexuality and the priesthood.

to guarantee that the Church always has suitable priests who are true shepherds according to the heart of Christ."

The document said the need to issue specific norms on admitting homosexuals was "made more urgent by the current situation."

It did not elaborate on that statement.

The full title of the document was "Instruction Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations With Regard to Persons With Homosexual Tendencies in View of Their Admission to the Seminary and to Sacred Orders."

(A link for the complete text of the document can be found at www.CriterionOnline.com.) †

Readers may share their Christmas memories

Again this year, *The Criterion* invites readers to submit personal holiday memories for inclusion in the annual Christmas Supplement, which will be published in the Dec. 23 issue.

Christmas memories should be brief stories related to faith, family and friends. They may be written about humorous or serious topics.

Submissions should include the writer's name, address, parish and telephone number, and should be mailed to *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or sent by e-mail in care of criterion@archindy.org by the Dec. 12 deadline. †

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Vicar general dedicates St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum

By Mary Ann Wyand

The first snow of the winter season on Nov. 23 provided a stark contrast to the new blacktop roads throughout historic Holy Cross and St. Joseph cemeteries in Indianapolis.

Last summer, Catholic Cemeteries paved the small roads in the Irish and German cemeteries established in the early 1800s and located near the newer Calvary Cemetery on the south side.

Now it's easier to drive by the gravesites in both cemeteries and park near the recently dedicated St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum at St. Joseph Cemetery.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, blessed and dedicated Phase II of the St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum on Nov. 2 following an All Souls Day Mass at the Calvary Cemetery Mausoleum.

Faith is a two-way street, Msgr. Schaedel said in his homily.

"Faith in God is one thing," he said. "God's faith in us is another. There's lots of talk about faith—assurance that Jesus Christ is our salvation. ... On this feast of All Souls, we recall those who have died in faith. But faith has another side. God has faith in us. God expects us to believe in him, to adore him, to hope in him, to love him. And in turn, God believes in us. He loves us. He trusts us."

God's gift of free will means that we can choose to believe in God or reject him in our lives, the vicar general said. "He sent his only Son, Jesus, to show us the way. But God lets us make up our own minds. ... God trusts us. And God expects us to have enough sense to be careful of anything or anybody that could conceivably

lead us to betray that confidence. He does not force us. Yet God relies on us to listen, to look for him in our lives every step of the way."

Christians should always look to God for help and be open to him for inspiration, Msgr. Schaedel said. "... Our faith in God is essential. But equally important is God's faith in us."

Jim Dawson, location manager for Catholic Cemeteries in Indianapolis, said on Nov. 28 that he is pleased to see the completion of the St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum, construction of new roads in Holy Cross and St. Joseph cemeteries, and landscaping on the historic and sacred grounds.

"It's been a long time coming," Dawson said. "We were able to complete the paving last summer, and it's made all the difference in the world in the appearance of the cemeteries."

Dawson said the crypts in the St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum provide the last opportunities to purchase burial space in the historic cemeteries. There are 318 crypts, and most are sold.

"The first mausoleum building that was completed a couple of years ago is probably 90 percent sold," Dawson said. "The newest building, which Msgr. Schaedel dedicated on All Souls Day, is about 75 percent sold. If people are serious about wanting burial space at St. Joseph Cemetery, they should contact the cemetery office sooner rather than later."

(For more information about the St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum, call the Catholic Cemeteries office in Indianapolis at 317-784-4439.) †



Above, an angel statue "greet" visitors to the historic St. Joseph Cemetery in Indianapolis. The St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum includes new Stations of the Cross that may be dedicated in memory of loved ones.

Left, this statue of St. Joseph holding the Christ Child was restored and placed in the courtyard of the mausoleum. It was originally part of St. Joseph Chapel, which was built in 1874 on the site of the new mausoleum. The old chapel was damaged by age and weather, and had to be taken down.

Recently paved roads in the historic Holy Cross and St. Joseph cemeteries in Indianapolis make it easier to drive by the gravesites and park near the new St. Joseph Courtyard Mausoleum and Stations of the Cross there. Holy Cross Cemetery was established in the early 1800s by members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Members of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis established St. Joseph Cemetery there a few years later.



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Editorial



CNS photo from UCAAN

Bishop Joseph Xu Zhixuan of Wanzhou ordains Auxiliary Bishop Paul He Zeqing, left, during Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Wanzhou, China, on Oct. 18. Bishop Xu ordained Bishop He for the Diocese of Wanxian in the government-approved Catholic Church; the ordination took place with the approval of the Vatican.

Vigorous Church in China

A recent trip to China showed a vigorous Church there.

It was a sharp contrast to what existed there during a previous trip 19 years ago. At that time, the priest said the Mass in Latin while facing the wall, just as in pre-Vatican II days. This was an anomaly: The Chinese, who were not in communion with Rome, said the Mass in Latin while the Latin Rite Church used the vernacular. The small congregation, composed mainly of elderly Chinese women and members of diplomatic staffs, said their own prayers, usually the rosary, and the priest and congregation came together only at Communion.

All that has changed! On Sunday, Oct. 30, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Beijing, one of two Catholic churches in China's capital, was packed. All the pews were taken and people were standing in the back several rows deep. Although there were people there from the international diplomatic staffs, at least 90 percent of the people were Chinese. Young people in the congregation, both singles and couples with their child, outnumbered the old people.

The 10 a.m. Mass was in English, with the first two readings said also in French, but there were also Masses in Chinese scheduled for other times. (The Chinese learn English beginning in the second grade, and billboards and road signs now are in both English and Chinese.) The Mass was like any of the Masses in the United States except that the hymns were sung with more enthusiasm, the words to the hymns and responses projected on large screens. Even the practice of holding hands across the aisles during the Our Father has spread to China.

This Church, obviously, is part of the state-sanctioned Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association since it's out in the open. The Chinese government refuses it any connection with Rome. There is also an underground Catholic Church that maintains an allegiance to Rome. Eighteen of its bishops are in some form of detention. Masses are usually said and sacraments administered in private homes. Seminarians and religious are educated outside the country, and ordinations kept quiet.

The Catholic Patriotic Association permits the Catholic Church to conduct worship within a church but refuses to permit any religious instruction, lectures, or baptisms of anyone under the age of 18. That's why millions of Catholics in China participate in the underground Church. Many of those who attended Mass in the cathedral probably go to the underground Church for religious instructions and baptism.

The number of Catholics, estimated now at 12 million, continues to grow in China. There are 110 dioceses, more than 6,000 churches, 136 bishops (70 in the open church and 66 underground, including those 18 in detention), more than 3,000 priests and 5,000 women religious. More than 70,000 Catholics live in Yichang and 300,000 live in the Three Gorges area. Most Catholics live in the Province of Hebei, where most of the inhabitants of many villages are poor Catholic farmers.

We hope that Pope Benedict XVI will be able to figure out a way to bring the open Catholic Church and the underground Church together. Right now, the Chinese government insists that the Vatican transfer its diplomatic mission from Taipei to Beijing and give the Chinese government a role in naming bishops in order to re-establish diplomatic relations between China and the Vatican. But for some time now, the Vatican has been quietly recognizing the legitimacy of the bishops appointed by the Catholic Patriotic Association, and it now recognizes about two-thirds of them.

That's where the problem exists. Since the Vatican has recognized some bishops as legitimate but not others, and only legitimate bishops can ordain priests, nobody really knows who is a true bishop and who is not, and which priests have been validly ordained.

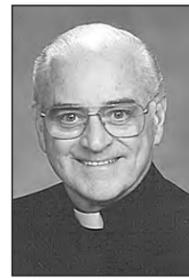
The people at that Mass, though, were simply there to worship God as true Catholics, as well as they can. At the prayers of the faithful, there was a prayer for "our bishop Michael," but none for the pope. Whenever the Vatican and the Chinese government can agree to free the Church in China—and surely that will happen—the Catholics in China will be ready.

— John F. Fink

Spirituality for Today/John Catoir

Learn how to manage your stress

If you'd like to feel more at peace during the holidays, why not do what St. Teresa of Avila did? Learn how to manage your stress.



St. Teresa was filled with fear and inner turmoil, and her superiors scolded her day after day. She found a way to manage emotions, and in the process

learned that joy prevails over sorrow.

Teresa was born near Avila, Spain, in 1515. At age 21, she entered the Carmelite order, but soon became discontent. The emotional pain was partly because she was sickly and partly because life in the convent was not what she expected.

In the 16th century, the vow of poverty was often compromised. Nuns from wealthy families had many privileges that the poorer sisters were denied. The ideal of equality, which is supposed to be practiced in every convent, was routinely disregarded.

When Teresa became sick, she was sent home to recuperate. Two years later, after prayer and rest, she found the strength to return and immediately began working to reform convent life. She wasn't asking for better treatment, she just wanted the convent to attain a higher degree of holiness. Some called her a perfectionist, but it was more a matter of detesting mediocrity.

Her superiors often reprimanded her for being proud and headstrong. This upset her and made her feel guilty. When they threatened to send her home for her "bad attitude," she questioned her own motives: "Maybe I am filled with pride. ... One day I might be

dismissed from the order. ... Maybe I am going against Jesus, who said, 'Judge not that you be not judged.' "

It was a living nightmare.

