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CriterionOnline.com

February 9, 2007

Vol. XLVII, No. 17 75¢

A promise to God

Cancer gives catechist new perspective on prayer, religious education

By Sean Gallagher

In the spring of 2005, David Ballintyn was a new graduate of the University of Notre Dame.

But unlike many young graduates who strike out into the marketplace with ambitious career plans, Ballintyn decided to give of himself to God by serving two years as an apprentice in parish catechetical ministry through Notre Dame's Echo program.

Over the course of the summer, as he was planning to minister at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, Ballintyn became sick and was later diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor.

In the process, he discovered that God was asking more of him than he had originally planned to give.

Plans put on hold

Instead of moving in with his four fellow Echo apprentices in Indianapolis, Ballintyn returned to his Delaware hometown where an MRI revealed his brain tumor.

"I just felt sick all over [when I saw it]," he said. "It's the kind of stuff you see in the movies. It was a huge egg inside [my] head. You could see it right there."

Ballintyn's neurologist referred him to a brain surgeon in Indianapolis, the place where he had originally planned to live for two years.

When Ballintyn and his parents arrived for biopsy surgery in September 2005, Harry Dudley, associate executive director of faith formation of the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Education, opened his family's home to them.

Mary Lynn Cavanaugh, director of religious education at St. Mark Parish who was Ballintyn's planned Echo mentor, lent him and his family a car for their short stay in Indianapolis.

"He was totally upbeat and positive," said Cavanaugh. "We talked very broadly about when he would come to St. Mark. The issue wasn't if he was coming, it was always when he would get here."

The power of prayer

Mixed in with Ballintyn's confidence was fear about his future, a fear that he laid before God in prayer.

"I started making promises [to God], fumbling in prayer," he said. "I was like, 'Listen. Bring me through this, and I will be more devoted to you.'"

"[But] I had decided very concretely that I was not going to be angry at God at all," Ballintyn said. "I understood that things like this are not God's fault."

Ballintyn asked many friends to pray for him. They, in turn, passed the prayer request to others that he didn't even know.

"I had church groups in Arizona e-mailing me," he said. "This whole thing is the part that is the most emotional for me. It was so beautiful to have all these



David Ballintyn gives a first Communion textbook to Aaron Adrian, a second-grader at St. Mark School, during a Jan. 9 meeting at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. Aaron's father, Anthony Adrian, stands behind him.

people praying."

Although Ballintyn and countless others were praying that he might survive, the Notre Dame graduate wanted to make the prayer effort his "dying ministry."

He wanted to share with his family and friends that if "this wasn't necessarily going to work out the way they wanted it to ... that didn't mean that God wasn't working. It didn't mean that they were being ignored."

The wisdom of children

Ballintyn received radiation treatment for his tumor at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York in October 2005.

Because of the nature of his tumor, Ballintyn was treated in its pediatric ward. Seeing children battling cancer was a "wake-up call" for him.

"They were so happy," Ballintyn said. "I expected a lot more crying."

"But it was quite the opposite. I was made keenly

aware of the children's optimism, of the children's desire to live."

Ballintyn's own desire to live was strengthened when he learned that the probability of a total elimination of the cancer was 90 percent or more.

"That's actually [when] my prayer requests ended up shifting," he said. "I sent out e-mails and I said, 'Listen, I'm going to be fine. We need to pray. We need to pray for these kids.'"

Two days after Christmas, Ballintyn learned that the radiation treatments were successful and that he was clear of his cancer.

'I need to go. I need to do it.'

About a week later, Ballintyn returned to Indianapolis, where he had come three months earlier for brain surgery. Now he was coming to make due on his promises.

See PROMISE, page 2

Faith's effects unclear for Catholic presidential candidates

WASHINGTON (CNS)—On any given day this January, a full 21 months before the 2008 election, it seemed that someone was announcing a presidential exploratory committee or launching his or her campaign for president.

And there was a good chance that the candidate was a Catholic.

When Sen. John F. Kerry of Massachusetts bowed out of the race for the Democratic nomination on Jan. 24, he left nearly a dozen other Catholics—Republicans and Democrats—vying for their party's nomination, either officially or unofficially.

On the Republican side, there are Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas; former

New York Gov. George Pataki; long-shot candidate John Cox of Illinois; former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson; and former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, considered the GOP front-runner along with Sen. John McCain of Arizona, an Episcopalian, and former Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Catholics vying for the Democratic nomination for president include Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware; retired Gen. Wesley

Clark; Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut; Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio; Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico; and Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa.

Seen as the Democratic front-runners are Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, a Methodist; former Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, a Baptist; and Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois, a member of the United Church of Christ.

"It's a more open field [for Catholic candidates] than ever before," said Roger Robins, an assistant professor of history and political science at Marymount College Palos Verdes in California. "I think the old nativism [against Catholic immigrants] is pretty well gone."

In some ways, Catholics have a stronger role in the American political scene than ever before, with about 30 percent of the members of Congress and about 40 percent of the nation's governors being Catholic, Robins said.

"But the real shocker is the

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PROMISE

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"Thinking a little bit about those promises that I had made to God, I thought, 'I can't sit around. I have a chance,'" Ballintyn said. " 'I have life. I need to go. I need to do it.' "

But his youthful enthusiasm was at first tempered by the radiation treatment's effects on his body.

"[Ministry] was tiring," Ballintyn said. "I took naps almost every day."

Cavanaugh, who describes her Echo apprentice as a "go-getter," was aware of his limitations.

"[Catechetical] ministry is very intense and [it] comes at you quite quickly," she said. "I had to be intentional to hide some areas from him for a while."

Ballintyn's four fellow Echo apprentices based in Indianapolis were also deliberate in incorporating him into the community life that he had missed out on for several months.

"We were all very excited for him to come back," said Echo apprentice Alexa Puscas, who ministers at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.

Having Ballintyn in the community after his battle with cancer offered Puscas a new view on life.

"God does not plan for these things to happen," she said. "But we know that God can turn ugly things into beautiful things and that, whatever happens in our lives, there can be some good and new life brought out of it."

"And I think that, from the perspective that we have now, we can look back on it and we can see all of the green shoots of new life that have come from this in our work and in our community and in our personal relationships."

Family catechesis

For Ballintyn, one "green shoot" blossomed in a new perspective on his catechetical ministry.

"It is a family endeavor," he said. "It is something that parents can bring to their children. But it is something that children can bring right back to their parents."

Ballintyn experienced that firsthand in his experience with cancer.

"In my own family, I realized that, while we were a very devout Catholic family, my own faith journey had

Photo by Sean Gallagher



David Ballintyn speaks to parents about the Eucharist during a Jan. 9 meeting about first Communion at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis.

brought me to a point where I needed to catechize my family," he said.

"I needed to teach them. I had very clear things I needed to say to my family about what I had learned about God and about prayer and about suffering and about death and about heaven."

Now Ballintyn relishes the opportunity to speak with parents about passing on the faith to their children.

"I just snatch up the opportunities to talk to parents," he said. "And I try to give them the practical resources that they can [use]."

Coming back to children

Ballintyn's battle with cancer has undoubtedly had an impact upon the way he approaches catechetical ministry—whether it's in speaking to parents or in one of his favorite activities, observing preschoolers and kindergartners in a Montessori-style religious education class offered at St. Mark Parish.

"I get to see... just the unbelievable fire

in their eyes just from having these small experiences of Christ," he said. "It helps me understand how Christ expects us to approach him and to talk to him. It's humility, which is something that any cancer patient has been through."

In the coming months, Ballintyn's Echo apprenticeship at St. Mark Parish will come to an end. At this point, he is contemplating entering into full-time campus ministry.

However he might try to form the faith of others in the future, Ballintyn recognized that while his battle with cancer will have an impact on his ministry, he doesn't want to simply make it his "big story" that he tells in retreats and faith formation presentations.

If he brings it up with other people, he wants his story to strengthen their faith.

"It does open a line of connection between me and other people," Ballintyn said. "But I only feel comfortable using that line so that I can direct them to the faith that I know." †



Submitted photo

David Ballintyn, right, poses with his brother, Mark, outside a house that the two of them worked on in December 2005 during the taping of an episode of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." The house was near Virginia Tech University, where Mark was a student. David was visiting him shortly after completing radiation treatment for a brain tumor.

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The Criterion • P.O. Box 1717 • Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

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

1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1717
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717
317-236-1570
800-382-9836 ext. 1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
Criterion Press Inc.
1400 N. Meridian St.
Box 1717
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

The Criterion

Phone Numbers:
Main office:317-236-1570
Advertising317-236-1572
Toll free:.....1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570
Circulation:.....317-236-1425
Toll free:.....1-800-382-9836, ext. 1425

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

Postmaster:
Send address changes to *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2007 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

Blue Ribbon day

Department of Education official honors schools for excellence

By John Shaughnessy

COLUMBUS—In 15 minutes, the band would play and the St. Bartholomew School gymnasium would be packed with hundreds of people clapping and cheering—for academic excellence.

Yet before that celebration began on Jan. 31, a senior official from the U.S. Department of Education walked into the school's fifth-grade classroom and talked to teacher Missy Foist's students about how special this day was for their school.

"There are only 14 Blue Ribbon schools in the entire state of Indiana," said Kristine Cohn, the U.S. Department of Education's top official for Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. "Of those 14 schools, seven of them are private schools [including six from the archdiocese]."

"There are only 50 private schools in the United States that are Blue Ribbon schools, and you're one of them. We are going to celebrate all the hard work [that] St. Bartholomew has done."

During the celebration in the gymnasium filled with students, teachers, parents and staff, St. Bartholomew Principal Kathy Schubel shared a quote from John Ruskin, a 19th-century writer, "When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece."

Then she added her own words as she addressed the school children. "Each and every one of you students is a masterpiece."

Similar celebrations and sentiments were shared on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 as Cohn visited the four other elementary schools in

Photo by Cindy Clark



Betty Popp, principal at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis, congratulates students for doing their part to help the school be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.

the archdiocese that earned Blue Ribbon recognition in 2006: Christ the King School in Indianapolis, St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis, St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg and St. Monica School in Indianapolis.

The other 2006 Blue Ribbon school from the archdiocese—Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr. /Sr. High School in Madison—had its celebration and a U.S. Department of Education visit earlier.

The six schools are among the 292 schools honored nationally by the

No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Blue Ribbon Schools program honors elementary and secondary schools that have placed in the top 10 percent of state or national tests.

The program also honors schools, with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds, that dramatically improve student performances on state or national tests over a three-year period.

In the past four years, 21 different schools in the archdiocese have earned the Blue Ribbon distinction. No other diocese in the United States has matched that level of excellence.

"In the 3½ years I've been doing Blue Ribbon schools, Indiana has always had more schools from the Indianapolis archdiocese," Cohn said after the celebration at St. Bartholomew School. "When a school system sets goals on achievement and accountability and then

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Photo by John Shaughnessy



Kristine Cohn, left, of the U.S. Department of Education, and Kathy Schubel, principal at St. Bartholomew School in Columbus, talk about the school's prestigious Blue Ribbon recognition and all the work that students, teachers and administrators put into the effort.

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Editorial



Michael and Christine DeStefano leave St. Joseph Church in Babylon, N.Y., following their wedding on May 22, 2004.

God's plan for marriage

We call your attention to our Marriage Supplement on pages 11-15 in this issue. Twice a year, we celebrate with couples who marry. Unfortunately, it appears that such couples are in decline.

It used to be taken for granted that most men and women would marry when they grew up then have children and raise families. Today, though, for the first time in our country's history, the percentage of adult women who are not married is greater than those who are.

Our secularized society seems to rejoice in women who are proud of the fact that they don't need a husband in order to have children. In earlier generations, it was a tragedy to become pregnant outside of marriage, and those who did so certainly didn't plan it that way.

That's no longer true. Single women now are impregnated with sperm that men have deposited in "sperm banks." They become "mothers-by-choice" instead of by accident and they are bearing "designer children."

All this is happening despite the well-known statistics that single-parent families are much more likely to live in poverty and that the children are more likely to go to prison and/or to continue to have children out of wedlock. For example, in 2004, more than 98 percent of the 2 million families that qualified for welfare were single-parent families.

We acknowledge the fact that those women who become mothers-by-choice are far different from the young women who are already living in poverty when they become pregnant. But we still lament the fact that the children grow up without a father.

OK, some of them do have a father. The practice of cohabitation, of couples living together without marriage, has become prevalent in our society. There is no longer a stigma attached to what was once called "shacking up." Of course, these couples are also different from the single women who become mothers-by-choice.

The decline in family life has taken place within the past half-century. It probably began with the so-called "sexual revolution" in the 1960s, powered by the invention of the birth-control pill that made it possible

for men and women to have sex with less fear of becoming pregnant. Many people saw no reason to get married if their partner was willing to have sex with them outside of marriage. The ages at which men and women married gradually increased, too.

What happened to morality when all this was going on? When did it suddenly become all right for non-married men and women to have sex? Today our society takes it for granted that sexual activity is part of dating. Our television situation comedies revolve around men and women having sex outside of marriage.

The Catholic Church still believes that God's original plan for men and women is best. It teaches that God himself is the author of marriage.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator. Marriage is not a purely human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone through the centuries in different cultures, social structures, and spiritual attitudes" (#1603).

The Church also teaches, "By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory" (Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* #48).

Because it believes so emphatically in marriage and the family, the Church also opposes those techniques that make it possible for women to become mothers-by-choice.

The catechism states: "Techniques that entail the dissociation of husband and wife, by the intrusion of a person other than the couple [donation of sperm or ovum, surrogate uterus], are gravely immoral. These techniques infringe the children's right to be born of a father and mother known to him and bound to each other by marriage" (#2376).

We are still old-fashioned enough to believe that intact family units are vital for our civilization. Despite trends to the contrary in our modern society, the Church must continue to promote God's plan for marriage and family life.