To keep from having a breakdown, Teresa decided on a plan to control her thoughts. She wrote this little prayer for herself, and repeated it over and over until she regained her confidence:

"Let nothing disturb you, let nothing cause you fear.

"God is unchanging. Patience obtains all.

"Whoever has God needs nothing else.

"God alone suffices."

Once she took control of her thoughts, by repeating this prayer over and over, she persevered, got the strength to continue and eventually succeeded beyond her wildest dreams.

In 1567, the Vatican gave her permission to begin a new branch of the Carmelites. She even expanded her dream of reform to the male members of the order.

When Teresa died on Oct. 4, 1582, she had established 16 new houses of women and 14 new houses of men in the then new Discalced Carmelites. Teresa eventually was canonized a saint and named a doctor of the Church, all of which proves that if you set your sights high and learn to control your thoughts, your emotions gradually will calm down and your life will become more manageable and more joyful.

Joy is the infallible sign of God's presence. Learning to focus on God's loving presence and less on your own fears is the key to a rich and fruitful spiritual life.

(Father John Catoir is a columnist for Catholic News Service.) †

Letters to the Editor

Limiting pain doesn't make it right

What a touching concept in the Nov. 11 *Criterion* on the U.S. House of Representative's efforts to determine whether fetuses experience pain when they are aborted.

First, we should anesthetize them and then they can be killed. Exactly whose pain are these people trying to mitigate, anyway? Have we lost any sense of the gift of life here? Are we giving up on ending this holocaust?

Dan Wickizer, Shelbyville

There are many challenges for the laity to address

As I finished reading John Fink's editorial, "Challenge to the Laity," in the Nov. 18 *Criterion*, I thought, is that all there is? It seems to me the challenge for all Christians is so much more than pre-marital sex, same-sex unions and filthy entertainment.

Christ talks more about justice for the poor and the needy than about sexual matters. Referring to the bishops writing about the apostolate, of lay people, Fink quotes, "Among the tasks of the apostolate Christian social action is pre-eminent."

Our Church has such a strong and generous history of social action, which of course includes social justice for the poor and needy, that we are definitely not working to the extent of our possibilities if we are not involved in spreading Christ's love this way.

Are we writing to our congressmen about providing a living wage for those

who are working? Are we striving to get health care coverage for all our citizens? Are we interested in whether there is affordable housing for all people? Do we speak out against the death penalty as our Church now is? Were we outspoken against the war in Iraq as our Church was?

For me, these are the more difficult challenges in our culture.

Gerard Burford, Indianapolis

Thank you, St. Pius X parishioners

The people from St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis involved with the Communion ministry to the people at the Forum at the Crossing are to be commended for their wonderful spiritual program they faithfully have each Wednesday. Words can't express how much they are appreciated.

Pat Shea, Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content.

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

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717.

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Don't let Advent pass without joyfully making room for God

In the ancient world, "advent" was a technical term. It referred to the arrival of a person of high office, such as an emperor or king. In the pagan world, it could also signify the coming of a god or goddess who was emerging from obscurity and making his or her presence known. The advent of the god or goddess might be celebrated in pagan ritual. Christianity took over this word "advent" to signify the entry of Jesus Christ in the procession of life on earth, something truly to be anticipated and celebrated.

The most profound meaning of Christian Advent can be understood in its several aspects. It connotes an important visit. It is a time of expectant waiting. It is a time of quiet joy.

The backdrop for the season of Advent is intended as a time of reflective quiet in the days before Christmas. For many folks, it is anything but that. But we should not simply concede that the weeks before Christmas must be hectic and anxious. We have something to say about that.

This time before Christmas can take on a completely different flavor if we choose to see it as a time of preparing for a special visit from God, who wants to enter our lives and become closer to us.

We can welcome this special visit of God, who loves us as individuals, as a family and also as a community of faith.

This is a time when, with God's help, we might make a special effort to free ourselves a bit more from being possessed by our work or other preoccupations that tend to keep God at bay. We might resolve to step aside from being driven by things or other people in order to give God a chance to help us carry our everyday burdens. Advent reminds us that God wants to be with us.

It is also a time of expectant waiting. For most of us, waiting is not a pleasant experience. When I think of waiting, I remember the experience of what seemed like endless hours in the eye doctor's office as a kid while my eyes were being dilated for the exam. During that waiting, I couldn't read; I couldn't do anything but sit there, and I wasn't good at it.

That is not the kind of waiting that underscores the meaning of the Christian Advent. The time before Christmas is intended to be a waiting full of hope. Waiting is something familiar in all the stages of life for everyone. We are always hoping for better times.

As Christians, we hope that the Lord will be with us every step of the way on our pilgrim journey in life. We hope and

pray that, if not now, someday he "will gather up all our tears and troubles" in that kingdom where every tear will be wiped away. Even in sorrow, we can grieve with hope because we know that some day we will enter the Father's house where everything will be OK.

An Advent thank you for the gift of our faith is timely. If we had nothing to hope for, life would indeed be empty. A prayerful pause during the days before Christmas helps us deepen our awareness of the true meaning of the procession of life on the way to God's house.

Advent reminds us that life can indeed be a procession of joy as we make our way to the kingdom. Christian joy is not something superficial or fleeting that disappears after all the gifts have been opened on Christmas morning. Even human suffering cannot deprive us of joy. In fact, human suffering and joy are not contradictory. Joy is a sense of happiness that is rooted in a deep inner peace in our hearts. When all is said and done, God is

with us.

Deep inner peace, of course, means that we open our hearts to God who has come and continues to come to be with us. On the other hand, sadness of heart and joy can be contradictory. Sadness of spirit that comes from a less than truthful life can suffocate Christian joy. The good news is that Jesus Christ gave us a remedy for spiritual sadness, namely the sacrament of reconciliation. Advent provides us with the special opportunity to make things right between us and God, who comes to be with us.

The true spirit of preparing for the birthday of Jesus and the promise of eternal happiness in the Father's house has rightly led to the tradition of exchanging gifts at Christmas. The important thing is to remember why we share the joy of giving. Then Advent has a chance to become a season of quiet joy and waiting with hope. †

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for December

Catholic Grade Schools: that they may teach our children the Catholic faith and assist them in hearing and answering God's call to service in the Church, especially as priests or religious.

No dejemos que pase el Adviento sin dedicar gozosamente un espacio para Dios

En el mundo antiguo, "adviento" era un término técnico. Se refería a la llegada de una persona de una institución superior, tal como un emperador o un rey. En el mundo pagano, también podía significar la llegada de un dios o una diosa quien emergía de la oscuridad y daba a conocer su presencia. El adviento de un dios o diosa podía celebrarse por medio de un ritual pagano. El cristianismo se apoderó de la palabra "adviento" para referirse a la llegada de Jesucristo en la procesión de la vida en la Tierra, algo que debe esperarse y celebrarse en grande.

El significado más profundo del Adviento cristiano puede entenderse a través de sus diversos aspectos. Tiene la connotación de una visita importante. Constituye una época de espera vigilante. Constituye una época de alegría sigilosa.

El telón de fondo de la temporada de Adviento se concibe como una época de reflexión sosegada en los días previos a la Navidad. Para muchos compañeros es todo menos eso. Pero no debemos simplemente entregarnos a la idea de que las semanas anteriores a la Navidad deben ser agitadas y llenas de ansiedad. Tenemos algo que decir al respecto.

Esta época que precede a la Navidad puede adquirir un cariz totalmente diferente si elegimos verla como un momento para prepararse para una visita especial de Dios, quien desea adentrarse en nuestras vidas y acercarse a nosotros. Podemos darle la bienvenida a esta visita especial del Dios que nos ama como personas,

como familia y también como comunidad de fe.

Esta es una época en la cual, con la ayuda de Dios, podemos hacer un esfuerzo especial para liberarnos un poco más de la posesividad de nuestro trabajo y otras preocupaciones que suelen mantener a Dios alejado de nosotros. Quizás nos hagamos el propósito de evitar dejarnos llevar por las cosas o las demás personas, para poder darle a Dios la oportunidad de ayudarnos a soportar las cargas cotidianas. El Adviento nos recuerda que Dios desea estar con nosotros.

Asimismo, es una época de espera vigilante. Para la mayoría de nosotros, esperar no constituye una experiencia placentera. Cuando pienso en esperar, recuerdo la experiencia de lo que parecían ser horas interminables en el consultorio del oftalmólogo cuando era niño y me habían dilatado las pupilas para el examen. Durante la espera, no podía leer, no podía hacer nada más que estar allí sentado y no era bueno en eso.

Este no es el tipo de espera que pone de relieve el significado del Adviento cristiano. La época que precede a la Navidad está destinada a ser una espera llena de esperanza. La espera es algo cotidiano para todo el mundo en todas las etapas de la vida. Siempre esperamos que vengan tiempos mejores.

Como cristianos, esperamos que el Señor esté con nosotros a cada paso de nuestro peregrinaje en la travesía de la vida. Esperamos y rezamos por que, si no

en este momento, algún día Él "recoja todas nuestras lágrimas y nuestros problemas" en el reino donde toda lágrima será enjugada. Aun en la aflicción podemos lamentarnos con esperanza porque sabemos que algún día entraremos en la casa del Padre donde todo estará bien.