— John F. Fink

Parish Diary/Father Peter J. Daly

Sister parishes in Mexico are a gift of our faith

We are back from Mexico.

Our parish sent a delegation of four people to visit our sister parishes high in the mountains of the central Mexican state of Hidalgo, about 200 miles north of Mexico City. It was our fourth visit.



We have two sister parishes, *Sagrado Corazon* (Sacred Heart) in the "municipio" (county) of Pisaflores and *San Pedro* in the "municipio" of Chapulhuacan.

These places are not tourist Mexico. They are rural, poor, isolated. People wear cowboy boots and hats. They work in fields. The average wage is \$8 to \$10 per day. It is a hard, hard life.

These are mountain people. Their local music, called *Huasteca*, sounds like U.S. country music. If you want a mental picture of the place, combine the music, the mountains and think of West Virginia in the 1950s, only in Spanish.

Not many "gringos" visit there. In one little town, I mentioned that I was the only gringo ever to visit four times. Residents laughed in agreement.

They call me "Padre Gringo" or "Padre Pedro." I answer to either.

One young woman stopped me in Chapulhuacan. She said, "Padre, you came to anoint my mother last year."

I asked how her mother was doing. "She died," she said. "But we were grateful that a priest was able to visit her before she died."

Local priests are incredibly overworked. There is no way they can visit all the towns, let alone individual homes. One of our sister parishes has 45 chapels and two priests. The other parish has 25 chapels and one priest.

When we visit, we try to go to the places that local priests can't get to. We also help financially to support the work of the lay catechists. We buy building supplies to

rebuild chapels. We also have bought bells, crucifixes, statues and chairs for chapels. We bring supplies for the catechists, especially Bibles, catechisms, rosaries and prayer books.

The Catholic Church is under siege in Mexico from outside missionaries, mostly from the U.S. These missionaries are usually Mormon, Jehovah's Witnesses or various evangelical groups. One catechist said, "They divide the community."

Because priests cannot be everywhere, the Catholic Church depends on lay catechists. These volunteers teach the faith, hold Sunday services in remote towns, reflect on the Scriptures and prepare people for sacraments. Without the catechists, the Church would die.

Our visits are like getting caught up in a whirlwind. I usually celebrate Mass three times a day in three little towns.

Getting to the towns involves hours bouncing along dirt roads in the back of a pick-up truck. We sit on stools or boards laid across the truck's side rails.

When we arrive, the catechists jump off and call people to Mass with loudspeakers, bells and fireworks. Nobody has a phone. People come down from the hills, in from the fields and out from their houses.

Each Mass is followed by a "convivio" (party). Women miraculously produce tables loaded with chicken and pork, tortillas and enchiladas, beans and rice. Sometimes we participate in weddings and baptisms.

These visits are not restful, but they are rejuvenating. I always come back exhausted but strangely energized.

Somehow, on the faces of all those wonderful people, we see in a new way what the Catholic faith means to people. How it unites us, sustains us, guides us.

Somehow, God has given these sister parishes in Mexico to me and to my parish. It is a mystery how we have made this connection. Truly the plan of God.

It is the mystery of the body of Christ. What a gift it is!

(Father Peter J. Daly writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

Letters to the Editor

Addressing poverty is no easy task

I read Father Larry Snyder's column in the Jan. 26 issue of *The Criterion* with interest.

As president of Catholic Charities USA, he is passionate about addressing America's poverty. I was particularly pleased with his comment that a "short-term response, however generous, is not enough to deal with long-term challenges."

Father Snyder's column was rather light on specifics, however. Does he merely desire to take more money from honest, hard-working Americans and re-create the failed Great Society Programs from 40 years ago, or is Father Snyder truly willing to help promote fundamental changes in American society?

For example, is Father Snyder serious about providing low-income children the opportunity to attend the school of their choice, be it private, public or parochial?

If so, then he must be willing to take on the mighty teachers' unions who dominate state capitols.

Statistics show that single parenthood is highly correlative with the level of poverty in a community, and nearly 40 percent of American children today are born to unwed mothers. Is Father Snyder serious about repealing no-fault divorce laws in order to strengthen the bond of marriage? If so, then he must be willing to fight against militant feminists and the domestic relations industry and the sums of money they derive from the current system.

Finally, and perhaps most important, is Father Snyder prepared to require the poor to do their part and learn the capital virtues of chastity, temperance and diligence?

While the Church has a preferential option for the poor, the poor are all too often idealized by the dominant intellectuals in America. In my profession, I work with the poor on an almost daily basis.

I applaud Father Snyder's efforts to fight poverty in America, but I question whether he is truly prepared to address poverty's long-term challenges.

Carlos F. Lam, Indianapolis

Pastor was teacher, devoted priest

I was so pleased to read Father Dan Armstrong's obituary that appeared in the Jan. 26 issue of *The Criterion*.

Unfortunately, I was away on vacation when he passed away and couldn't attend his wake and funeral.

I had the unique privilege of knowing and working for Father Armstrong during his pastorate at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford, and he was also a great friend to all my family. Once you were his friend, you were one forever.

We will miss him, and our prayer is that our good Almighty God welcomes his faithful servant into paradise because he was a great teacher and devoted priest.

Linda Fitzpatrick, Bedford

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SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Married couple's love must be rooted in God

This week, I thought I might share some thoughts about marriage.

First, there is some centuries-old advice from St. John Chrysostom: "Show your wife you appreciate her company a lot and that you prefer to be at home rather than outside, because she is there. Show her a preference among all your friends and even above the children she has given you; love them because of her ... pray all together ... Learn the fear of God; everything else will flow from this like water from a fountain and your house will be filled with bounty" (20th Homily on the Letter to the Ephesians).

While this advice addresses a husband, it applies equally to the wife.

When I celebrate a wedding, I am always struck by the thought that for most other people who are out and about on that wedding day, that day will come and go like any other.

As I look upon the wedding couple, I can't help but think that there are people, young and old, rich and poor, beautiful and not so beautiful, who are driving around or walking the streets or shopping centers looking for something to do, looking for some kind of meaning in their lives.

There are lonely people who are looking wherever people are for someone who cares. And if any of those lonely people happen to walk into a church where a marriage is being blessed, what would they think?

Some might think "it's just another wedding" and, cynically, they might add, "If marriage is the answer, why do so many marriages come apart?"

Some, the more romantic, might get caught up in the beauty of the bridal couple and the wedding party, and dream of happiness forever.

There is no such thing as just another wedding. A wedding day is not just another day. Life together is not and will not become a romantic dream. For the bride and groom, the meaning of their life together, their love for each other and the trust they have for each other must be rooted in God.

Wife and husband will need God's blessing on their marriage over and over again. No couple should try to go it alone in marriage. The secret to a happy marriage is the commitment to have God as the mutual third partner.

It is wholesome for a husband and wife to realize that however deeply in love they may be on their wedding day, their love for each other is not enough for a lifetime.

No couple's love on the day of their wedding is enough for a lifetime because love is not static. Love is a decision that grows and is pruned and is tempered by life's experiences and, yes, it can falter if not re-enforced. It is spiritually wholesome for a couple to understand that almost certainly by themselves alone they cannot make their marriage work.

Recently, I received an e-mail from a

friend whose wedding I witnessed 18 or 20 years ago. He wrote that I had made him very angry when I said his love for his wife on their wedding day was not enough for a lifetime. He said, "Archbishop, you were right. I couldn't understand at the time, but our love has grown much deeper and stronger over the years."

Every married couple needs God's blessing for their love. It is the first reason our Church comes together to witness and bless a marriage.

Love needs nurturing. Trust and faith between wife and husband need constant attention.

And that is the second reason we come together as Church: Before family and friends, wife and husband promise to help each other build the trust and love they will need for life. Down the road, there may be days when keeping marriage promises may seem like the only measure of their love. Marriage, like all of life, has growing pains.

Do you want to look at a happy marriage? Look to the wife and husband who reach out to their family and friends. Look to the couple whose prayer together leads them to care for their neighbors; look

to the couples who care for the elderly, for the poor and for the sick.

It is what we mean when we say marriage is a sacrament of the love of God. God's love takes flesh and reaches out to others through the married love of husband and wife.

A couple's vocation in life is to share their love with family and neighbors. And we keep in mind that Christ expanded our notion of family and neighbor to include anyone in need.

If couples pray every day, and if they attend weekly Mass and receive the sacraments together, everything will be OK. God is always faithful. †

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein's prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein's
Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for February

Young Adults: That they may realize the importance of their presence in our parishes and have the generosity and courage to consider service in the Church, especially as priests and religious.

El amor de las parejas de casados debe estar arraigado en Dios

Esta semana pensé en compartir algunos pensamientos sobre el matrimonio.

Primeramente, tenemos el consejo centenario de San Juan Crisóstomo: "Muéstrale a tu esposa cuánto aprecias su compañía y que prefieres estar en casa y no lejos, porque ella está allí. Demuéstrale que la prefieres por encima de todos tus amigos e incluso de los hijos que ella te ha dado; ámalos por ella... recen juntos... Conozcan el temor de Dios; todo lo demás emanará a partir de esto como el agua de una fuente y tu hogar se colmará de abundancia." (Homilía XX sobre la Carta a Efesios)

Si bien este consejo está dirigido al esposo, es igualmente aplicable para la esposa.

Cuando celebro un matrimonio siempre me sorprende el pensamiento de que el día de esa boda transcurrirá como cualquier otro para el resto de la gente que se encuentra afanada en sus quehaceres.

Cuando miro a la pareja de novios no puedo más que pensar que hay personas, jóvenes y viejas, ricas y pobres, hermosas y no tan hermosas, que se encuentran manejando o caminando por las calles o en los centros comerciales buscando qué hacer, procurando hallarle sentido a sus vidas.

Existen personas que se sienten solas y buscan entre la gente a alguien que les preste atención. Y si por casualidad una de esas personas solitarias entrara en una iglesia donde se está celebrando una boda, ¿qué pensaría?

Algunos podrían pensar "es una simple boda más" y añadirían cínicamente: "si el matrimonio es la respuesta, ¿por qué tantos

matrimonios fracasan?"

Otros, los más románticos, tal vez queden cautivados con la belleza de los novios y el cortejo, y con el sueño de la felicidad eterna.

No existe tal cosa como una simple boda más. El día del matrimonio no es simplemente un día cualquiera. La vida en pareja no es y no se convertirá en un sueño romántico. Tanto para el novio como para la novia, el significado de la vida en pareja, su amor mutuo y la confianza que se tienen, debe estar arraigada en Dios.

Una y otra vez los esposos necesitarán la gracia de Dios en su matrimonio. Ninguna pareja debe tratar de estar por su cuenta en el matrimonio. El secreto para un matrimonio feliz es el compromiso de tener a Dios como el tercer compañero mutuo.

Tanto para el esposo como para la esposa, resulta saludable aceptar que, independientemente de cuán enamorados estén el día de su boda, su amor mutuo no es suficiente para toda una vida.

El amor de una pareja en el día de su boda no es suficiente para toda una vida, porque el amor no es estático. El amor es una decisión que crece, se poda y se templea con las experiencias de la vida y que también, es cierto, puede vacilar si no se refuerza. Espiritualmente, es beneficioso que la pareja entienda que casi con seguridad ellos solos no podrán hacer que su matrimonio funcione.

Recientemente recibí un correo electrónico de un amigo cuya boda celebré hace unos 18 o 20 años. Me escribió que lo

había hecho enojar mucho cuando dije que su amor por su esposa el día de la boda no era suficiente para toda una vida. Dijo: "Arzobispo, tenía razón. En aquel momento no podía entenderlo, pero nuestro amor se ha vuelto más fuerte y más profundo con el pasar de los años."

Todas las parejas de casados necesitan que Dios bendiga su amor. Esta es la primera razón por la cual nuestra Iglesia se reúne para presenciar y bendecir un matrimonio.

El amor requiere que lo alimentemos. La confianza y la fe entre la esposa y el esposo necesitan constante atención.

Y esta es la segunda razón por la que nos reunimos como Iglesia: Ante familiares y amigos, esposo y esposa prometen ayudarse para construir la confianza y el amor que necesitarán para toda la vida. Más adelante, quizás haya días en los que mantener las promesas matrimoniales parezca la única medida de su amor. El matrimonio, como toda en la vida, tiene problemas en sus inicios.

¿Quiere ver un matrimonio feliz? Fíjese en los esposos que buscan consuelo en sus familiares y amigos. Fíjese en la pareja cuyas oraciones juntos los llevan a atender a su prójimo; fíjese en las parejas que se preocupan por los ancianos, por los pobres y

por los enfermos.

Eso es lo que queremos dar a entender cuando decimos que el matrimonio es un sacramento del amor de Dios. El amor de Dios se hace carne y llega a los demás por medio del amor conyugal de los esposos.

La vocación de una pareja en la vida es compartir su amor con familiares y vecinos. Y recordemos que Cristo amplió nuestro concepto de familia y vecinos para incluir a todo aquel en necesidad.

Si las parejas rezan todos los días y si asisten semanalmente a la misa y reciben los sacramentos juntos, van a estar bien.

Dios siempre es fiel. †

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en febrero

Adultos jóvenes: que se den cuenta de la importancia de su presencia en nuestras parroquias y tengan la generosidad y el valor de considerar el ser vicio en la iglesia, especialmente como sacerdotes y religiosos.

Events Calendar

February 10

Ursuline Motherhouse Library, 3115 Lexington Road, Louisville, Ky. Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, "The Joy of Getting to Know Yourself: Myers Briggs Workshop," meeting, two-part series, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 502-896-3945 or gschaeffer@ursulineslou.org.

St. Roch Parish, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Bus trip to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods**, Mass, 11 a.m., brunch, depart 7:30 a.m., return 8:30 p.m., \$45 per person. Information: 317-783-6048.

February 11

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Black History Month, Mass**, 10 a.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

St. Anthony Parish, Parish Center, 379 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. **Euchre party**, 1:30 p.m., \$3 per person.

MKVS and DM Center, Rexville (located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South, 12 miles south of Versailles). **Mass**, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

February 12

Bishop Chatard High School, 5885 Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis. **Parents in Touch committee, "Theology of the Body,"** Father Jonathan Meyer, presenter, 7 p.m. Information: 317-251-1451.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Evening of Reflection, "Preparing for**

Lent: Conversion of Heart," Franciscan Sister M. Timothy Kavanaugh, presenter, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-291-7014, ext. 30.

February 13

Marian College, Mother Theresa Hackelmeier Memorial Library auditorium, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Franciscan Center for Global Studies speaker series, "The Catholic Church in Latin America,"** Father José Marins, presenter, 7 p.m., registration required. Information: 317-955-6213.

St. Francis Community Relations, 3145 E. Thompson Road, Indianapolis. **"Freedom from Smoking,"** seven-week class, 6-8 p.m., \$50 per person. Information: 317-782-7999.

February 14

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery,

Mausoleum Chapel, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Valentine's Day Mass**, 6 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898.

St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Church, St. Mary Hall, 1117 Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana, healing service**, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992, www.inholyspirit.org or e-mail ccrci@inholyspirit.org.

February 15

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Black History Month, evening of worship, "Gospel Explosion,"** 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Church, St. Mary Hall, 1117 Blaine Ave., Indianapolis.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana, praise, worship and healing prayers, 7:15-8:45 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992, www.inholyspirit.org or e-mail ccrci@inholyspirit.org.

February 15-17

Marian College, Peine Theatre, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Franciscan Center for Global Studies speaker series, "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?"** 8 p.m. Information: 317-955-6213.

February 16

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **Seminar for cancer patients and their families, "Tired of Thinking or Too Tired to Think: Managing Fatigue and Chemo Brain,"** noon-2 p.m.,

lunch served, no charge. Information: 317-257-1505.

February 17

St. Christopher Church, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. **Sixth annual Indianapolis Catholic Men's Conference, "How and To Whom Do I Pray?"** Father Keith Hosey, keynote speaker, 8 a.m.-3:45 p.m., \$35 per person includes lunch. Information: 317-241-6314, ext. 126, or e-mail djb@saintchristopherparish.org.

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Precious Infants Pro-Life Mass**, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1569. †

Regular Events

Sundays

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Tridentine (Latin) Mass**, 9:30 a.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

St. Joseph Church, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass in Vietnamese**, 1 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

Christ the King Church, 1827 Kessler Blvd., E. Drive, Indianapolis. **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**, 7:30-9 p.m., rosary for world peace, 8 p.m. Information: 317-255-3666.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Spanish Mass**, 5 p.m. Information: 317-291-7014.

Holy Trinity Parish, 2618 W. St. Clair St., Indianapolis. **Poticas for sale** after 9 a.m. Mass. Information: 317-634-8025.

Mondays

St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 523 S. Merrill St., Fortville. **Rosary**, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-485-4102.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, chapel, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Prayer group**, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-888-2861.

St. Roch Church, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Holy Hour**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-784-1763.

Marian Center, 3356 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Prayer group**, prayers for priests and religious, 9 a.m. Information: 317-253-2964.

Cordiafonte House of Prayer, 3650 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Monday silent prayer group**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-543-0154.

Tuesdays

St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Bible sharing**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

St. Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holliday Drive E., Indianapolis. Marian Movement of Priests, **prayer cenacle**, Mass, 7-8 p.m. Information: 317-842-5580.

Cordiafonte House of Prayer, 3650 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Tuesday silent prayer hour**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-543-0154.

St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road, Sellersburg, Mass, 7 p.m., **eucharistic adoration** following Mass until 7 p.m. Wed. Information: 812-246-2512.

St. Joseph Church, 125 E. Broadway, Shelbyville. **Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet** after 8 a.m. Mass. Information: 317-398-8227.

St. Francis Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center, 650 E. Southport Road, Suite C, Indianapolis. "Awesome Kids," **therapeutic program for 5- to 13-year-olds** grieving from the loss of a loved one. Information: 317-783-8383.

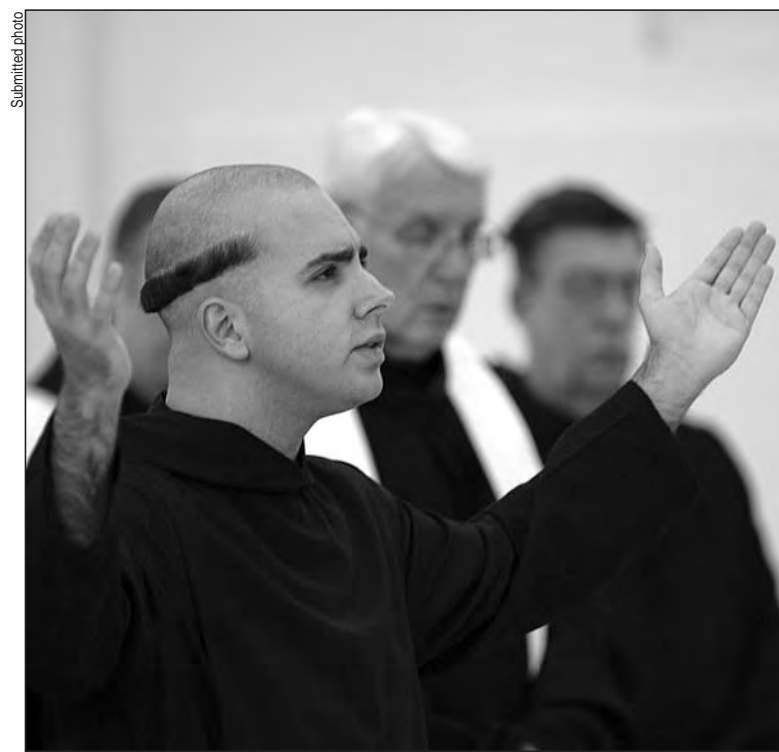
VIPs

Earl and Terri (Lannan) Mires, members of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 16.



The couple was married on Feb. 16, 1957, at St. Joseph Church in Indianapolis.

They have five children: Mauri Smith, Robert and William Helfrich, and Gary and Michael Mires. They have 10 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. †



Benedictine Brother Silas Henderson sings a chant during the ritual in which he solemnly professed his vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. As part of an ancient monastic tradition, Brother Silas received a *corona* (Latin for "crown") haircut for the occasion.

Benedictine monk professes solemn vows

Benedictine Brother Silas Henderson professed his solemn vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey during a ceremony on Jan. 25 at the Archabbey Church in St. Meinrad.

He entered the novitiate at Saint Meinrad in 2003 and professed his simple vows the following year.

In professing solemn vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community at Saint Meinrad, Brother Silas becomes a full and permanent member of the Benedictine community.

Brother Silas, who is 28, grew up in Clinton, Tenn., and was a member of

St. Mary Parish in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Following high school, he was a seminarian for the Diocese of Knoxville at Conception Seminary College in Conception, Mo.

He later took courses toward a degree in secondary education at Roane State Community College in Harriman, Tenn.

In 2006, he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at St. Joseph Seminary in Covington, La.

Brother Silas is currently in formation for the priesthood at Saint Meinrad School of Theology. He also serves as a musician for the monastic community. †

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Saint Lawrence Parish cordially invites all Indianapolis area Catholic Parishes to our 6th Annual St. Lawrence Father Beechem Endowment Fund Event on March 3, 2007 from 6:45PM-12:00PM.

The event will be held at:

**The Allison Mansion
Marian College Campus
3200 Cold Spring Road
Indianapolis, IN 46222**

Gourmet hors d'oeuvres will be served with desserts, and complimentary drinks will accompany this fun evening full of fellowship, dancing, gaming, and entertainment. The night will include silent, choice and live auction items that you may bid on or be lucky enough to win!

The event is \$50 per Person, and you can call 845-4323 for reservations or information.

We hope you will join us for our big fund raising event.

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Call or e-mail Dana 236-1575 or ddanberry@archindy.org

Annual St. Christopher men's conference to focus on prayer

By John Shaughnessy

As soon as he received the phone call, Tony Avellana feared the worst.

He had just arrived at work after driving through a snowstorm for



Tony Avellana

two hours when his mother-in-law phoned him to come home immediately.

"She didn't tell me what was going on," he recalls.

"She just said I needed to come home. She wanted me to be calm as I drove home. I just

prayed that everything was OK. I hoped everything was OK with my wife, Julie, and our kids.

"I remember walking into the house. Julie took me to our bedroom. She told me my father had died of a massive heart attack."

Avellana pauses for a moment.

"I wept so much and ached so deeply," he continues. "I lost not only my father but my hero. He supported me through all my ups and downs of life. I still needed him in my life."

In the next hours, he made arrangements to fly to the Philippines, where he was born and his father had lived.

"It was a 22-hour flight," he recalls. "I did a lot of praying during that trip. I did a lot of wrestling with God as to why he took my father. Then I came to peace with it, knowing God does things for the greater good. He knows what's better and what needs to be done. As they say in the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy will be done.' Sometimes, that's hard amidst life and the crises we experience as human beings. But I know my father is in a better place. And

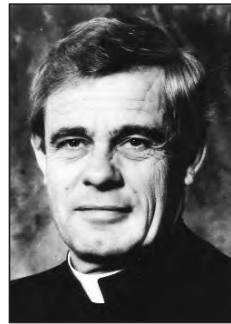
one day, we'll all be together as a family."

Avellana shares that story from 1995 as he prepares to be a speaker at the Indianapolis Catholic Men's Conference on Feb. 17 at St. Christopher Church in Indianapolis. The conference will focus on prayer: praying with silence, praying from the heart, praying the Beatitudes and learning to make prayer a personal connection with God.

"Prayer is a means of truly communicating with God, to ask him to walk by your side through the good times and the bad times, to help him spread the Gospel and lead others," says Avellana, a Catholic musician who is a member of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. "One of the greatest tools we have to light the world is prayer."

Life-changing and life-shattering moments often lead people to a different, deeper kind of prayer, says Father Keith Hosey, who will be the keynote speaker at the men's conference.

"Most of the time our prayer patterns stay the same until something comes along to shake them up, usually in moments of pain," says Father Hosey, a priest in the Lafayette Diocese. "The grace of God often



Fr. Keith Hosey

comes in difficult times in life—the death of someone we love, the loss of a job or we have an addiction. That's when we turn to God, our higher power." Yet the change can also come when people deliberately set aside time to focus on their faith—during retreats and faith conferences, Father Hosey says. It particularly helps when people separate

themselves from the "noise" of the world and seek an atmosphere of silence to connect with God.

"We think prayer is talking to God, but prayer is listening to God," Father Hosey says. "There's a time when we really need to listen to God and that requires silence. It's a skill that takes a lot of patience. Men who go fishing and hunting and climbing mountains are really looking for God. That's where a lot of men find God, too."

Bill Fike takes time to find God at 3 p.m. every day—the time he and his wife of nearly five years, Colette, always set aside to pray together.

"We find some time no matter where we are or what we're doing at 3 o'clock to pray together," says Fike, a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis, who will speak at the conference. "My cell phone will ring and it's her. That's been a wonderful tradition of prayer for us and our relationship."

David Burkhard found a glimpse of God when he went walking in a park with his first child when she was about 3 years old.

"She was on my shoulders and the leaves were falling down around us," says Burkhard, the coordinator of the men's conference. "She was giggling and laughing at the falling leaves. It was new to her. Seeing her get caught up in the awesomeness of these new things awakened in me an awareness of the bigger presence of God in our midst."

The personal awakening took longer for Daniel Sarell, another conference speaker.

Sarell remembers a time in his life when he believed "the poor were poor because they were lazy."

"After all, I experienced firsthand how my mother worked hard and overcame many of the disadvantages of being a divorced, single parent," Sarell

recalls. "If we could do it, why couldn't everyone else? I was proud and lacked compassion."



Daniel Sarell

His view began to change as he grew older, especially when he helped at a Catholic Worker kitchen in Denver.

"I encountered the poor as my brothers and sisters with whom I could have a person-to-

person interaction," says Sarell, who is now the director of Family Ministries for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. "As appalled as I was at the poverty I witnessed, I was inspired by the humanity of the people."

At the conference, Sarell hopes to use the Beatitudes to help men make a difference in their daily lives. He believes that meditating on the Beatitudes can place people in a dialogue with God and move them closer to the destiny God has for them.

Father Hosey also believes prayer is the path toward that destiny.

"Finding God is what life is all about," Father Hosey says. "God's presence is the one thing you can count on. Yet we feel it's too good to be true that God will be there for us, that he wants to be close to us. But it's true."

(The men's conference will be from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. on Feb. 17 at St. Christopher Church, 5301 W. 16th St., in Indianapolis. The registration fee, which includes lunch, is \$35 before Feb. 14 and \$40 after Feb. 14. For information, call David Burkhard at 317-241-6314, ext. 126, or send an e-mail to him at djb@saintchristopherparish.org †

LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

For Our Children and the Future

ST. MARY'S CHILD CENTER REACHES OUT TO AT-RISK CHILDREN

As it approaches its half-century mark, St. Mary's Child Center is not resting on its laurels. Instead, it strives daily to improve its programs to serve Indianapolis at-risk children. Proceeds from the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign are helping the center achieve that goal.

A \$150,000 campaign grant has increased the center's operating funds, explained Connie Sherman, executive director. "We ask that the family pay \$2 a week toward expenses; no child has ever been denied services for financial reasons. The actual cost is over \$8,000 per year to help just one at-risk child, and the *Legacy for Our Mission* funding helps close that gap." The funds also have been used to expand the program to include 16 more children this year.