Resulta muy oportuno un agradecimiento de Adviento por el obsequio de nuestra fe. En efecto, si no esperáramos nada, la vida sería vacía. Una pausa de oración durante estos días antes de la Navidad nos ayuda a profundizar nuestra conciencia sobre el verdadero significado de la procesión de la vida camino a la casa de Dios.

El Adviento nos recuerda que la vida puede ser, de hecho, una procesión jubilosa, mientras vamos camino al reino. El gozo cristiano no es algo superficial o fugaz que desaparece después de abrir todos los regalos en la mañana del día de Navidad. Ni siquiera el sufrimiento humano puede privarnos del júbilo. De hecho, el sufrimiento y la alegría humana no son contradictorios. El júbilo es el sentido de alegría que se encuentra profundamente enraizado en una paz interna en nuestros corazones. A final de cuentas, Dios está con nosotros.

Por supuesto, una profunda paz interior significa que nosotros abrimos nuestros corazones a Dios, quien ha venido y continúa viniendo para estar con nosotros. Por otra parte, la tristeza de corazón y el júbilo pueden ser contradictorios. La tristeza de espíritu proveniente de una vida algo menos que verdadera puede sofocar el gozo cristiano. La buena noticia es que Jesucristo nos dio un remedio para la tristeza espiritual, a saber, el sacramento de la reconciliación. El Adviento nos brinda la oportunidad especial de arreglar las cosas entre nosotros y Dios, quien viene para estar con nosotros.

El verdadero espíritu de preparación para el nacimiento de Jesús y la promesa de la felicidad eterna en la casa del Padre nos han conducido acertadamente a la tradición de intercambiar regalos en Navidad. Lo importante es recordar por qué compartimos la dicha de obsequiar. Así el Adviento tiene la oportunidad de convertirse en una temporada de alegría sigilosa y de espera con esperanza. †

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en diciembre

Escuelas primarias católicas: que ellos puedan enseñar la fe católica a nuestros niños y puedan ayudarles a oír y contestar la llamada de Dios para ser vir en la Iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosos.

Events Calendar

December 5

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Free workshop, **"Look Good, Feel Better,"** women with cancer, 2 p.m. Registration: 317-782-6704.

St. Athanasius Byzantine Church, 1117 S. Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. **St. Nicholas feast day**, Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m., St. Nicholas visits after liturgy. Information: 317-632-4157.

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis.

Charismatic Mass, 7 p.m. Information: 502-239-0208.

December 6

St. Bridget Church, 404 E. Vine St., Liberty. **Healing Mass**, 7:30 p.m. Information: 765-825-7087.

December 7

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Gloria Deo Concert 2005**, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-634-4519.

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Solo

Singles, Christmas party, **Catholic singles** 50 and over, single, widowed, divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-359-0220.

December 9

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei meeting**, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast in Priori Hall, \$15 members, \$20 guests. Information: 317-919-5316.

Our Lady of the Apostles Family Center, 2884 N. 700 West, Greenfield. **"Live Like a Saint Today,"** Leon Suprenant,

presenter, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-891-0029.

St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Family Night at St. Mike's**, pitch-in dinner, 5:30 p.m., faith formation for adults and children, 6:45 p.m. Information: 317-926-7359.

St. Michael Parish, 519 Jefferson St., Greenfield. **Natural Family Planning (NFP) class**, 9-11 a.m. Information: 317-462-2246.

Robert Irsay Pavilion, 1303

West 116th St., Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette).

Christmas Celebration, benefits the Little Sisters of the Poor, reservation deadline Nov. 29. Information: 317-872-6420

December 11

St. Mary Church, 415 E. 8th St., New Albany. **Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, Las Mañanitas, celebration in Spanish, 11 p.m. Information: 502-494-3264.

Holy Family Council, Knights of Columbus Hall, 200 N. Lynhurst Dr., Indianapolis.

Breakfast, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Information: 317-240-3782.

St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry, **"Christmas—the Rest of the Story,"** 2:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-4055.

Monastery Immaculate Conception, Ferdinand, Ind. Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, **Marian Pilgrimage**, 2 p.m. (EST). Information: 812-367-1411. †

Retreats . . .

December 2-4

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Annual Charismatic Retreat**. Information: 317-545-7681.

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Advent Silent Retreat**, \$140 resident per person, \$110 commuter per person. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

December 3

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Introduction to Centering Prayer,"** 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Benedictine Sister Anna Marie Megel, presenter. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

December 3-4

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Retreat with Healing Angels,"** Franciscan Sister Anita Brelage, presenter, \$132 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

December 6

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Day of Reflection**, "Francis and Greccio: Understanding the Incarnation," 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or e-mail retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 6-December 20

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, Providence Center, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Spirit Pro retreat series, **"Praying Toward Christmas."** Information: 812-535-4531 or e-mail spiritpro@spsmw.org.

December 9-11

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"An Advent Retreat,"** Franciscan Sisters Judy Hillman and Joan Laughlin, presenters. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **"With, In and Through the Blessed Virgin Mary: The Spirituality of the Franciscans of the Immaculate,"** Father Michael Gauvreau, presenter, \$120 per person, \$150 couple. Information: 812-825-4642, ext. 200.

December 10

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Christmas Creations,"** Franciscan Sister Ann Vonder Meulen, presenter, children 8-12, 1-3:30 p.m., \$20 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 14

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Evening Reflection**, "The Lessons Learned from Greccio," 7-9:30 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or e-mail retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 15

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"An Advent Day of Reflection,"** Father Bob Sims, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$30 includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. "The Theme of Conversion in Scripture and Life Experiences," **"There's Hope!"** three Thursdays, session two, afternoon session, 7-8:30 p.m. evening session, \$30 series, Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"The Spirit in These Times,"** monthly series, 9-10:45 a.m., \$30 series, \$8 per session, Franciscan Father Carl Hawver, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

December 16-18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Silent retreat for men**, "The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me," Jesuit Father Benjamin Hawley, presenter, \$150 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Non-Directed Silent Retreat Weekend,"** \$125 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.arching.org/fatima.

Kordes Retreat Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Preparing for the Coming of Jesus, **Advent Retreat**, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-880-2777 or e-mail kordes@thedome.org.

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Family**

Christmas Retreat. Information: 812-923-8817 or e-mail retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 17-18

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Retreat with Healing Angels,"** Franciscan Sister Anita Brelage, presenter, \$132 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

December 20

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Reflection**, "Finding a Thankful Heart," Msgr. Paul Koetter, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$30 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

December 27-31

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. "A Monastic Observance," **experience the monastic life**, men age 18 and older. Information: 812-357-6611 or e-mail avinson@saintmeinrad.edu.

December 31-January 1

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"New Year's Eve Retreat,"** \$135 per person, \$250 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 4-5

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, Hwy 150, Floyds Knobs. **Young adult retreat**, young adults 18-23, \$55 per person. Information: 800-588-2454 or www.nadyoungadult.org.

January 7-8

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Married Couples Retreat,"** Brennan and Marie Hill, presenters \$250 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 7-13

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Humility Matters,"** Benedictine Sister Mary Margaret Funk, presenter. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

January 9-13

Kordes Retreat Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). **"The Christian Call to Discipleship,"** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-880-2777 or e-mail kordes@thedome.org.

January 13-15

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E.

56th St., Indianapolis. **Tobit weekend**. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Pre-Cana Conference**, 1:45-6 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596.

January 19

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"The Spirit in These Times,"** monthly series, 9-10:45 a.m., \$30 series, \$8 per session, Franciscan Father Carl Hawver, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

January 20-22

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **"Blessed Grieving" retreat**, Msgr. Paul Koetter and Dr. Margie Pike, presenters. Information: 812-923-8817 or e-mail retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Retrouvaille program for troubled marriages**. Information: 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1586.

January 21-April 22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Spirit of the Seasons" retreat**, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Benedictine Sister Antoinette Purcell, presenter. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

January 22

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Adoration 101,"** Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, presenter, 7 p.m., \$20 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 23

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Your Call, Your Cup, Your Talents, Your Response,"** Richard Smith, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 24

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Day of Reflection**, "Blessed or Stressed," Franciscan Sister Patty Campbell, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$45 per person, early registration. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com. †



Bishop Chatard place-kicker receives award

Place-kicker and wide receiver Kevin Ball, a senior at Bishop Chatard High School and member of St. Luke Parish, both in Indianapolis, receives the IHSAA Class 3A Mental Attitude Award following the Bishop Chatard Trojans' 7-0 loss on Nov. 26 to NorthWood High School in Napanee, Ind., in the 3A championship game at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis. Standing with Kevin are, from left, his mother, Mary Ellen Ball; his brother, Brian Ball; his sister, Emily Ball; his father, Dr. Michael Ball; and a representative of Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, the award's sponsor.



Roncalli linebacker receives award

Linebacker Nick Banich, fourth from left, a senior at Roncalli High School and member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, both in Indianapolis, receives the IHSAA Class 4A Mental Attitude Award following the Roncalli Rebels' 28-27 loss in the Class 4A championship game to Lowell High School in Lowell, Ind., on Nov. 26 at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis. Standing with Nick are, from left, his parents, Joe and Jeannie Banich; his brother, Kevin Banich; and a representative from Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, the award's sponsor.

Concert to benefit Gulf parish damaged by hurricane

By Mary Ann Wyand

St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis has “adopted” Our Lady of the Gulf Parish in Bay St. Louis, Miss., whose facilities were severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina in late August.

Proceeds from the adult choir’s annual Winter Concert scheduled at 7 p.m. on Dec. 15 at St. Christopher Church, 5301 W. 16th St., will help restore the music ministry at the Gulf Coast parish.

The Advent concert will feature a variety of unique Christian songs, and donations will be collected for the Mississippi parish to help defray the cost of repairs to the parish’s musical instruments damaged during the Aug. 29 hurricane.

“This is the first time [that] St. Christopher’s Winter Concert has identified a benefactor outside its own parish, but we can empathize,” said Larry Hurt, director of music at the Indianapolis West Deanery parish.

“St. Christopher’s worship space was damaged by fire a few years ago,” Hurt said, “and I remember how anxious I became while we restored our worship space and our music ministry.”

Ed Grotkowski, director of music at Our Lady of the Gulf Parish, said both faith communities enjoy a “very

lively” music ministry.

Grotkowski said members of the Mississippi parish “really appreciate the outreach and generosity of the St. Christopher musicians in helping us to restore an all-important element of our worship service—music.”

Hurt said choir members will perform a variety of Christian music ranging from seasonal songs, such as “Run to Bethlehem” by Steven Warner, to songs recorded by the Notre Dame Folk Choir, such as “Run with the Light of Christ” by Karen Schneider Kiner.

Other concert selections include Nicholas Micchelli’s arrangement of “ ‘Tis the Gift to be Simple,” Ricky Manalo’s “Pie Jesu” adaptation from “Requiem Mass,” Francis Patrick O’Brien’s “Wood of the Cradle,” and Eileen Berry and Dan Forrest’s “Never a Brighter Star.”

St. Christopher Parish was established by former Bishop Joseph Elmer Ritter in 1937 west of the historic Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and now has 2,400 regis-

tered households with more than 6,400 parishioners.

Hurt said the parish sponsors more than 50 Christian service ministries dedicated to witnessing and sharing in Christ’s mission of evangelization.

Also during Advent, St. Christopher School students are collecting gifts to send to students at St. Stephen School in New Orleans..

Our Lady of the Gulf Parish was established in 1847 at 228 South Beach Blvd. in Bay St. Louis, Miss. The parish campus, which sustained extensive damage during Hurricane Katrina, includes the church, Bay Catholic Elementary School for pre-kindergarten through sixth-grade students and Our Lady Academy for girls in the seventh- through 12th grades.

(For more information about Our Lady of the Gulf Parish’s rebuilding efforts, log on to www.olgchurch.net, www.baycatholic.org and www.ourladyacademy.com.) †

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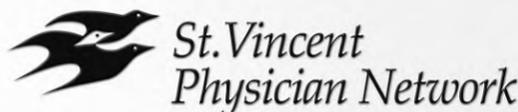


2005
TUESDAY 13

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SCHOOLS

continued from page 1

will be looking "to see what you did," she said.

Nov. 7 was designated "St. Thomas Aquinas School Day" in Indianapolis by Mayor Bart Peterson, who joined the students, faculty, parents, archdiocesan Catholic education representatives, state legislators and other special guests for an outdoor pep rally a few days before Bonnie Stevens, the principal, and other staff members traveled to Washington to accept the Blue Ribbon award.

"This is a big, big deal," Mayor Peterson said. "Very few schools in the entire country get chosen to be a Blue

Ribbon school. This means you're the best of the best, ... you have great teachers, ... great, involved parents, ... the school is well-run [and] ... each and every one of you students works really hard every single day to do your best. That's all anybody can ever ask of you, and I want to say thank you to all of you. ... You've done a great job. Keep up the good work."

Offering his congratulations, the mayor said St. Thomas Aquinas School exemplifies the best of the city's Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood because it has a long tradition of racial and economic diversity and has provided quality education since its founding by the archdiocese in 1941.

See AWARDS, page 12



Theresa Slipher, left, principal of St. Michael School in Greenfield, joins her faculty and students in singing the national anthem during a Nov. 28 ceremony at the school to celebrate receiving a 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award from the U.S. Department of Education.



Cheered on by her school's students and eighth-grade cheerleaders, a St. Simon the Apostle School teacher runs through a banner during a Nov. 28 ceremony celebrating the Indianapolis school's receiving a 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award.



St. Thomas Aquinas School students release blue balloons during a Nov. 7 pep rally celebrating the Indianapolis North Deanery school's selection as a 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson joined the students, faculty, parents and guests for the celebration and proclaimed Nov. 7 as "St. Thomas Aquinas School Day."

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December 11, 2005

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Memories nurture our spiritual relationship with God

By Fr. Robert L. Kinast

Our memory of the past plays an important role in our spiritual life.

Memory is important because the spiritual life entails the relationship of the whole person to God, and memory preserves important aspects of any person's life.

Memory's most obvious role is to connect us with our past. This provides a sense of history that enables us to put the present moment in its proper, larger context, to learn from the past and to experience ourselves as part of the living sequence of events and people that define who we are.

The collective memory of the Church is its tradition, and it is celebrated most fully at the eucharistic liturgy. Biblical stories and psalms unite us with our spiritual ancestors, while the eucharistic prayer explicitly invokes the memory of Jesus' Last Supper and his desire that we remember him in the breaking of the bread.

Another role for memory is to keep us real in the sense of being aware of the actual events that have shaped our lives rather than what we might wish had been the case.

Human recall of past events, after all,

is not perfect. People can be selective about which experiences they remember, and they can remember them in the way they want rather than the way they were. This is especially true for unpleasant, embarrassing or painful memories.

Nonetheless, memory provides a "rootedness" and identity that enable us to function with a degree of assurance about who we are. This is one reason why many adults trace their family ancestry as far back as they can and why victims of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina search for mementos of their past.

The same impulse works in the spiritual life because memory provides us with a spiritual autobiography. Although I don't pray today as I did when I was a child, I still pray with just as much confidence that God is loving and responsive, and with just as much trust that my prayer unites me with the community of the faithful around the world.

A third role for memory is to retain the painful and disappointing experiences on our life's journey. This is helpful because it enables us to revisit those events and, in so doing, very possibly come to terms with shortcomings and overcome enduring obstacles.

If we had no memory, whatever affected us negatively would continue to

God strengthens us with love

By Fr. Paul Campbell

For the past few months, I have been preparing our family home to be sold. Many memories came to me as I moved from room to room deciding what to do with the stuff of our family's life from the past 30 years.

I will always recall Dad standing in our driveway saying, "We'll be here."

In my years of religious life and priesthood, I have lived in 11 different places. I always was going someplace with the urgency of someone who didn't really understand the important things in life.

Many times, I would rush in for an overnight stay and would get a helping of my mother's Sunday cooking regardless of the day of the week. My parents were always ready to nourish my body while healing an occasional aching spirit.

My father died two years ago, but whenever I drive away from our home I can hear him say, "We'll be here."

During Advent season, I can imagine Dad's words being spoken by God. Just

as in my memories, God is always here.

But we cannot take God for granted. While Advent comes during a very busy time of year, its purpose is to make time for us to notice the really important things.

As I packed up the Christmas decorations, I took comfort in remembering each item's history and was reminded of the wonderful moments I spent lying on the floor looking up at our tree. They were peaceful moments when I felt my family's love and God's love.

This Advent, try to make time as a family for an evening drive to look at Christmas decorations and remember that God's words to us are, "I'll be here."

Advent is a time to realize that God is always here for us. But are we moving too quickly to realize what that presence means? As during my trips home, God always greets us, nourishes us and strengthens us with unconditional love.

(Father Paul Campbell is associate pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Middletown, Del.) †



Christmas is for many people a pre-eminent example of an event surrounded by positive memories. The holidays provide many opportunities to relive memories of the past and create new memories for the future.

wield its influence upon us, but we wouldn't know where it came from or what to do about it.

This function of memory plays a large role in counseling and psychoanalysis. Under skillful guidance, people can retrieve painful memories that inhibit their development and begin to deal with them in a positive way.

The same is true in the spiritual life where the process is termed a healing of memories. With the help of a trained spiritual mentor, an individual can retrieve a hurtful, traumatic event from the past, bring it forth for analysis and interpretation, then replace it with a new experience that has a healing effect and that stimulates spiritual growth.

For example, people whose religious formation as children gave them a feeling of unworthiness or convinced them that they could never really please God can look at those feelings in light of their positive adult experiences and claim a healthier, more loving relationship with God.

Healing memories of this kind is not easy or quick, but a person who denies them or refuses to face and replace them will be holding back from entering the kind of holistic relationship that God desires in the spiritual life.

On the other hand, the more a person

opens up to God fully and honestly, the more that person is likely to overcome unresolved conflicts or emotional damage from the past.