"Through our educational programs, we are able to change the trajectory of these children's futures."

St. Mary's Child Center raises \$1.1 million annually through private donations, grants, special events and program fees. The not-for-profit education center was formed in 1961 to serve the needs of young children who have "fallen through the cracks" of private or public social services. It is focused on helping young children at-risk for a wide range of social, emotional, economic and environmental problems. "Through our educational programs, we are able to change the trajectory of these children's futures," explained Sherman.

The program reaches out to thousands of Indianapolis area children aged three to five who are at great risk: too young to be helped by school systems and too old for most early-age programs. Nancy Needham, director of agency operations, explained, "It is important to reach these children by age six with a high-quality educational program in order to succeed. These are the very important formative years for



children. At risk is their ability to learn, socialize and grow into typical, happy children because of the severe stresses they are exposed to in daily life from neglect, abuse, drugs, violence... or worse."

The center's early childhood services include transportation, therapy, a high-quality curriculum, social services and a home-based program for family support and development. The center also has a diagnostic clinic that provides testing and evaluation of children experiencing problems in elementary and high school.

The teaching staff is well trained and well educated—people who put children first, Needham said. The 12 hours per week that children spend at St. Mary's is more than child-care; it is "intensive intervention," focusing on cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. The program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and has a 4:1 child-to-adult ratio.

There are 4,000 to 5,000 at-risk children in the metropolitan Indianapolis area with no other hope, but the center is only able to serve 5 percent of them. Currently, there are 100 at-risk children on its waiting list.

The directors of St. Mary's Center realize the need is so great that they cannot possibly respond to it without the help of others. "As a result, we believe the best way to reach these children is to teach the teachers. We make what we know readily available to early-childhood teachers in the community. We offer them tours of our facility, we invite them to our monthly staff training sessions, and we mentor them. Through this outreach effort, we hope to positively influence the futures of children at-risk beyond the scope of our program, Needham said." This outreach program will be expanded through *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign proceeds.

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocesan capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as the Mission of Education. By contributing to Legacy for Our Mission through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to the Mission of Education and distributed to programs such as the St. Mary's Child Center.

Please visit the new online home of the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign at www.archindy.org/legacy. It can also be accessed at www.LegacyforOurMission.org.

Twins Master Social and Educational Skills

Victoria Medina enrolled her four-year-old twins, Max and Kandys, at St. Mary's 18 months ago. She said the program has helped them developmentally in terms of socializing with the other children and talking more... and in English. The program also has helped them educationally—the twins have already mastered their letters and numbers. Asked if she reinforces at home what is taught in the center, Medina nodded enthusiastically and said "Sure!" with a broad grin.

BLUE

continued from page 3

communicates that, the success is very evident. The Indianapolis archdiocese has very clear goals for achievement and accountability."

Cohn also stressed another point: "We are very proud to give these awards, but the true reward is the wonderful education these boys and girls are receiving."

During her visit to St. Bartholomew, Cohn also spent time in the third-grade classroom, which was decorated with signs that encouraged the students, including "Smile, God loves you!" and "Have the courage to do your best!"

In the sixth-grade classroom, she noticed the signs that read, "Never settle for less than your best" and "To know God is to love many things."

Cohn said all Blue Ribbon schools have four common elements: parents who are committed to making sure their children get a quality education, a strong administrative staff, students who realize they need to learn as much as they can, and teachers who commit their lives to sharing their knowledge and their love for learning.

The Blue Ribbon celebration at St. Bartholomew was a reaffirmation of those commitments by students, parents and teachers, said the school's principal.

"This is an exciting event because it recognizes what we've known for a long time," Schubel said. "Our parents and students are committed to academic excellence, our teachers have worked hard to put in place programs and academics that look at individual student needs and, when you put it all together, it means success for everyone." †



Students at St. Monica School in Indianapolis enjoy being recognized as a Blue Ribbon school during a celebration on Feb. 1.



During a visit to St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg, U.S. Dept. of Education official Kristine Cohn, center, takes time to talk to second-grade students in Jill Lanning's class about their school's Blue Ribbon recognition.



The Christ the King middle school band performs during the school's Blue Ribbon awards ceremony on Feb. 1 in Indianapolis.

CHATARD-A-BRATION 2007

presents



Saturday, Feb. 24, 2007
 7 p.m. to midnight
Montage at Allison Pointe
 (82nd & Allisonville Rd.)

Your \$150 ticket includes:

- Entrance for you and a guest
- Chance to win one of 10 Early Bird Drawings of \$100 between 7 and 8 p.m.
- Chance to win one of two \$250 prizes between 8 and 9 p.m.
- Heavy hors d'oeuvres, beer and wine
- Music and dancing
- Participation in exciting live and silent auctions
- Support for Bishop Chatard, the North Deanery high school of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

\$100/single and \$150/couple tickets are still available. Reservation deadline is Feb. 17, 2007.

For more information, visit www.BishopChatard.org or call (317)251-1451, ext. 2264.

Don't miss your opportunity to bid on this **Trojan Blue 2003 Chrysler PT Cruiser** and this **2007 Harley Davidson Sportail Deluxe**, along with many other exciting auction items, at Chatard-A-Bratton 2007!



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Mentally ill not eligible for death penalty under proposed bill

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Life in prison without parole would be the stiffest penalty given to individuals suffering from serious mental illness under a bill being considered by the Indiana General Assembly.

Senate Bill 24 would rule out the death penalty for those convicted of a murder, but who are seriously mentally ill. The measure, authored by longtime death penalty opponent Sen. Anita Bowser (D-Michigan City), also would establish a procedure for determining whether a



Sen. Anita Bowser

defendant charged with murder is mentally ill.

"Senate Bill 24 is very much needed,"

Sen. Bowser said. "We've done away with executing 10-year-olds, and executing the mentally retarded. However, there is

another group which needs to be exempt—that's those suffering from mental illness."

The Michigan City lawmaker added, "It's crass to say, but there is an economic side of this bill because it would curtail some of the prisoners being sent to Death Row, which costs the state a lot of money.

"This bill doesn't abolish the death penalty," Sen. Bowser said. "It merely exempts a narrow part of society—those who are severely mentally ill."

Sen. Bowser said that the Senate Subcommittee on Corrections, Criminal and Civil Matters did not take a vote on the issue because there are some who would like to see the U.S. Supreme Court rule on the matter. They are expected to do so in June.

"I think we should define it ourselves," she said.

Sen. Bowser said that the only real opposition to the bill came from a prosecuting attorney's group who expressed concern that "a defendant could fake being seriously mentally ill."

Testimony from doctors said that possibility was remote, she said.

Sen. Brent Steele (R-Bedford), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Corrections, Criminal and Civil Matters, said it was out of respect for Sen. Bowser that he heard the bill.

"Sen. Bowser is a champion of death penalty issues, and has been ahead of

the curve in predicting what the U.S. Supreme Court will do on more than one occasion," he said. "I also gave the bill a hearing so that both sides

could 'get their day in court.' I haven't decided whether or not to take a vote on the bill. I lay in bed at night thinking and praying about what to do.

"Exempting the mentally ill from the death penalty is much more of a slippery slope than exempting the mentally retarded or exempting juveniles as Indiana has done," Sen. Steele said. "It is much easier to determine when



Sen. Brent Steele

someone is mentally retarded. And we know if someone is a juvenile because we can just look at the individual's birth certificate.

"But with mental illness, there is a lot of grey area compared with the

other two groups that we currently exempt," he said. "I'm not sure if we should get ahead of the U.S. Supreme Court on this issue. Indiana may benefit from getting some guidance on this highly complex issue from the [Supreme] Court."

Sen. Steele, who is also an attorney, said before he makes a decision to take a vote on the bill, if possible, he plans to review the evidence that is currently before the Supreme Court to see if he can "get more pixels to this picture on mental illness."

Pam McConey, executive director of the National Association of the Mentally Ill (NAMI) of Indiana, said, "We strongly support Senate Bill 24 because part of our mission is to educate and advocate for the mentally ill. We feel that people with severe mental illness need to be exempt, just as juveniles and the mentally retarded.

"Those who are mentally ill need treatment, not jail," she said. "Indiana has a very good law providing assisted outpatient treatment, but only three counties in Indiana are funded."

The pre-trial determination of whether a defendant is mentally ill, which Senate Bill 24 is proposing, would mirror the procedure in cases involving claims of mental retardation. When critical evidence of mental illness and its effects on the defendant's conduct is brought to the consideration

Mentally ill and death penalty statistics

Under Senate Bill 24, a mentally ill individual is an individual who, at the time of the offense, had a severe mental disorder or disability that significantly impaired the individual's capacity to: (1) appreciate the nature, consequences or wrongfulness of the individual's conduct; (2) exercise rational judgment in relation to the individual's conduct; or (3) conform the individual's conduct to the requirements of the law.

In 2005, there were more people in prison at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility with mental illness than there were in the five state mental hospitals combined, according to the National Association of the Mentally Ill (NAMI) of Indiana.

The estimated number of individuals on Death Row in the U.S. who are mentally ill, according to the narrow definition found in Senate Bill 24, is 5-10 percent, according to the Indiana Public Defender Council. However, NAMI Indiana estimates that number to be higher at 25 percent.

A 2002 study by Indiana's Criminal Law Study Commission found the total cost of Indiana's death penalty is 38 percent greater than the total cost of life without parole sentences, assuming that 20 percent of death sentences are overturned and resented to life.

The average capital case in Indiana costs anywhere from \$250,000 to \$500,000 or more, according to the Indiana Public Defender Council.



Nationally, Indiana has been one of the most progressive states in death penalty law, preceding the U.S. Supreme Court in two instances.

In 1994, Indiana passed a law prohibiting the use of the death penalty on persons who are mentally retarded.

In 2002, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that persons who were mentally retarded could not receive the death penalty. In the same year, Indiana passed a law prohibiting anyone under age 18 from being sentenced to death.

In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court again followed suit by ruling that no one under age 18 could be sentenced to death.

Currently, North Carolina, Washington and California are considering similar legislation to exempt the mentally ill from the death penalty, according to the Indiana Public Defender Council. †

of the prosecutor and trial judge, it is done so before an expensive capital trial is conducted rather than in its final phase as done under current law.

There are two phases of a trial in a capital case, the guilt/innocence phase and the sentencing phase.

Paula Sites, assistant executive director of Capital Litigation Assistance of the Indiana Public Defender Council, explained that not all states operate like Indiana in capital cases.

"For instance, in Indiana even when there is a guilty plea, Indiana still goes through phase one to determine guilt while some states skip the guilt/innocence phase and go right to sentencing," Sites said.

She said that by making the jury go through a whole trial, the circumstances of the crime oftentimes outweigh the defendant's mental illness, and the jury gives the death penalty.

Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director, testified in support of Senate Bill 24.

"The Church is not trying to erase guilt or punishment for those convicted of terrible crimes," he said. "However, the Church recognizes those with severe mental illness are less morally culpable and should not be put to death."

Senate Bill 24 must pass the Indiana Senate by the end of February in order to move to the House chamber for further consideration.

To view the Indiana Catholic Conference's position paper on Senate Bill 24, visit the ICC Web page at www.indianacc.org. Click on Public Policy Priorities and scroll down to ICC Position Statements on Issues of Interest.

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

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IND

Pope urges young people to express love in unselfish ways

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI urged young people to express love in unselfish ways, looking past social goals of competition and productivity in order to become “witnesses of charity” in the world.



Pope Benedict XVI

He held out Blessed Teresa of Calcutta as an example of a Christian who translated love into concrete action to help the poorest of the poor.

The pope made the comments in a message marking World Youth Day, which is being celebrated in most dioceses on April 1, Palm Sunday. The text was released at the Vatican on Feb. 5.

The theme of the papal message was love, and he began by telling young people that despite emotional disappointments and lack of affection in their own lives, they should know that “love is possible.”

“The purpose of my message is to help reawaken in each one of you—you who are the future and hope of humanity—trust in a love that is true, faithful and strong; a love that generates peace and joy; a love that binds people together and allows them to feel free in respect for one another,” he said.

He emphasized that God is the source of true love, and that Christ’s suffering and death on the cross form the perfect expression of this divine love.

The pope focused on three areas where young people are called to demonstrate love of God: in the Church, in marriage and in society.

In the Church, which he described as a “spiritual family,” the pope said youths should be willing to help stimulate parish and other activities, even if it means giving up some of their entertainments. They should “cheerfully accept the necessary sacrifices” and testify to their love for Jesus among people their own age, he said.

The pope said marriage is a “project of love” between a man and a woman that fits into a divine design.

“Learning to love each other as a couple is a wonderful journey, yet it requires a demanding ‘apprenticeship,’ ” he said. When couples get engaged, he said, it’s a period of preparation that needs to be lived “in purity of gesture and words.”

Engagement allows couples to practice self-control and develop respect for each other, he said. This is true love, which does not place an emphasis on seeking one’s own satisfaction, he said.

When it comes to the daily routine of family, studies, work and free time, the pope asked young people to look beyond the cultivation of talents needed to obtain a social position.

“Develop your capacities, not only in order to become more competitive and productive, but to be witnesses of charity,” he said.

He encouraged young people to study

the social doctrine of the Church and use it to guide their actions in the world. Love is a powerful social force, the only force capable of changing human hearts, he said.

The pope said Blessed Teresa responded to the search for love by society’s weakest members by taking in and caring for the people who were dying on the streets of Calcutta.

The lives of the saints are full of such lessons, and young people should try to know them better, he said.

The pope also encouraged youths to attend Mass regularly, telling them that the Eucharist is “the great school of love.” He said the sharing of the eucharistic bread kindles a desire to give generous service to others.