Along with healing painful memories, reinforcing positive memories is also important. Reliving important, formative events from the past keeps these events alive in one's awareness and prepares a person to recognize similar experiences in the present.

Drawing upon the memory of past experiences of forgiveness, support, acceptance, grace and love enables a person to face current challenges with a spirit of greater confidence, expectation and hope.

Christmas is for many people a pre-eminent example of an event surrounded by positive memories—memories related greatly to their relationship with God.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas throughout the Advent season, we relive memories of the past, create new ones for the future and give thanks for the gift of memory, which provides such a rich store of experience to nurture our spiritual life.

(Father Robert L. Kinast is director of the Center for Theological Reflection in Clearwater, Fla.) †

Discussion Point

Memories shape our lives

This Week's Question

Why are memories of our early years in life so important to us?

"For me as a father, childhood memories are important because they helped shape me. They help me now so that I, in turn, can shape my children." (John Baker, Little Rock, Ark.)

"Memories build a foundation for the journey and for what we are in the rest of our lives." (Susan Calvo, O'Neill, Neb.)

"We build upon memories and become what we are because of them. They are important because they are a part of us and are intertwined with us, and to deny them is to deny part of ourselves. I'm lucky [because]

my memories are good and [are] like a little vacation from where I am. Because of them, I am where I am." (Andi Little, Savage, Minn.)

"If you look back [on your life], you can often help someone else because you may have been through something that someone else hasn't." (Edith Garcia, Los Angeles, Calif.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Tell of a situation that Catholics in another part of the world face that concerns you. Can people like you do anything about this?

To respond for possible publication, write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



CNS photo by Gregory L. Tracy, The Pilot

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Jesus in the Gospels: He curses a fig tree

See Matthew 21:18-22, Mark 11:12-25



When we read the story of Jesus cursing a fig tree, our first impression is that he must have had a really bad morning. He cursed the tree for not having any fruit on it, even though it wasn't the season for figs. I guess we've all had days when things just didn't go right and it helps to know that even Jesus felt that way. But let's not get carried away. Jesus did this for a purpose.

The previous day, Jesus had had a triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In the evening, he walked the two miles back to Bethany, where he presumably stayed with Lazarus, Martha and Mary. This was one of three places he and the Apostles stayed when they were in Jerusalem. Another was in a cave in the Garden of Gethsemane at the bottom of the Mount

of Olives. The third was another cave near the top of the Mount of Olives, known as the Cave of Eleona. It's not clear whether "Eleona" comes from the semitic word *elyona* (upper) or from the Greek word *elaion* (cave in an olive grove).

Anyway, on Monday morning Jesus and his disciples were returning to Jerusalem to teach in the temple. He was hungry (Martha must not have given him breakfast), so he went over to a fig tree along the road. When he couldn't find any figs on it, he said: "May no fruit ever come from you again." According to Matthew's account, the tree immediately dried up. Mark's account is a bit different: The disciples found the tree withered the next day.

Matthew says that the disciples were amazed at this. My guess is that they were as amazed at Jesus' apparent temper as they were by the tree drying up. Then Jesus used the episode to teach. He often taught by parables. This time, he wasn't just telling his parable, he was

acting it. He was performing an act similar to that of prophets in the Old Testament, similar to what Ezekiel did (Ez 12:1-20).

Old Testament prophets Jeremiah, Joel and Hosea all used fig trees to designate Israel. Now Jesus was doing the same, using this action parable to represent his judgment on barren Israel, like the fig tree that wasn't bearing fruit, for refusing to listen to his teachings.

Jesus didn't explain all this to his disciples though. To them, he used the episode to teach the power of prayer made with unwavering faith. If they had faith, he said, they could not only do what he had just done to the fig tree, but they could also say to a mountain, "Be lifted up and thrown into the sea," and it would be done. Earlier, he had said that faith the size of a mustard seed would be sufficient to move a mountain (Mt 17:20).

In Mark's account, Jesus adds that the power of prayer demands not only faith but also forgiveness. We must forgive others if we want God to forgive us. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

It's all a matter of conscience

Sometimes one of the most annoying things about being human is having a conscience. If we weren't burdened with one of those, we could really enjoy life, right?



However, every society has standards of behavior that all its members must follow in order to remain in good standing. Some of these groups may

be more casual about marriage customs or wearing clothing than the rest of us, but they do have their rules.

From what I've read, there are universal demands that emerge in almost any society. These include prohibitions against murder, abuse of children and theft when it involves a threat to the welfare of the community. It's the shadings of truth that differ.

The Church teaches faith "formation," that is, helping us learn to discriminate between a "right" conscience and a convenient one. After all, we humans are adept at rationalizing every thought and action to reduce guilt, avoid recrimination and generally do as we please.

We've become masters of creative spin. Politicians are famous for it, but the rest of us do it as well. One example I heard recently was how some teenagers define

chastity. They vow they are "saving themselves for marriage," but feel free to dress provocatively or immodestly, flirt like people cruising for sex, and place themselves in dangerous situations. Only sexual intercourse seems to be an unacceptable practice in this context.

Adults prevaricate, too. They may economize by serving the family soup and sandwiches for dinner in order to impress others with their expensive clothes, humongous houses or monster cars. They may sign Junior up for football so Dad

'Following God's will requires us to be responsible for discerning what God wants us to do, and then doing it.'

can be proud, or put Sis in junior beauty queen contests so Mom can live out her fantasies, all the time claiming such activities are for the good of the children.

Sometimes, conscience not only can be twisted to fit one's whims, but also used to further seriously bad results. Overly strict parents may forget the scriptural admonition not to nag one's children, "lest they lose heart." In their zeal for their kids to be good, clean, reverent and the rest, they

may instead make them feel unworthy and unloved.

In short, obeying one's conscience is a complicated and difficult task, but one we're obligated by faith to do. Following God's will requires us to be responsible for discerning what God wants us to do, and then doing it.

The number one thing to keep in mind is that the end never justifies the means. Never. Here we discover the fine line between self-defense and aggression or between self-interest and the good of the family, community or world. Serious actions demand serious judgment calls, and very few are black and white decisions.

Heroism, in the end, is stubbornly sticking to the truth of our conscience in whatever venue, whether it's on the battlefield, in a parked car with a girlfriend or trading stocks in a chaotic market. And always, we need prayer to achieve a good conscience.

No matter what society we belong to, by the grace of God we all possess an innate desire for the good. How we define it may differ, but when our life has a prayerful connection to our Creator, I believe we're on the right path.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Advent: the annual giving adventure

During Advent, we prepare ourselves spiritually for the biggest birthday celebration of the year—



Christmas, the commemoration of the birth of Jesus. However, let's face it, no matter how prayerful or meditative we might be during this time, because of traditions long engrained into our families and

society itself, Advent is also a busy, often frenetic, time for preparations of the practical, material and social kind.

Although I would like to concentrate more on the spiritual, like others, I get caught up in the early spirit of the season, too. Although I wish holiday hustle and bustle would not begin Thanksgiving week, I admit that even my family celebrates then with an early gift exchange in honor of St. Nicholas.

Why? Because, for years, we have not been able to get together for St. Nick's

Dec. 6 feast day, which we faithfully enjoyed by hanging stockings when our daughters were younger. Nor can we do this at Christmas because of varying situations and complications that the extended family has in locations other than Indianapolis. All of us mark the real holidays in individual and substantial ways, making Advent almost an adventure.

Changing traditions are not easy, but our time over the Thanksgiving weekend brings us together with high-spirited success. I look upon this as worthwhile, for we have been able to adapt to circumstances without sacrificing the spiritual values of the season. Yes, we exchange gifts early, but they are usually well thought out and sometimes not the material kind. Each of us becomes a gift to the others.

Some years ago, our eldest daughter, Donna, sent me a verse by an "Unknown Author" that I now share with readers. It applies in any season, but particularly—at least in our family—at this time of year. Why? Because it can be applied to anyone

of any faith. (Donna converted to Judaism one year after she sent this.)

The Gift of Giving

*The more you give, the more you get.
The more you laugh, the less you fret.
The more you do unselfishly,
The more you live abundantly.
The more of everything you share,
The more you'll always have to spare.
The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind.
For only what we give away
Enriches life from day to day.*

I see the above working not only in Donna's life, but also in the lives of her sisters, Diane and Lisa. In fact, I see this regularly in the lives of nearly everyone I hold dear, including those who are with our Heavenly Father. After all, the "gift of giving" started with God the Father, his only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit.

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

The Bottom Line/Antoinette Bosco

The holidays for those who live alone

During the holidays, I hear again from friends who live alone about how lonely they feel at this time of year. I relate to what they are saying with empathy.



People live alone for many reasons. Some choose this lifestyle, but for many it is a situation imposed on them: A spouse dies, a child

moves away.

Most of the time, we don't think about the days to come when we will be without companionship in our home. Then that day arrives. We no longer have loved ones to talk with, eat with, quarrel with, pray with, work or laugh with. We face a turning point and an at-first unknown future, but one that definitely will be different.

I went through this lifestyle change when all my children left home as they entered adulthood. I remember sometimes walking from room to room, feeling a loneliness that almost defied description. I still had my job to go to every day, and that was good. It kept me too busy to keep focusing on my loneliness.

But the emptiness was there, and the quiet. I had no one to cook for or argue with or listen to. In all honesty, I think I felt my best usefulness was at an end.

Of course, living alone is not a situation unique to only few of us. In fact, 28 million Americans live alone. That information is found in a new book I grabbed recently because the title caught my attention, *A Party of One, Meditations for Those Who Live Alone* by Joni Woelfel (Resurrection Press, an imprint of Catholic Book Publishing Corp.). The best part of the book was the spirit of it.

Woelfel says it bluntly: "As in all stations in life, the unique dynamics of living alone bring their own challenges, lessons, joys and rewards."

Woelfel's situation arrived unexpectedly. After many years of marriage, and especially having to survive the suicide of a beloved son, she was given the surprising and terrifying news from her husband that he was leaving her. They subsequently reconciled. But she learned so much from that time when she was suddenly thrust into aloneness that she found herself writing about it.

I found it amazing that she could stay so positive, actually even upbeat, when her life so sadly had plunged her into aloneness. When you have to live alone "for whatever reason," she tells readers, you can "take ownership" of your life if you remain confident that you are being guided and "upheld by God."

A word she speaks many times is "empowerment," and she tells how she found ways to get comfort, inspiration and eventually wisdom in her new and sudden situation of living alone.

Often, I felt myself relating to her situation. One chapter, in particular, where she talks about getting sick with influenza, brought back memories. She writes, "As a person living alone, there was no one to bring me chicken soup, a cup of tea or a word of encouragement." I could relate, especially when she admits so honestly there was nothing she could do "but float with the experience." Yet, this somehow, paradoxically, gave her a sense of peace knowing she "was in God's hands, come what may."

Woelfel's advice was what I have learned—that those of us who live alone must take "ownership" for our lives, "confident in being guided and upheld by God."

Remembering that, we all can rejoice in this holiday season.

(Antoinette Bosco is a columnist for Catholic News Service.) †

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2005

- Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
- 2 Peter 3:8-14
- Mark 1:1-8

The second part of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for this Second Sunday of Advent.



When this book was written, God's people were very happy. Their long, dreary exile of four generations in Babylon was about to end, and they were looking forward to returning to their

homeland.

This section of Second Isaiah captures well the joy and relief that the people felt about the end of their exile. It certainly captures their longing to return to their homeland. Also, and importantly, these verses convey well the sense that this happy circumstance has occurred as a result of God's mercy and God's faithfulness to the Covenant.

It was not as if the people had earned God's munificence in this regard or that they had been unusually loyal to the Covenant themselves. To the contrary, their sins had brought misery upon themselves.

But, nevertheless, God's mercy lives so the prophet insists that, upon returning to their homeland, the people must go to Jerusalem, to the holy mountain where stood the temple, and there proclaim aloud the goodness of God.

To any who doubt, this release from exile is proof of God's existence and of God's love.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church presents a passage from the Second Epistle of Peter.

Its theme differs from that of the first reading. The first reading was wonderfully optimistic. This reading is grim in its predictions of dark days and gloom.

However, it is not predicting everlasting death. Bad things will happen, difficult times will come, but God will protect the faithful. In this last reassurance, the second reading parallels the message of the first reading.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the last reading.

It is the beginning of the Gospel, as

the first verse of the reading states, however, of course, it is not the beginning of Luke's Gospel. Already, in earlier chapters, Luke's Gospel has revealed the Infancy Narratives, with their stories of the conception, birth and youth of the Lord.

This reading quotes Isaiah. In this prophecy, God pledged to send a representative to guide the people from death to life, from the deadly effects of their sins to the bright realms of God's forgiveness.

The Gospel then tells of John the Baptist, who went throughout Judea calling people to repentance.

Luke's Gospel, however, is careful to say that John himself was not the messenger promised by God in the writings of Isaiah, but rather that John came before this messenger. The messenger, the Savior, of course, was the Lord Jesus.

Reflection

Advent is the time of the year in which the Church clearly, frankly and directly calls people to remember who they are as humans and to recognize the devastating results of sin.

This message quite bluntly is the lesson of Second Peter. It also is in the messages of Second Isaiah and Luke's Gospel.

Sin, or total estrangement from and rejection of God, is indeed the root of all evil. It produces death itself, not simply earthly death but also eternal death. And, inevitably, it leads to misery in life on earth.

These lessons, while unequivocal and admittedly dour, are not in the end terrifying or filled with doom. Instead, they remind us in all three readings that God's mercy is overwhelming and unending. In God's mercy is hope because sins are forgiven and everlasting life is acquired.

The key to obtaining this mercy personally is to recognize personal sin and repent. God never turns away a sincerely sorrowful sinner.

Always, God's love prevails, but God does not drag us kicking and screaming into heaven. We must turn to God wholeheartedly.

Advent calls us realize our situation. Our situation is that we need God, especially in our sinfulness. We need God's mercy. We must seek it. We must repent. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 5
Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9ab-14
Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday, Dec. 6
Nicholas, bishop
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, Dec. 7
Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, Dec. 8
The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20

Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Friday, Dec. 9
Juan Diego, hermit
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, Dec. 10
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, Dec. 11
Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
(Response) Luke 1:46-50, 53-54
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Sede vacantists believe last valid pope died in 1958

Q What can you tell us about people called "sede vacantists"?



Some people in our area, who belong to the group and claim to be Catholics, believe almost everything about the Church is wrong and against Catholic teaching. According to these people, we should not pay attention to what the popes do or say these days because they are not really popes. Are these people really Catholic? (Texas)

A The term "sede vacante," which is Latin for "the see being vacant," commonly refers to the time between the death of one pope and the election of another, during which time, of course, there is no pope.

In recent decades, however, the phrase has taken on another meaning. A significant number of so-called "traditionalist" Catholics, calling themselves "sede vacantists," believe there has been no valid pope in the Catholic Church since the death of Pope Pius XII in 1958.

The loosely connected branches, represented in several nations around the world, strongly oppose the changes in Catholic faith and practice since Vatican Council II.

They reject the Mass as it is celebrated today, along with an array of other consequences of the council, and see these changes as attacks by the popes on essential orthodox Catholic doctrines and practices.

By no means do all traditionalist Catholics follow this line of thinking. Those who do, however, hold that the popes who have encouraged and promulgated these changes are guilty of heresy or other radical denial of Catholic faith.

Canon law #751 defines heresy as an obstinate denial or doubt of some truth, which is to be believed by divine and Catholic faith. It is a sin that can be imputed only to Catholics. (See, for example, the Vatican II "Decree on Ecumenism," 3.)

"Sede vacantists" point to scandalous actions or heresies committed by every recent pope. For example, in a tract titled "101 Heresies of Anti-Pope John Paul II," the late pope is accused of betraying Catholic belief for apparently kissing the Quran as a mark of respect when he met

with a Catholic, Shiite and Sunni delegation in Rome in 1999.

Thus, according to the "sede vacantists," Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, perhaps John Paul I (who reigned as pope only one month in 1978), John Paul II and Benedict XVI are, in effect, imposters, not valid popes.

One branch of "sede vacantists," however, called conclavists, have taken another direction, that of designating their own pope and, in fact, has designated a number of them.

The most prominent of these was Clemente Dominguez y Gomez, one of several bishops ordained in Spain in 1976 by the archbishop of Hue in Vietnam, Ngo Dinh-Thuc, himself a "sede vacantist," but presumably not a conclavist.

Clemente Dominguez y Gomez proclaimed that God personally designated him to be pope and named himself Pope Gregory XVII. He ordained other bishops as well.

These conclavists profess to be continuing the real Catholic Church during this time when, so they claim, the Church has no other valid, orthodox leaders.

According to one count, there are at present about 20 anti-popes in the world, descending from various "lines" of illicitly consecrated bishops. At least five of these anti-popes are living in the United States.

(A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions that Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 5515, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com.) †

My Journey to God

Advent

In this winter weariness that fills the dark of night and waits for whatever is to come, I look to You, Oh Lord, and know that love is still the light of your redeeming plan.

It is the yearning of my heart that gives me strength and hope and quiet peace until the dawning of Emmanuel.

By Helen Fritz Welter



CNS photo by Gregory A. Shemitz

(Helen Fritz Welter is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. A statue of Mary overlooks a park outside St. Vincent's Hospital in the New York borough of Staten Island. The feast of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8 commemorates the Church dogma that Mary was free from original sin from the first moment of her existence.)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to critterion@archindy.org. †

AWARDS

continued from page 8

St. Thomas Aquinas fourth-grade student Zoë Ellars of Indianapolis said she is very proud of the school, the students' high ISTEP state achievement test scores and the teachers.

"Going to a Blue Ribbon school means that I am receiving one of the best educations possible," Zoë said during the school assembly. "... The Blue Ribbon award inspires me to do the best that I can in school. I am grateful to our teachers for making our school shine."

Seventh-grade student Bianca Chavis of Indianapolis said she was excited that her school is one of only 11 schools in the state to be honored and among the top 10 percent of the schools in the nation.

"A wonderful school has a variety of great things," Bianca said. "Every student ... is smart in a different way."