He said he hoped young people would join in youth day celebrations at the diocesan level this year in preparation for the 2008 World Youth Day international gathering in Sydney, Australia. †

FAITH

continued from page 1

overwhelmingly Catholic Supreme Court,” with five of its nine members being Catholics, “all nominated by conservative Republicans with strong ties to the evangelical wing,” he said.

But that doesn’t mean a Catholic is destined to win the presidency in 2008—or even to get a major party’s nomination.

“In 2004, we thought Kerry would carry the Catholic vote—but he got crushed,” said James R. Hedtko, a professor of history and political science at Cabrini College in Radnor, Pa.

“In many ways, the Catholic vote carried [President George W.] Bush [back]

into office,” he added.

Much depends on what emerges as the major issues in the 2008 race, several political commentators said.

“Everything could change tomorrow, but if the election were held today,” the top issue would be the war in Iraq, Hedtko said, “and I’m not sure how that would play out” in the race.

Other top issues, in order of their traditional importance in elections, are the economy; social issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage; “bridge issues” such as education or immigration; and issues of corruption, Hedtko said.

Anthony LoPresti, a professor of religious studies at Salve Regina University in Newport, R.I., thinks the 2008 race will see a continued emphasis by the

U.S. Catholic bishops on “their opposition to abortion, [embryonic] stem-cell research and same-sex marriage, with perhaps increasing emphasis on passing comprehensive immigration reform.”

“How to proceed in Iraq is more a matter of prudence than doctrine so candidates will not feel as much pressure in that area,” he said.

But LoPresti believes that “Catholic politicians who hold positions contrary to the bishops, particularly with regard to abortion and same-sex marriage, will come under increasing pressure,” and the 2004 debate over their reception of Communion might be revived in some dioceses.

Diane J. Heith, associate professor of government and politics at St. John’s University in Jamaica, N.Y., said Kerry’s Catholicism “was questioned by Catholic clergy and by pundits trying to figure out who he was.”

“I would expect that to continue particularly for candidates who profess to be Catholic and pro-choice,” she added. In the 2004 campaign, “Kerry’s attitude and responses [on abortion], like so many of his other statements, did not satisfy many Catholics,” Heith said.

Among the Democratic prospects—Biden, Clark, Dodd, Kucinich, Richardson and Vilsack—all support keeping abortion legal, although Clark has said he opposes partial-birth abortion. Republicans Giuliani and Pataki also describe themselves as “pro-choice.”

GOP candidates Brownback and Cox have made their pro-life views the

centerpiece of their campaigns, and Thompson has said he opposes abortion but supports expanded funding for embryonic stem-cell research.

Another Republican who has said he opposes abortion is Romney. But Andrew Moore, an assistant professor of history at St. Anselm College in Manchester, N.H., said Romney’s identity as a Mormon might bring him problems in the GOP primary races.

“He’ll have to convince evangelicals that he is one of them,” Moore said. “In the struggle for the party’s base, Catholics would have an easier time than Romney would.”

He said Romney faces a level of suspicion similar to what President John F. Kennedy “had to overcome in 1960” as the first Catholic candidate to win the presidency. “There’s no [suspicion of the] pope giving the orders, but there is a perceived secrecy on the part of the Mormon Church,” Moore said.

But Heith of St. John’s University believes the choice facing Catholics in November 2008 will be no easier than any other recent election year.

“At a fundamental level, voters and candidates who are very active Catholics will always have a difficult time with the current issue divisions in the country,” she said. “So long as the Democratic Party is pro-choice but anti-death penalty while the Republicans are typically pro-life but pro-death penalty, there is a challenge for the Catholic who views the entire spectrum of life as sacred.” †

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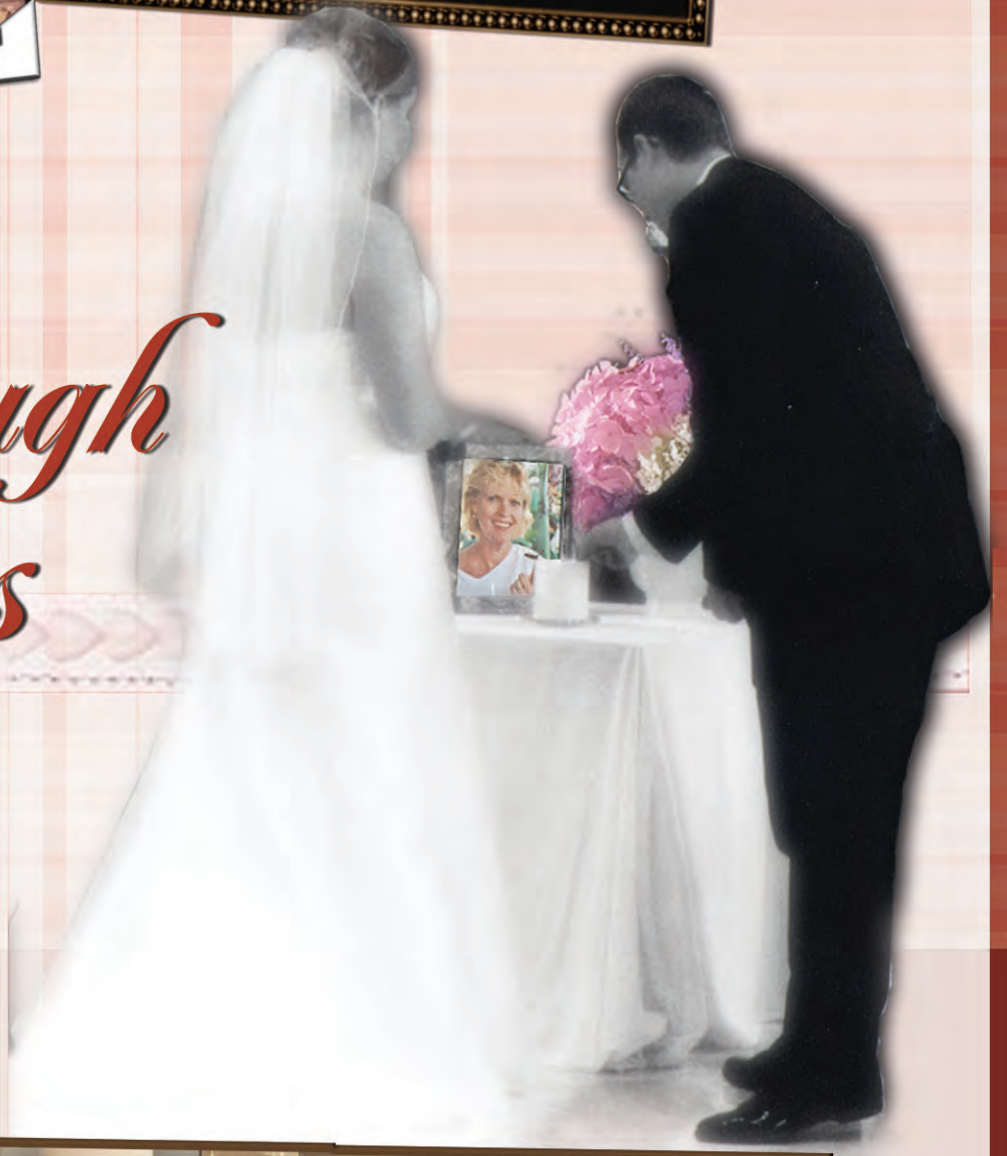
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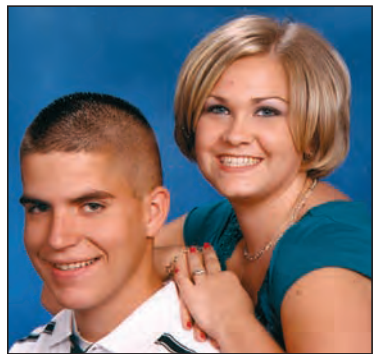
Love Through the Tears



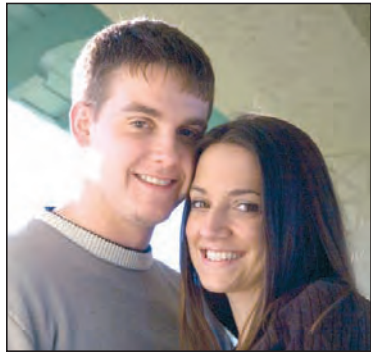
Rebecca Andrea Laux and Patrick Allen Farrell were married on July 8, 2006, at Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Robert and Mary Ann Laux. The groom is the son of Kevin Farrell and the late Judy Farrell.

(See related story on page 14.)

Wedding Announcements



Beechler-Merriman
Mary Joan Beechler and Brandon Ray Merriman will be married on April 14 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jerry and Sandra Beechler. The groom is the son of Dennis Merriman and Marisa Voiles.



Eakman-Miskowiec
Stephanie M. Eakman and Christopher Miskowiec will be married on Sept. 1 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Larry and Mary Eakman. The groom is the son of Thomas and Leslie Miskowiec.



Crimmins-Sharpe
Kelly Marie Crimmins and Ryan Christopher Sharpe will be married on May 12 at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus. The bride is the daughter of Patrick Crimmins and Linda Hallum. The groom is the son of Ronald Sharpe and Mary Pat Sharpe.



Ebert-Batta
Nichole Leah Ebert and Lawrence Nicholas Batta will be married on June 16 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of Sylvan and Linda Ebert. The groom is the son of Larry and Janet Batta.



Crotzer-Turner
Victoria Lynn Crotzer and Kevin Patrick Turner will be married on June 9 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Gerald and JoEllen Crotzer. The groom is the son of Linda Turner Nicholson and the late Harvey "Pat" Turner.



Koetter-Pennington
Anita Brittany Koetter and Ryan Bray Pennington were married on June 17, 2006, at St. John the Baptist Church in Starlight. The bride is the daughter of Randall and Sis Koetter. The groom is the son of Steve and Paula Pennington.



Doll-Raver
Deanna Marie Doll and David Joseph Raver will be married on June 9 at St. Nicholas Church in Sunman. The bride is the daughter of Pete and Linda Doll. The groom is the son of Glenn and Alice Raver.



Lecher-Fry
Sarah Lynn Lecher and Daryl Edward Fry will be married on April 28 at St. Mary Church in Greensburg. The bride is the daughter of Ron and Donna Lecher. The groom is the son of Mary Ann Fry and the late Wayne Fry.

McKinney-Han
Katherine A. McKinney and David D. Han will be married on June 23 at SS. Francis and Clare Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of Irmie McKinney. The groom is the son of Paul and Betsy Han.



Murphy-McNabb
Maryjane Evelyn Murphy and Jonathan McNabb will be married on March 17 at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington. The bride is the daughter of Robert and Penny Murphy. The groom is the son of Daniel and Linda McNabb.



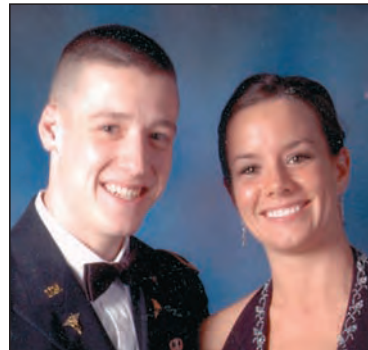
Myers-Fleck
Erin Elizabeth Myers and Gabriel John Fleck will be married on June 23 at St. Roch Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Mark and Deborah Myers. The groom is the son of Larry and Andrea Fleck.



Navel-Knight
Sarah Jane Navel and John David Knight will be married on June 30 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of Steve and Janet Navel. The groom is the son of David and Susan Knight.



Neu-Lane
Lindsay Michelle Neu and Joe Alan Lane will be married on June 23 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Mark and Jamie Neu. The groom is the son of Bob and Linda Lane.



Norton-Kennedy
Kathryn Ann Norton and Sean Michael Kennedy will be married on June 9 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of James and Jeanne Norton. The groom is the son of Casey and Angela Kennedy.



Ray-Cox
Alisa Marie Ray and Christopher Evans Cox will be married on May 19 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Christopher and Lisa Ray. The groom is the son of James Cox and Nancy Cox-McCauley.

Robbins-Sawin
Katie Gene Robbins and Jared Douglas Sawin will be married on March 3 at American Martyrs Church in Scottsburg. The bride is the daughter of Kelley and Jean Robbins. The groom is the son of Dale and Vicki Sawin.



Savka-Dudich
Abigail Marie Savka and Jason Paul Dudich will be married on June 16 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Dan and Barbara Savka. The groom is the son of Robert Dudich.

Senac-Andrews
Lauren Mollie Senac and Colin Zachary Andrews were married on Oct. 21, 2006, at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of John and Pamela Senac. The groom is the son of Sue Ann Williams and the late Colin Andrews.



Trainer-Mitchel
Anne Elizabeth Trainer and Samuel Adam Mitchel will be married on April 14 at St. Mary Oratory in Rockford, Ill. The bride is the daughter of Alan and Susan Trainer. The groom is the son of Stephen and Rosalind Mitchel.

Wissel-Capper
Amanda Catherine Wissel and Eric Kyle Capper will be married on June 9 at St. Mary Church in Greensburg. The bride is the daughter of Timothy and Melinda Wissel. The groom is the son of Ruth Coomer and the late Kevin Capper. †



Archdiocese offers Pre Cana program

By Mary Ann Wyand

The phrase "today is the first day of the rest of your life" is especially true for engaged couples on their wedding day. The Catholic Church helps couples prepare for a sacramental life together by offering the Pre Cana Conference, a one-day marriage preparation program, at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis.

"Weddings are the 'stuff of dreams,'" explained Marilyn Hess, associate director of healing family ministries of the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries. "Making plans for the day consumes a lot of time and energy, not to mention expense prior to the event. "It is important for engaged couples to remember that the wedding day lasts for 24 hours while marriage lasts for a lifetime and requires a great deal of skill," Hess said. "Attending marriage preparation programs like Pre Cana can help the engaged couple focus on relevant marriage issues, such as sacramentality and sexuality, and enhance necessary skills like communication."