Across the nation, 245 public schools and 50 private schools were honored this year. With 11 schools honored in Indiana, the archdiocese operates nearly half of the Blue Ribbon schools recognized in the state in 2005.

The recent honors also bring the total number of Catholic schools in the archdiocese honored by the U.S. Department of Education to 20 since 1982. Last year, the archdiocese had six Blue Ribbon schools, and four schools the year before that.

To date, no other diocese in the United States has had as many Blue Ribbon schools as the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

(Mary Ann Wyand contributed to this story.) †



St. Simon the Apostle School students in Indianapolis stand in the shape of a cross on Nov. 18 in the school parking lot to celebrate receiving a 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award. St. Simon School is one of five archdiocesan schools to receive the award this year.

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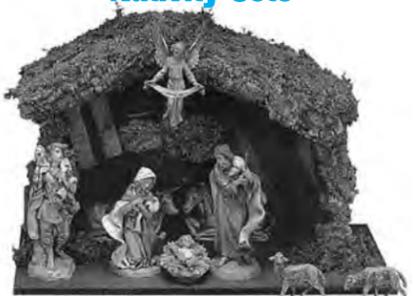
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Missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

The Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be on display at several parishes and adoration chapels as well as a retreat center and college chapel in the archdiocese during December, including on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12.

The missionary image is an exact photographic replica of the imprint of Mary left on the cloak, or *tilma*, of St. Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531.

It has been displayed in more than 1,000 parishes across the United States.

The original image is displayed at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe portrays Mary as an expectant mother.

People who visit the places where the image will be shown are invited to seek the intercession of Mary, who—under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe—is the patroness of the Americas and is closely connected with the pro-life movement.

The image will be available for veneration on Dec. 6-7 at the St. Francis Hall Chapel on the campus of Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis.

On Dec. 6, a eucharistic adoration prayer service for vocations will be held in the chapel from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

The image will be on display at the Divine Mercy Chapel, 3354 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis from 1 p.m. until approximately 8 p.m. on Dec. 8.

A retreat on Mary incorporating the Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be held on Dec. 9-11 at Our Lady of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, in Bloomington.

A Mass on the morning of Dec. 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, will conclude the image's display at the retreat center.

The Marian image will then be taken to St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 1723 "F" St., in Bedford, where it will be on display in the parish's John Paul II Perpetual Adoration Chapel.

Dec. 17 is the last day that the image will be shown in the archdiocese. It will be available for veneration at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis during the 8:30 a.m. Helpers of God's Precious Infants monthly pro-life Mass.

Following the Mass, the missionary image will be taken to an abortion clinic on West 16th Street in Indianapolis, where a prayer service will be held on the sidewalk.

The image will then be taken back to St. Michael Church for Benediction. †



Open house

Left, Benedictine Sister Mildred Wannemuehler, a former prioress of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, examines religious items for sale at the new Shop Inn-spired Books and Gifts store at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center adjacent to the monastery in early November. The Benedictine sisters are sponsoring a Christmas open house from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Dec. 3 at the gift shop.

Below, Benedictine nun dolls dressed in habits are among the items for sale at the Benedict Inn gift shop.



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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.

CONNOR, Joseph Gordon, 86, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Nov. 1. Father of Dr. Ann Short, Denny, Kevin, Mike, Patrick, Terry and Tim Connor. Brother of Rita Hennessy, Joan Muller and James Connor. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of one.

COURTNEY, Robert F., 85, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 20. Husband of Mary Helen (Cain) Courtney. Father of Patricia Cross, Janet Hoeping, Katie Mason, Anne and Thomas Courtney. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of six.

GOMEZ, P. Ernesto, 69, St. Bernadette, Indianapolis, Nov. 5. Father of Lisa Chapman, Mary Jo Christian, Chris Minor, Mandy Whisler, Andy, Ernie and Tony Gomez. Brother of Elva Martinez and Joe Gomez. Grandfather of 21. Great-grandfather of one.

HOLMAN, Veronica June, 58, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 17. Sister of Patricia Ann Fife and David Holman.

KRIEG, David C., 53, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 8. Husband of Ginger (Drake) Krieg. Father of Jill and Adam Krieg. Brother of Rosemary Suters and Earl Krieg.

MEYER, Robert G., 84, Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville, Oct. 27. Father of Jan Walker. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of two.

OTTO, Gerald, 67, St. Gabriel, Indianapolis, Nov. 16. Husband of Helen (Adams) Otto. Father of Betsy Griffin, Donna Hayes, Christina Neukam, Sherrie Payne, Pete Schmitt, Sandy Schoolcraft, Margaret Star, Carrie Widows, Fred and Johnny Otto. Brother of Betty Brattain, Al and John Otto. Grandfather of 25. Great-grandfather of two.

RAINS, Marjorie S., 93, St. Anne, New Castle, Nov. 15. Mother of E. Alan Rains. Grandmother of two.

SIFRIG, Pearl, 81, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 18. Mother of Joseph Schneider. Sister of Caroline Mayville, Lucy Rickelhoff, Helen Rose and Walter King. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of several. Great-great-grandmother of one.

UNDERWOOD, Walter, 76, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Nov. 14. Husband of Sherry Underwood. Father of Jane Root, JoAnn, June, Jim and John Underwood. Brother of Donna Brown, Sarah Tincher, Dale and Don Underwood. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three. †

Providence Sister Mary Pius Regnier led congregation through post-Vatican II changes in the Catholic Church during a 10-year tenure from 1966 to 1976

Providence Sister Mary Pius Regnier, a former general superior of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Nov. 27 at Mother Theodore Hall at the motherhouse. She was 91.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 30 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Mary Pius is credited with holding the congregation of the Sisters of Providence together at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods during the dramatic changes in the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1960s.

Providence Sister Suzanne Brezette started Providence Center Gift Shop

Providence Sister Suzanne Brezette died on Nov. 19 at Union Hospital in Terre Haute. She was 88.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 23 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Suzanne Brezette was born on June 20, 1917, in Indianapolis. She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Feb. 11, 1937, professed first vows on Aug. 15, 1939, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1945.

During 68 years as a Sister of Providence, she taught at schools staffed by the Sisters of Providence in Indiana, Massachusetts, California, Illinois and Florida.

A member of the congregation for 73 years, Sister Mary Pius served as general superior from September 1966 through August 1976. She served as a member of the congregation's general council from 1960-66.

Sister Mary Pius also was an educator and taught at schools staffed by the Sisters of Providence in Indiana and Illinois. She also worked in various ministries for the Diocese of Joliet, Ill.

"We have lost a woman who led the community with great courage at a most difficult time in our history, but what we will miss most now is a holy woman of great humility and wisdom,"

said Providence Sister Ann Margaret O'Hara, the current general superior.

"She had a wonderful light and happy spirit," Sister Ann Margaret said. "She knew how to relate to people and how to draw the best out of them. She had the kind of wisdom that always stayed on the core values of religious life."

Sister Mary Pius was called to provide leadership during a delicate time in the congregation's history. The Second Vatican Council in Rome created the foundation for sweeping changes in the Catholic Church and in religious life during the early and middle 1960s. Implementation of those changes often was controversial.

The Sisters of Providence used the opportunity to make the wearing of the traditional habit optional, and to give members of the congregation greater freedoms, which included local community living arrangements and stronger voices in ministry options.

"God sent her at the right time," said Providence Sister Alexa Suelzer, who served on the general council during Sister Mary Pius' tenure. "She was a very gracious, humble lady, ... fixed on her goals. She was a person who gave strength. I think she is almost universally revered by the sisters today, even the people who opposed her, who thought she was too strict or too lenient. People recognize what she accomplished. We won't see her like again."

Several sisters said the dramatic changes in the late 1960s were so divisive that the Sisters of Providence could have split into two congregations had it not been for Sister Mary Pius's leadership. They said she did not dictate change, but rather let the congregation's renewal take its natural course.

An editorial published on April 23, 1976, in *The Criterion* praised Sister Mary Pius and the congregation for courage and leadership in making difficult decisions about the future of Catholic education.

Providence Sister Rosemary Borntager, the congregation's general secretary, ministered with Sister Mary Pius in Joliet.

"She was greatly respected there," Sister Rosemary said. "She ministered in the Marriage Tribunal in every parish in the diocese. She was noted for being compassionate and for being persistent. She was the first one to volunteer to do anything."

"She also held us together in the hardest of times," Sister Rosemary said. "Her death is

the greatest loss we have in wisdom. We recognize today the suffering she went through, ... the hard times we had, ... the wisdom we called upon all these years."

Providence Sister Ann Kathleen Brawley served as general secretary during Sister Mary Pius's administration.

"In my mind, she brought the congregation through one of the most difficult periods of its history," Sister Ann Kathleen said. "Mother Theodore Guérin had its beginnings, of course, but Sister Mary Pius was willing to sacrifice anything to bring the congregation through the difficulties."

"She was a woman of absolute integrity," Sister Ann Kathleen said. "Self always was second to her sisters and the congregation."

The former Helen Marie Regnier was born on April 28, 1914, in Aurora, Ill.

She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor's degree in English then earned a master's degree in education at St. Louis University.