Hess said the Pre Cana program is intended to be the initial

The Criterion's Fall Marriage Supplement will be published on Friday, July 20.

Marriage witnesses God's love in communities

By Daniel Sarell
Special to The Criterion

Is it your goal in life to be well-connected with other people?

That question can be interpreted many ways, but some well-meaning people will respond, "When I said 'I do' to my spouse, I promised to forsake all others."



Daniel Sarell

It's probably a healthy sign if you think that response is a bit crazy. There is a vast difference between putting one's spouse and family at the top of one's priorities and making one's family your only priority.

I don't know anyone who has taken family life to that absurd extreme, but social research in the past several years reveals a trend that shows married people to be more socially isolated than others, and the usual attempts to explain away this data have proven untenable.

I remember shortly after my wife, Angela, and I got married, we remained relatively well-connected with family and friends, but the amount of time we spent with them during our courtship dropped precipitously after our wedding.

According to sociologists Naomi Gerstel of the University of Massachusetts and Natalia Sarkisian of Boston College, Americans in particular have a tendency to buy into the myth that the married couple should "retreat from other interactions into private self-sufficiency."

They noted in their report that the "percentage of Americans who rely on their spouses as their only confidants has nearly doubled over the last 20 years. ... As we increasingly expect our partners ... to be our soul mates, we become less involved with other people."

Television images of guys escaping their wives to watch the big game with their buddies hits close to home for many of us.

"You'd rather watch a stupid game with them than go shopping with me?"

Plenty of husbands also resist similar excursions by wives to party it up with the girls.

Perhaps the problem with our collective tendency to cling to our spouse relates somewhat to the particular activities we

perceive that our spouse is "abandoning" us for or that we perceive "abandonment" at all.

Social scientists have made great strides in developing what is known as "attachment theory" to explain some of these phenomena.

Understanding these issues better may lead us toward more healthy and balanced relationships as well as more active involvement in our civic and faith communities.

One simple attachment model put forward by John Van Epp, author of *How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk (or Jerkette)*, states that intimate relationships should be built on a sequence of, first, knowledge of the other and, second, trust, which leads to, third, reliance (and reliability), which forms, fourth, commitment, and the ultimate level of intimacy, fifth, is termed "touch," the sexual intimacy between husband and wife.

The point of Van Epp's "Relationship Attachment Model" is that no one level in the sequence should ever get higher than the previous step.

I have reflected on some of the relationships that I have known personally and some I have seen in marriage preparation programs, and too often couples get this sequence completely out of order and out of balance.

Too many so-called commitments are founded on "touch," intimacy first, preceding any sufficient knowledge or trust of one another, creating a completely false sense of reliance, or dependency, for meeting certain perceived needs, perhaps even just personal gratification, the quick fix for lacking real intimacy.

Research shows that unmarried people tend to be more socially connected than those who are married because of our society's unrealistic and privatized expectations for marriage.

The usual set of explanations about the time it takes to care for children or that insulation within family life is simply a natural part of the life stage do not hold up when many of these variables are accounted for.

Gerstel and Sarkisian argue that social isolation in marriage deprives elderly family members and other friends from the care and attention they need. This disconnectedness strains those who are single to fill these voids.

They note that neighborhoods are not as safe when there are no established communication networks for emergencies or even daily monitoring, and marriages themselves can become "fragile" when the burden of emotional dependency strains one's spouse to the predictable breaking point.



CNS photo illustration by Mike Crisp, Catholic Courier

While much of married life is appropriately private, marriage creates families, the basic building blocks of our Church and society. Therefore, married people have an essential role, a social responsibility, in publicly witnessing to and sharing in the needs of families in our society.

"With children" or not, through extended families and friends, schools, parishes and civic organizations, participation in public community life expresses more fully not only what it means to be a disciple of Christ in communion with God and the Church, but also what it means to be a married couple, living witnesses in the world of God's unconditional, life-giving and never-ending love for us.

So break out of your cave! Call a friend or visit an elderly loved one. Get involved in your parish. Be generous with your time to others and flexible with how much time you expect of your spouse.

The Church, our communities and your marriage will benefit greatly from your contribution and sacrifice of time and self.

(Daniel Sarell is the director of the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries. His sources for this column are "Marriage Reduces Social Ties," a January 2007 discussion paper by Naomi Gerstel and Natalia Sarkisian for the Council on Contemporary Families, and "One Plan ... Two Programs," a brochure explaining Marriage Links and the Relationship Attachment Model from Lifechangers, based in Medina, Ohio.) †

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Couple's wedding celebrates love through the years

By Mary Ann Wyand

A wedding is a family celebration of life and love. For Patrick Farrell and Rebecca Laux, their wedding day was also an opportunity to remember deceased loved ones.

During their nuptial Mass on July 8, 2006, at Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis, they lit a candle in memory of his mother, Judy, who died on April 18, 2004.

After the ceremony, they stood on the steps of the historic church and posed for a family photograph which resembled his late grandparents' wedding picture taken there on Sept. 20, 1938.

Father James Farrell, the groom's uncle, and Father Brian Sutton, a newly ordained priest from Winona, Minn., who is the groom's cousin, witnessed their marriage vows.

"Certainly the opportunity to be the minister who witnesses your nephew's wedding is a special occasion for any priest," Father Farrell said. "I think for me it was an opportunity to really step back in time since it was the church where our parents were married. Holy Cross Church has always had a special place in our family's memory and in the hearts of each one of us."

The pastor of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis said his nephew's wedding was a tribute to love through the years that honored three generations of the Farrell family.

"To have been able to witness the wedding of a grandchild of my parents in the same church certainly made that Eucharist a real celebration in time of something that is timeless," Father Farrell said. "And that is the recognition of God's presence in every generation, and the faith that has bound our family together and enables us to move forward with confidence that God's love is ever present to all of us from generation to generation."

He said the ceremony was also a reminder of the

communion of saints.

"There was a whole sense of the cloud of witnesses that the Book of Hebrews (Heb 12:1) talks about," Father Farrell explained, "the cloud of witnesses of our ancestors—who gathered in that church to celebrate a wedding in 1938—and that we would come back and celebrate a wedding last year, and recognize what a remarkable journey that our family has been on and how God has made himself present in so many ways in our family life."

Patrick and Rebecca Farrell said it was providential that they were able to be married at Holy Cross Church 68 years after his grandparents, Jim and Josephine (Griffin) Farrell, began their married life together there.

"That was the reason we decided to be married there," he said. "I was focused on the moment, of exchanging vows with Rebecca, during the ceremony. It wasn't until we did the picture outside that I realized again that my Grandpa had stood on that spot with my Grandma so many years before."

His great-aunt, Margaret (Hartnett) Hazel, attended both weddings.

"She's a real sweetheart," he said. "She's in both pictures, which was a really good reminder of the generations that came before us whose lives helped set the stage for our lives."

Having his uncle serve as the principal celebrant for their wedding was "fabulous," he said. "I love him dearly. He's an integral part of our family."

Patrick and Rebecca Farrell met at the urging of a friend who had been trying to introduce them for three years.

"We finally went out on a blind date and it worked great," he said. "We dated for about two years then I asked her to marry me."

Rebecca Farrell describes herself as "sentimental" so the opportunity to continue a family tradition meant a lot.

"We knew it was a beautiful church and just thought it was really special to have that family history with it as well," she said. "It was very special to have Father Jim blessing our



When Patrick and Rebecca Farrell were married on July 8, 2006, at Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis, they included tributes to deceased loved ones during and after the ceremony. (See photos on page 11.)

marriage. We feel very lucky.

"I wasn't fortunate enough to meet his grandparents," she said, "so to some extent it gave me a feeling of connection to his family, to the members that have passed and that I had not been able to connect with personally."

Kevin Farrell, the groom's father and a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, said family members appreciated the historical significance of the day.

"It was great that the kids chose that church to get married in," he said. "It was a beautiful day for both families." †

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Set family boundaries for a simpler, happier life

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Somewhere in the house, a door slams. It's a gut-wrenching, painful expression of family discord.

There probably are few families who haven't felt the jarring impact of a door slammed in anger, perhaps by a wounded spouse or a disgruntled teen.

But noisy demonstrations aren't the only sign of conflict.

Have couples who boast smugly that "we never fight" listened for the quieter sounds of family disharmony? The curt remark made over morning coffee or the cold shoulder turned at bedtime or the sullen adolescent at the dinner table are all signs of conflicts. Doors may not close, but somewhere in the family a heart is shutting someone out.

Ursuline Sister Lorene Griffin, who earned a doctorate in counseling psychology, spent many years helping families work through conflicts before

retiring in Anchorage, Alaska.

The best place to start in dealing with family conflict, she said, is to take a good look at your family of origin.

Was your family authoritarian? Are you compensating by setting no rules for your children? Are you expecting your spouse to respond as your parent would? Are there two conflicting sets of family values at play here? Are there two opposing outlooks on money or housekeeping?

"I'm convinced that if you do not take care of what's happened to you and how you grew up," Sister Lorene said, "you're just applying Band-Aids to the problems."

If you're finding yourself at conflict with your partner, she said, reflect on your upbringing then sit down with your spouse and talk it through.

Another important rule is to "clear the air," she said. "A noisy argument isn't always the worst way to do it."

Couples have different styles. Again, you may want to look at how your family of origin handled conflict. Were you

brought up to believe that yelling should be avoided at all costs? Or was a noisy argument the prelude to a just settlement?

If you've learned to argue in different ways, you may need to talk about that.

The important thing is to talk about a conflict, Sister Lorene said. But first, maybe you need to take a time-out.

"Before it escalates, tell your partner or child, 'I'm getting angry. I need to stop,'" she said. "But don't forget the second step. When you've cooled off, go back and say, 'Can we continue where we left off?'"

Another way to bring healing to the whole family, she said, is for couples to remember that "parents are first of all husbands and wives."

Take frequent nights out as a couple, she advised. Show your children that you are committed to keeping up your relationship.

Children need to be allowed to express their feelings about a conflict, she said. "It's great for kids. ... A parent can say,

'It's OK to be angry, but don't kick the dog.'"

Sister Lorene believes many family conflicts result from giving in to the pressure from children for material possessions to keep up with their peers as well as the pressure to be involved in multiple activities outside the home.

"Parents don't want to take the energy or time to set boundaries," she said. As a result, "people are run ragged" by the demands on their time or finances and "all this adds to family conflict."

To meet conflict head on, she advised, start thinking about your original family and share that reflection with your spouse.

Vent your feelings and don't be afraid of a healthy argument, Sister Lorene said. Make a date with your mate. Listen reflectively to your spouse and children. Set family boundaries for a simpler life.

(Effie Caldarola is a columnist for Catholic News Service and Catholic Anchor in Anchorage Alaska.) †

PRE CANA

continued from page 12

introduction to marriage preparation and not the only experience.

"Couples are encouraged to continue their preparation through sponsor couple programs at their parish," she said, "and by participating in weekend retreat programs like Tobit."

This year, Pre Cana Conferences are scheduled on March 4, March 25, April 15, April 29, May 20, June 3, July 22, Aug. 5 and Oct. 21.

(For more information, call the Office of Family Ministries at 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596.) †

Tobit Weekend prepares couples for marriage

By Mary Ann Wyand

The late Franciscan Father Martin Wolter founded the Tobit Weekend, a Christian marriage preparation program, in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 1976.

During three decades, thousands of engaged couples have benefited from this retreat opportunity to enter into a deeper personal relationship with Christ and realize the importance of having God at the center of their marital relationship.

The love story of God guiding Tobiah's and Sarah into a happy marriage is the basis for the weekend. Christian team couples and a priest conduct the marriage presentations.

Tobit Weekends are held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis. This year, Tobit Weekends are scheduled on April 13-15, May 18-20, June 15-17, July 20-22, Sept. 14-16 and Nov. 2-4.

(For more information, call Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House at 317-545-7681.) †



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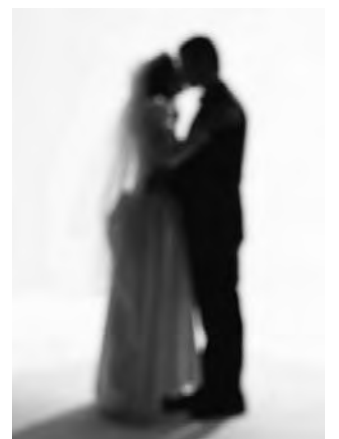
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Nation's youngest lobbyists take to Hill for Catholic schools

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A wave of teenage—and preteen—lobbyists descended upon Washington on Jan. 31 to make the legislative case for Catholic schools on a variety of issues, including educational choice.

They were Catholic school students themselves and were at the Capitol for the annual National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools, part of the Jan. 28-Feb. 3 observance of Catholic Schools Week.

The students were from a dozen Catholic schools in the Washington and Baltimore archdioceses and the Diocese of Arlington, Va. They stuffed themselves into a Senate office building's hearing room, about 100 seats too small to accommodate all of them, to get their talking points and marching orders from a panel of highly placed grown-ups in the Catholic education field.

There are close to 7,600 Catholic schools in the United States, and their students "would love to be here doing what you're doing," said Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational Association. "You're representing all the

students in all the Catholic schools across the country," she added. "What you're doing is very important."

"You're going to be our advocates today before the House of Representatives and the Senate on four important issues," said Father William Davis, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales who is interim secretary for education for the U.S. bishops. Pointing to his fellow adults at the head table, he said members of Congress or their staffs "can look at me or some of these other people up here and say, 'You're supposed to be here. That's your job.'"

But that was not the case, he added, for the students ready to visit the congressional office buildings surrounding the Capitol.

Vincent Guest, who lobbies on the bishops' behalf on education issues, took note of his Catholic grade school and high school background in his native Philadelphia, saying, "What I am—the good parts—are the product of Catholic education."