She entered the congregation on Jan. 23, 1932, from St. Mary Parish in Aurora, professed first vows on Aug. 15, 1934, and professed final vows on Jan. 23, 1940.

Sister Mary Pius taught and served as principal at schools in Indianapolis; Fort Wayne, Ind.; Washington, Ind.; and Evansville, Ind.; and in Chicago and Evanston, Ill.

In Indianapolis, she taught at St. Philip Neri School from 1934-35, the former Cathedral Grade School from 1937-39 and the former Ladywood Academy from 1958-59.

She served as retreat minister, notary/advocate and secretary in the Marriage Tribunal for the Diocese of Joliet and was a member of the Health Care Services staff at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Surviving are a sister, Jeanette Regnier of Oswego, Ill.; a brother, J. Donald Regnier of Aurora, Ill.; and several nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †





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Advent penance services are scheduled at parishes

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

- Batesville Deanery**
Dec. 4, 1 p.m. at St. Maurice, Napoleon
Dec. 4, 3 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. for St. Magdalene, New Marion, and St. John the Baptist, Osgood, at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, St. Mary-of-the-Rock
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- Bloomington Deanery**
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, and St. Mary, Mitchell, at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
- Connersville Deanery**
Dec. 2, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget, Liberty
Dec. 11, 2 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth, Cambridge City
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Grove
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Richmond
- Indianapolis East Deanery**
Dec. 5, 7 p.m. for St. Bernadette, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) and Our Lady of Lourdes at Our Lady of Lourdes
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Simon the Apostle
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at St. Rita
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, St. Philip Neri, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and Holy Cross at Holy Cross
- Indianapolis North Deanery**
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Matthew
Dec. 11, 1:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at Christ the King
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Pius X
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Indianapolis South Deanery**
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. for SS. Frances and Clare, Greenwood, and Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mark
- Indianapolis West Deanery**
Dec. 4, 2:30 p.m. at St. Anthony
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Monica
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
- New Albany Deanery**
Dec. 4, 2 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight
Dec. 4, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. for Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, and St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, at St. Augustine, Jeffersonville
Dec. 10, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, and St. Mary, New Albany, at St. Mary, New Albany
Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
- Seymour Deanery**
Dec. 4, 2 p.m. at Holy Trinity, Edinburgh
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, North Vernon
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
- Tell City Deanery**
Dec. 11, 4 p.m. for St. Michael, Cannelton; St. Pius V, Troy; and St. Paul, Tell City, at St. Paul, Tell City
- Terre Haute Deanery**
Dec. 8, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
Dec. 15, 1:30 p.m. at St. Ann, Terre Haute
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute
Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville †

ABORTION

continued from page 1

their bodies and how babies are killed during abortions.

Last week, state court justices determined that the law “does not impose a material burden on any right to privacy or abortion that may be provided or protected” by the Indiana Constitution.

The justices said they were not ruling on whether the constitution included a right to privacy or abortion.

Justice Robert Rucker wrote the

court’s ruling, which stated that reviews of U.S. Supreme Court and other state court decisions on abortion “persuade us that the Indiana statute does not impose a substantial obstacle to a woman’s ability to terminate her pregnancy.”

Justice Theodore Boehm, the only judge who dissented from the ruling, said a woman’s decision “to carry a non-viable fetus to term” or abort the pregnancy is “an intensely personal one,” and the “government has no role in seeking to take sides in ... debates over matters of conscience.”

In a separate opinion, Justice Brent

Dickson wrote that he would prefer that the state court “explicitly declare that the Indiana Constitution does not protect any alleged right to abortion.”

Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, praised the state court ruling as “a significant step forward in protecting women’s rights” and saving the lives of unborn babies.

“The whole point of the ruling is to guarantee that women who seek abortions understand the surgical procedure and its consequences,” Sister Diane said on Nov. 23. “Giving women 18 hours to consider the life-altering decision to abort [a baby] may lead some to make life-giving choices.”

She said “it should be noted that the millions of post-abortive women who suffer from the emotional, psychological and physical complications of the procedure would see informed consent as sane, humane and pro-woman.”

However, she said, “the abortion industry and their collaborators, of course, would view this ruling negatively. One does not have to imagine why.”

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, the Church’s public policy voice on state and national matters, said on Nov. 27 he is glad that Marion County Superior Court Judge Gerald Zore’s decision was upheld and hopes the state court’s decision ends the legal battles over the implementation and enforcement of this law.

Tebbe said he is “pleased with the [state court’s] strong decision affirming our position that informed consent and time to consider the consequences are not burdens for anyone considering abortion.”

He said “having an abortion is obviously a very serious decision, one filled with many consequences, not only for

the baby but for the mother, too.”

Speaking on behalf of Indiana’s five Catholic bishops and dioceses, Tebbe said, “We think giving someone time to consider all of these things is just prudent.”

Mike Fichter, executive director of Indiana Right to Life, said on Nov. 23 that the state court’s ruling “is a common sense victory for women in Indiana, who have a right to know all of the facts prior to making abortion decisions as well as the time to reflect upon this information.”

Fichter said “the court has now confirmed that the 18-hour waiting period is not an undue burden, but rather a reasonable and necessary requirement to ensure that women are not rushed or pressured into decisions that will impact their own lives and the lives of their unborn children.”

He said this ruling effectively brings to an end the legal challenges that abortion providers have used in the federal and state courts to try and block Indiana’s abortion waiting period.

“The federal appeal ended when the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal,” Fichter said, “and now the state appeal has ended with the Indiana Supreme Court issuing today’s ruling.”

St. Luke parishioner Joan Byrum of Indianapolis, president of Right to Life of Indianapolis, said on Nov. 29 she is “so pleased that after 10 years women are going to get information that is needed.”

Byrum said “we give people who smoke [medical] information on the side of cigarette packs, but [abortion providers don’t] want to give women information on abortion. This is the most critical decision of their entire lives, and they need to have all the information they can have in time to think about this enormous decision.”

Nationally, 22 other states have laws requiring waiting periods for abortions. †



CNS photo by Karen Calaway

Preparing for Christmas

Tom Stone from Immaculate Conception Parish, left, and Tim Flaherty from St. Andrew Parish, both in Chicago, set up crèche figures in Daley Plaza on Nov. 26 for the official opening of the city’s Nativity scene.

LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

For Our Children and the Future

ST. ELIZABETH CONTINUES TO DELIVER SMALL MIRACLES

WHEN A 17-YEAR-OLD CAME TO ST. ELIZABETH AND COLEMAN PREGNANCY AND ADOPTION SERVICES WITH HER CHILD, SHE WAS IMMEDIATELY WELCOMED. After a history of drug abuse and physical abuse by her biological parents, she was a shy and reserved young woman looking for help. And she found it.

“She learned to bond with her daughter,” said Janetta McKenzie, director of residential services. “She understood that she was going to have to push herself to make this work.”

After approximately seven months as a resident, the young woman found a job, attended her high school and saved her money. Now, she’s still living in the same apartment she moved into after leaving St. Elizabeth and Coleman, attending community college and living with her daughter.

“The biggest reward is seeing them experience life in a different way. I love to hear the girls giggling and laughing,” said Michelle Meer, director of St. Elizabeth and Coleman. “That’s what they should be doing, giggling and laughing. They’re teenage girls.”

It’s the only service in central Indiana that can serve at-risk young women under the age of 18. The clients are usually referred by county courts throughout Indiana, and they can come to St. Elizabeth and Coleman at any point during or after their pregnancy. The building can accommodate as many as 13 young women and 15 children.

“We tend to basic needs, and sometimes they haven’t had this before. We know when they’re down, and we take an interest in who they are,” Janetta said. “We’re never too busy. They come first; they always do.”

At St. Elizabeth and Coleman, prayer and service are a large part of the community, especially among the staff.



“They come first; they always do.”

While guiding the young women through their troubled times, McKenzie said that the staff comes together through God for support.

“You can’t rely on your own physical strength alone; you have to have strength in faith,” she said. “We are prayer warriors, and we rely on God. And our residents are learning about prayer and spirituality.”

Many times, the young women accept this spirituality into their own lives. “We are a staff that ministers,” Meer said. “There’s a passion but it’s beyond a passion.”

And by working together and working with the young women, a family bond is formed through everyone there. Women who haven’t had family support before can find in the dedicated staff of St. Elizabeth and Coleman.

“When they hurt, we hurt,” Janetta said. “When they cry, we cry.”

For the holidays, the staff at St. Elizabeth and Coleman will have dinners so that young women who have already left the center still have a home and a family to come home to.

With the biggest need being money for operational and programming costs, as well as volunteers to run the donation center, the center is never lacking in compassion. In the eyes of McKenzie, every case can be a success, whether a young woman has faced the troubles in her life, become more sociable, gone to school and received good grades or learned to bond with her child.

And with each new resident, the family at St. Elizabeth and Coleman continues to grow, nurturing each young woman and child who comes through the doors.

“We nurture them through our love,” Meer said.

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocese’s upcoming capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as Catholic Charities. By contributing to Legacy for Our Mission through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to organizations such as St. Elizabeth and Coleman Pregnancy and Adoption Services.