He added, "In high school, my principal was Father Davis.



Eighth-grade student Abner Funez from St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Riverdale, Md., places a Catholic Schools Week pin on Kris Skrzycki, the deputy chief of staff for Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga., in Washington on Jan. 31. Also pictured is Shaqueil Alexander, a seventh-grade student from the same school.

... Look around at your teachers," Guest said. "Someday they may be your boss."

Father Daniel Coughlin, chaplain to the House of Representatives, said that despite arguments about issues, "everything on Capitol Hill here is pretty friendly." He told the students to "be proud" and to "say you're grateful, you're grateful to be in Catholic schools."

With a Catholic for the first time as House chaplain, a Catholic as speaker of the House (Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California), and a Catholic as leader of the House Republicans (Rep. John Boehner of Ohio), Father Coughlin said, "We need, as Catholics, to behave well. We need to model what is the best behavior."

Father Coughlin told the story of Thomas Will, a Catholic student at a public school, who in 1859 "stood up and refused to give the Ten Commandments the way the Protestants said them. ... This little guy was beaten up and was ridiculed sometimes." Later, Will "didn't want to read from the Protestant Bible. He wanted to read from his Catholic Bible. That got people mad and he was beaten up some more."

That turned out, Father Coughlin said, to be the start of the Catholic school system in the United States: "A few weeks later, he had 300 other kids agreeing with him."

The issues the students were to take to Congress dealt with:

- Educational choice, including continued funding for "opportunity scholarships" for students going to nonpublic schools in the District of Columbia and additional pilot projects elsewhere; tax credits for personal and corporate donations to groups offering educational scholarships—including private school tuition—to children; and equal access for religious and private schools to services aimed at improving the educational environment.
- No Child Left Behind, including full funding of the 2007 extension of the original 2002 law and equitable participation of students and teachers in private schools.
- The E-Rate, a technology program that gives schools up to a 90 percent discount on telecommunication services depending on how many poor students are enrolled, including letting schools continue to upgrade their telecommunications services based on the Federal Communications Commission's promised delivery of collected telephone taxes rather than requiring them to have tax money in hand before getting discounted services. E-Rate subsidy monies are collected under the Universal Service Fund, a fee that consumers pay on their phone bills.
- Higher Education Act reauthorization, including federal student loan forgiveness for private-school teachers at schools in areas with a high poverty rate, and the inclusion of private school teachers in any federal law supporting teacher training and professional development.

Vatican publishing house defends choice of Doubleday for papal book

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican publishing house defended the choice of Doubleday as the English-language publisher of Pope Benedict XVI's new book on Jesus.

The book, *Jesus of Nazareth: From His Baptism to His Transfiguration*, is scheduled to be released on March 27 in North America.

Citing Doubleday's "respectful editorial curriculum," the Vatican publishing house said that when it contracted with the Italian publisher Rizzoli to handle the international translation and publication of the book, it expected Rizzoli to negotiate individual language rights with "the most important world publishing houses."

The Vatican statement, issued on Jan. 30, came in response to a front-page article in the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale* saying the English rights to the pope's new book will be in the hands of the same publisher responsible for *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown.

Il Giornale said the assignment of rights to Doubleday, a division of Random House, which published Brown's book, occurred despite Vatican officials' recent complaints about how some publishers seem to enjoy making money from books that attack the Church and the Christian faith.

The Vatican statement said Doubleday's catalogue also includes *Journal of a Soul: The Autobiography of Pope John XXIII* by Blessed Pope John XXIII, *Gift and Mystery* by Pope John Paul II and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. †



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Creating family harmony is challenging adventure

By David M. Thomas

How can families exercise attentive care as a way of surviving life's inevitable storms?

Can families turn anger into acceptance, indifference into caring and silence into conversation?

In short, can they make life a little better for the family?

There are no easy solutions to most of life's challenges. Through many of them, we just have to hang on and hope for the best, sort of like the disciples of Jesus in the boat during that big storm.

The disciples panicked while Jesus took a nap. When they demanded that Jesus wake up, pay attention and help, he more or less raised a hand, quieted the storm and for all we know went back to sleep.

Jesus did tell his disciples, "Be not afraid." You can translate that a thousand ways, but I like to think it meant something like this: "Trust God. In the end, it will basically be all right. While there will always be storms, there also will be survivors."

We have to realize that family life stands as one of the most challenging of all human adventures.

Getting to the moon is much easier than getting a teenager to express sorrow for denting the family's only car. Family life always swims in deep, choppy water.

Creating family harmony can be much harder than composing a beautiful symphony or solving an intricate math problem. Let's face it. Some things in life are just hard. And I believe that good family life is right at the top of "hard things to do."

Sometimes we still have trouble believing in goodness. Being a parent, I know there are days when it is hard to see the good. Of course, we can always make things just a little better. Our smallest gestures of love are infinitely important.

Regardless, good family life remains something we all desire. But it takes more than desire to achieve it. It takes arduous work and a better-than-average plan. It requires focus, discipline and a lot of love.

One reason it's so hard to improve family life is that most of what happens at home easily becomes habitual. Everyday family patterns and relationships so easily slip into repetitious patterns. They become hardened like a pond on a

subzero night. Some of these habits help family survival, but some do the opposite.

Creating better habits requires that we take a good look in the mirror. Search for what is good, and keep at it. Identify what is harmful and try to alter it, even if only a little.

Experts in family improvement often say that one of the first steps needed to make things better is to quiet family noise. The noise referred to is not what comes from a stereo speaker or TV set, but the noise reverberating from intense family emotions and anxieties.

That kind of noise can even be there when no one is speaking. Call it "loud silence." Usually, that's not good. Parents need quiet so that they can be more attentive to what is needed.

Sometimes the help of a professional is needed, someone to guide the family through a process of improvement. We are fortunate to live during a time when such assistance is readily available.

What might be causing your family some difficulty right now?

It's different for each family, but this simple set of rules will help families work through most problems:

- Be attentive to the difficulty. Identify its presence.
- Do something specific, one small thing aimed at making things better.
- Let your life flow toward goodness.

If there's poor communication between you and another family member, for example, ask how he or she is doing. Write a note. Recall a better moment from the past, and mention it in passing. Do something for that person that is unexpected. Even the smallest of gifts can make a difference. Remember that it's the little things that make up a family.

Say a prayer for the one in your family who is struggling. Even if you don't know who that might be, God does. It may be you. With that in mind, be sure to take care of yourself. Get enough sleep.

Remember the old saying: If you want to change the world or your family, begin by changing yourself. Care for yourself so that you can be more patient and more available to others.

Another old saying is that charity begins at home. Again, that may mean being a little better, a little kinder, to yourself.

(David Thomas lives in Whitefish, Mont., with his family and is co-director of the Bethany Family Institute.) †



Family life needs focus, discipline and a lot of love. It is one of the most challenging of all human adventures. Experts in family improvement often say that one of the first steps needed to make things better is to quiet family noise in the home.

Respect strengthens family life

By H. Richard McCord Jr.

Respect is the starting point for developing the other virtues necessary to a healthy and holy family life—love, care, sacrifice, intimacy and forgiveness.

Without the security of being respected and being able to offer the same respect to others, there is little chance that family members will grow into the community of life and love envisioned for it by God.

Because marriage is the primary community of a family, respect is a must between husband and wife.

One of the most difficult adjustments in married life is accepting the otherness of our partner and learning how to live with differences throughout the marriage as each spouse changes and grows.

When faced with differences in a husband or wife—annoying habits or more substantive attitudes and behaviors—our first reaction might be to try to change the person. But this is

futile and disrespectful. The only person you can change is yourself, and that's difficult enough!

It's best to discern where to begin, deliberately try to see some good in the other person and even call attention to it. Often, this effort will result indirectly in the other person's changed behavior.

Psychologist John Gottman studies why marriages succeed or fail. He said happy, stable marriages aren't without conflict, but thrive because of a proper balance of positive and negative feelings and actions.

The most common negative family dynamics are criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling, all caused by lack of respect, he said. Positive building blocks are showing interest, affection, care, appreciation, acceptance and concern, all based on respect.

(H. Richard McCord is director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth.) †

Discussion Point

Pray for help with family life

This Week's Question

What is your recommendation for handling anger between family members?

"Pray for inspiration to solve the problem, and pray for healing within the family. I'd recommend being quiet and letting God talk to you." (Richard Alvarez, Tucson, Ariz.)

"I've always been kind of a peacemaker, and I try to get them to consider what God would think about their actions. ... Our family has always believed that you talk about rather than fight about things." (George Sneathen, Cumberland, Md.)

"First, remember that anger is just an emotion, and it's

not a sin to have it. But when you get angry, stop and don't do anything. Give yourself time to pray before you speak." (Beatrice Vrtis, Aurora, Colo.)

"My best medicine is very natural and typical: Go to Mass, to church, pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament. In our church, it is so quiet you can feel the peace. After that, you can talk with people you're angry at even if you don't want to." (Manny Chavez, Chimayo, N.M.)

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To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Prayer: The Hail Mary and the rosary

(Sixteenth in a series)

Bible Christians should be attracted to the Catholic Church's prayer to Mary, the Hail Mary, because the first part of the prayer is taken directly from the Bible.



"Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee" were the words of the Archangel Gabriel when he appeared to ask Mary to be the

mother of God.

"Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus" are the words of Elizabeth when Mary visited her.

In the second half of the prayer, "Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death," we confess our faith that Mary is indeed the mother of God because Jesus is God and she is his mother. Since Jesus is only one person, with both a human and a divine nature, Mary is the mother

of that one person.

The prayer asks Mary to pray for us, to intercede with God for us. Catholics believe that all the saints in heaven can pray for us; it is belief in the communion of saints that Christians say they believe when they recite the Apostles' Creed.

Mary, as the mother of God, is honored as the greatest of saints so it is natural that we would ask for her intercession.

The rosary is considered a Marian prayer because we pray the Hail Mary 10 times for each decade. Actually, the entire rosary includes 150 Hail Marys, divided into 15 decades with an Our Father between each decade, but the rosary most of us are familiar with is only one-third of the entire rosary.

It's not easy to say the rosary if one does it properly. The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the mysteries of our salvation, on the events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. Although the prayer said most often with the rosary is the Hail Mary, the main focus is on the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. These are the

"mysteries" or events that the pray-er thinks about while praying the rosary.

The rosary has been called the perfect Christian prayer because it combines prayer, meditation and Scripture. The repetition of prayers is meant to create an atmosphere in which to meditate on the mysteries of our salvation as revealed in Scripture.

Pope Paul VI said, "By its nature the recitation of the rosary calls for a quiet rhythm and a lingering pace, helping the individual to meditate on the mysteries of the Lord's life as grasped by the heart of her who was closer to the Lord than all others."

The meditations are usually divided into four groups, the joyful, luminous, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of our salvation. Besides these mysteries, some people meditate on other events in the life of Christ.

The rosary has been a popular devotion through the centuries. It's a devotion that honors Mary but, as all true devotion to Mary must do, it leads us to her Son. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Talking-back-to-the-TV therapy

Sometimes, when I'm in another room of the house, I'll hear my husband speaking.



When I ask if he's talking to me, he'll grin sheepishly and say he was just talking back to the TV.

In these days of interactive computer programs and all manner of non-human communications, this seems quaint, but I'll bet many of us still do it.

Once, I told my daughter-in-law that my husband talked back to the TV and she said, "So do you." Chagrin. But we have to admit that it's a definite temptation, even when we know it's silly.

Think about the stupid, incorrect and even cruel things the talking heads say sometimes on TV news or commentary programs. My husband takes most umbrage with politicians and their official critics. He thinks they're fair game and so do I. They seem to think that being outrageous is part of the American political process.

Personally, I favor talking back to whoever the incompetent is who writes closed captions. If I were a deaf person

depending upon the captions to understand the program, I'd be mystified.

For example, when an actor remarked about the fuss, or "ado" over nothing taking place in the story, the captioner wrote "adieu." I rest my case.

There's such a thing as necessary talking back as well. When my grandchildren are watching a TV show with us, I often feel the need to step in as the moral editor of certain scenes and dialogue that appear on the screen. I'm kept busy reminding the kids that people like us do not drop into promiscuous sex in an instant or pepper their conversations with vulgar words. I can only hope they're listening to me and not the TV.

Talk shows also inspire hostility in many of us back talkers. You have to wonder where the people come from who appear on these shows because they are certainly unlike anyone we've ever met. Addicts, sexual predators, negligent parents, out-of-control kids and others who display every possible kind of dysfunction are the "guests" who tell all.

Sometimes they get physical and have to be untangled by the host, and we can sympathize because we'd like to punch them out ourselves.

I once read that talk show guests like these are actually people who go from one

show to another just for the attention or money, if there is any. What a relief because I'd hate to think they're real.

Speaking of real, how about those reality shows? Those are programs that need talking back to if I've ever seen one. Shouting, in fact, especially when the situations are so contrived and the participants so obviously not in "real" trouble that it's hard to watch quietly. So I don't.

Mulling over this apparent need to talk back in what should be a passive pastime, I've decided it's a kind of natural therapy. Most of us have problems of some kind, but we're ordinary people, not celebrities or politicians or sociopaths.

Being human, we're curious about these foreign behaviors so we observe them vicariously on TV, often on the sly because we don't want anyone to know we're interested in such stuff. If we don't approve of what we see, it's safe to talk back to it, and the louder we yell the more satisfying it is.

It feels good, and somehow our ordinary problems fall into perspective. It sure beats spending money for actual therapy.

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

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Unusual lesson on Communion of Saints

Not long ago, I had an MRI (magnetic resonance imagining) procedure of my head.



"Having my head examined," my husband, Paul, joked.

This was done because of significant left eye and head pain that continued for several months without relief.

When the doctor called with test results, he basically said the results showed "nothing," which naturally caused me to laugh, especially when he added that the test also showed that my brain is "age appropriate."

Not that this disturbs me because what will be, will be, and I certainly cannot change my age.

Meanwhile, the source of the pain remains a semi-mystery, but I'm getting some relief with an appropriate medication.

The whys and wherefores of this situation are unremarkable, but I felt the urge to share it because of what I learned

while experiencing the MRI.

First of all, despite horror stories I had heard or read about this test, I was not afraid. I was more curious than anything.

The technician told me this would feel much like being in a space capsule. That's OK since I remember telling Paul before we were married that I would like to be the first woman on the moon. This was many years before moon visits were accomplished. We were only in the era of Sputniks then. (For readers unfamiliar with Sputniks, check the library or Internet.)

I went into my "space capsule" with no fear. I quickly realized that the sounds I heard were not unlike being on an airplane, which is the only flight vehicle I've experienced other than being on amusement park rides.

In the machine, I began to calmly pray while observing everything, especially comments from the technician. A mirror and intercom allowed me to see him at his control center, and I felt no claustrophobia.

My first prayer was the "Gloria" from the Holy Mass, said calmly and with no

errors that I could perceive. Then I recited "The Creed" from Mass, again without any glitches. This was a first because I had never said these prayers outside of Mass without flubbing. Strange, yes, but true!

It dawned on me that the prayers are easily recited during Mass because they are said in unison with fellow worshippers—special moments that exemplify the Communion of Saints.

Then at Mass on Jan. 21, the second reading—1 Corinthians 12:13—verified my MRI musings.

Just as my head is part of my whole being, each of us is a part of the whole entity we call the Church, and our Church is most healthy and viable when all the parts work together.

As the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians, "... God so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without ... so that all parts may have concern for one another ..."

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

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

Pop culture lends urgency to romantic quests

My friend Tauna's New Year's resolution is to find romance. Last year's wedding circuit took a toll on her, and now she's determined to find a mate before 2008.



The year is starting off slow, she acknowledged in her blog, but it's early yet. Thankfully, there are resources for Tauna, like Janis Spindel's

book, *Get Serious About Getting Married: 365 Proven Ways to Find Love in Less Than a Year*.

I understand the anxiousness of being unattached. Every time wedding bells ring for a friend, my biological clock ticks a little louder. And when their firstborn cries, the ticking gets louder yet.

I'm a content, confident person, but it's impossible not to compare my personal life with a friend who's standing in front of the altar. And it's hard not to feel a bit behind.

Unlike some of my single friends, I enjoy weddings. I love getting dressed up and dancing and celebrating a happy union. So the "Save the Date" cards accumulating on my fridge don't depress me. (I'm already planning my outfits.)

There's just one moment I dread: the bouquet toss. We single ladies are displayed before the entire group. There's a palpable sense of desperation, the embarrassing notion that we should elbow and claw each other for the coveted prize. I tend to hide in the middle of the pack and lay low when the flowers fly.

Pop culture lends a sense of urgency to the pursuit of a partner. Romance is the endpoint of the romantic comedy. Despite ascending planes or pounding rain or oncoming traffic, our fearless stars always connect before the credits roll.

A bare ring finger can seem like a defect. The single life can feel achingly single. And more Catholics are experiencing that ache as the average age of a bride and groom keeps inching older.

It creates a conundrum for many of us. In waiting on God's will, are we being passive? In acting on our will, are we defying his?

That's the issue my friend Emily wrestled when she joined www.catholicsingles.com.

"I was having one of those panicky moments where I could visualize myself as still single, 50 years old, and only buying Christmas gifts for nieces and nephews," she recalled. "I must have sat for five minutes before hitting the 'Enter' button on the registration page, pondering if my act was desperation or if I was simply taking charge of my possibilities."

I know Emily lifts these questions to the Lord, and I believe that's important. Pray along the path to marriage—or religious life or single life. Pray for patience and trust.

The first reading for Feb. 14 is fitting for singles struggling with that in-your-face holiday. After 40 long days afloat, Noah sends out a dove. "But the dove could find no place to alight and perch, and it returned to him in the ark."

Noah is tired and seasick so he tries again. And finally, the dove returns with an olive leaf. Hallelujah!

If you're feeling tired and seasick from the romantic quest, hang in there. Your dove will find a place to perch—in God's perfect timing, according to his infinite wisdom. He's writing a script that's way better than Steven Spielberg's. (And the soundtrack rocks!)

The longer it takes, the more ready you'll be for your mate and the better you'll fit together.

So go dance the electric slide with crazy Aunt Sue. I'll see you at the bouquet toss. Meet me in the middle.

(Christina Capecchi is earning her master's at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. E-mail her at christinacap@gmail.com.) †

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2007

- Jeremiah 17:5-8
- 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
- Luke 6:17, 2-26

The Book of Jeremiah is the source of this weekend's first reading.



It is typical of Jeremiah's prophecy and the writings of all the prophets.

Jeremiah, as well as the other prophets, had to constantly contend with the spiritual sluggishness, if not the downright sinfulness, of the

Hebrew people.

Often, the people strayed from God because, instead of following God's will, they followed the fads of the time or earthly leaders.

Few prophets are more eloquent in their writing than Jeremiah. This reading beautifully conveys not only the prophet's eloquence, but also the depth and power of his belief.

Central to this belief was unyielding trust in God so he warns his first audiences, and later audiences such as ourselves, that anyone who trusts in humans rather than in God walks alone and without a compass into a wasteland.

Life can be like being alone in a wasteland. However, knowing God and following God's will provide an oasis.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians supplies the second reading.

The Christians of Corinth presented a challenge to Paul. His two existing letters to them, both of which are in the New Testament, easily show us how challenging he found their tendency to accept the Gospel halfheartedly or with reservations.

In a way, it is understandable that they were difficult to convince and fully to convert. They lived in a city renowned across the Roman Empire for its material excesses. Being in such surroundings surely made attention to the spiritual foundations of the Christian Gospel less than quick and easy.

So, in this reading, Paul calls the Corinthians to the spiritual life. It alone will endure. For those who truly love the Lord, the end of earthly spiritual life will be heaven itself.

For its last reading, the Church this weekend gives us a reading from St. Luke's Gospel.

This passage is part of the Synoptic Tradition. Similar readings are part of the

Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

Luke's approach to religion was very similar to that of Jeremiah. Luke's approach was urgent and bold. He minced no words. He cut to the chase, in modern-day terms.

The situations in the life of Jesus that appealed to him were those in which the Lord was emphatic and the most direct. Such directness at times took the form of warnings, as is the case in the latter part of this reading. On other occasions, it appeared in a lesson or compliment.

The message here is very much like the teaching of Jeremiah in the first reading and the teaching of Paul in the second reading.

Jesus makes very clear that true discipleship involves the spirit. The things of this earth come and go. In the end, all the things of this earth will go. Those people who set their sights on material goals, or live only for material advancements, do so at their own peril.

Reflection

The Church introduced us to Jesus, the son of Mary, on the feast of Christmas.

On the feast of the Epiphany, it introduced us to Jesus, the Son of God.

On the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, it introduced us to Jesus, the Redeemer, the reconciler between God and sinful humanity.

During January, through the weekend readings, the Church invited us to accept Jesus as our own Savior and Lord. It encourages us to follow the Lord, reassuring us and leading us.

But it leads us down no primrose path. It warns us that we are of the world so the enticements of the world are especially appealing to us. Nevertheless, they can only bring us emptiness—and possibly eternal death—if we do not turn to the Lord. †

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 criterion@archindy.org. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Feb. 12
Genesis 4:1-15, 25
Psalm 50:1, 8, 16-17, 20-21
Mark 8:11-13

Tuesday, Feb. 13
Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10
Psalm 29:1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3b, 9b-10
Mark 8:14-21

Wednesday, Feb. 14
Cyril, monk
Methodius, bishop
Genesis 8:6-13, 20-22
Psalm 116:12-15, 18-19
Mark 8:22-26

Thursday, Feb. 15
Genesis 9:1-13
Psalm 102:16-18, 19-23, 29
Mark 8:27-33

Friday, Feb. 16
Genesis 11:1-9
Psalm 33:10-15
Mark 8:34-9:1

Saturday, Feb. 17
The Seven Founders of the
Order of Servites, religious
Hebrews 11:1-7
Psalm 145:2-5, 10-11
Mark 9:2-13

Sunday, Feb. 18
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary
Time
1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13,
22-23
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13
1 Corinthians 15:45-49
Luke 6:27-38

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

God's reign, his loving rule over all creation, is constantly at work

QA priest visiting our parish during Advent spoke about the kingdom of God, and said it is here and now present on earth. But in the Our Father we pray that the kingdom will come.



What exactly is the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven? (Texas)

AYours is a good question, shared by many Catholics and other Christians. And it's an important one.

The Gospels, Matthew in particular, speak of the kingdom as a basic reality of our faith, which frames and forms our relationship with God here and in eternity.

One source of confusion is that the kingdom of God, or of heaven, is a rather fluid term in the New Testament. Jesus never actually defines it. Rather, he alludes to it with a variety of images and stories that give us something of a multicolored description of what he means.

The kingdom of which Jesus speaks is, first of all, not a place. Nor is it a static, unchanging condition, something finally finished here or perhaps even in the future. God's reign, his loving rule over all creation, is active and full of life, constantly at work in everything he continually is creating.

Nor is this kingdom something new. God always has been Lord of the universe and of our human family. From the beginning of his public life, Jesus declares that the rule of God is now; we must reform our lives to recognize his reign, to re-establish the harmony of creation destroyed by sin.

In fact, as I said above, the core of Christ's Gospel ("good news") is that this God whose reign we honor is a gracious, loving, merciful and joyful Father who is revealed in the life and words of his Son as told in the great parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son in Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel.

The heart of the kingdom-of-God theme, therefore, is this conviction that the infinite mystery surrounding us is an ongoing presence that allows Jesus to urge us to trust, not to be afraid. Whatever happens, we are sure of the Father's benevolent presence and power active in the world.

As the preface of the feast of the Kingship of Christ puts it, the kingdom he proclaims is one of justice, love and peace. All these are active, ongoing realities that, at least here, are never totally perfect and

are always moving toward fuller realization.

Finally, the New Testament indicates often that this kingdom—this compassionate and magnanimous presence of God—is not something we merit or "build" by our own initiative and strength. It is his work, a pure gift to his people when they try to live as a faithful and loving community.

When we look at it this way, as part of the mystery of God's creating love, perhaps we can understand a bit better how the reign of God will always be here and yet always be in some way in the future as long as his lavish creative generosity continues.

The spiritual value of this remarkable insight from Jesus is endless. The more we are aware of the power of this divine rule among us now and its continuance in eternity, the greater is our confidence that, in St. Paul's words, nothing can separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

QI know our Blessed Mother appeared to the children at Fatima, Portugal. I was told just recently that the town of Fatima is named after a Muslim woman.

In light of the present difficulties between Islam and Christianity, I find that interesting. But is it true? (Ohio)

AFatima was one of the daughters of the prophet Mohammed, who lived about 600 years after Christ.

Centuries later, after the long Muslim occupation of southern Europe, one of the last Muslim officials in the area of Portugal also had a daughter by that name. She married a Catholic and later became a Catholic herself. Supposedly it was her husband who named the town after her.

Some have seen some portent of eventual improved Catholic relations with Islam in the appearances of Mary at Fatima.

Interestingly, Muslims have a deep devotion to Mary as the mother of Jesus, whom they consider a prophet. They believe in her immaculate conception and the virgin birth of Jesus.

After the death of his daughter Fatima, Mohammed wrote these words to her: "You will be the most blessed lady of all women in paradise, after Mary."

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, 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 to jjdietzen@aol.com.) †

My Journey to God

Declaration of Dependence

What need for a plow
If there is no rain,
When streams are not fed
What good is the seine?

We fashion the clocks,
God furnishes hours.
We trespass on time
That never is ours.

We look to the Lord
For whatever comes,
Be it a whole loaf
Or merely the crumbs.

By Dorothy M. Colgan



CNS photo

(Dorothy Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. An elderly Vietnamese Catholic woman displays a picture of Mary and Jesus that was given to her by a priest after morning Mass on Dec. 7 at Ham Long Church, also known as St. Anthony Church, in Hanoi, Vietnam.)

Benkovic to highlight annual Catholic Life Network fundraiser

By Mary Ann Wyand

Eternal Word Television Network host and author Johnette Benkovic is the keynote speaker for the Catholic Pro-Life Dinner on March 3 at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Indianapolis.



Johnette Benkovic

Benkovic is the host and executive producer of "The Abundant Life" program, seen internationally on EWTN, and the Catholic Radio host of the "Living His Life Abundantly" and "Moments of Truth Live" programs.

The third annual fundraiser is presented by Catholic Life Network, which promotes Catholic teaching about the sanctity and dignity of human life. Dinner proceeds benefit the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry and the Gabriel Project of Indiana.

Members of the Abba Father chapter of Catholics United for the Faith work with Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the pro-life office, and St. Bartholomew parishioner Eileen Hartman of Columbus, director of the Gabriel Project, to present the fundraiser.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein has asked Catholics to support the pro-life dinner.

"In doing so," the archbishop said, "you advance the goals of these three groups as they conduct Catholic evangelization and pastoral outreach to those adversely

affected by the culture of death."

The dinner begins at 7 p.m. in the ballroom of the Radisson Hotel at 31 W. Ohio St. Tickets purchased by Feb. 15 are \$40 for adults, \$30 for students and \$350 to reserve a table for 10 people.

In addition to Benkovic's keynote address, the event will recognize the pro-life ministries of a diocesan priest and six lay volunteers in central and southern Indiana.

Father Shaun Whittington, chaplain and religion teacher at Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, will be honored with a Pro Vita Award for founding the Shield of Roses pro-life ministry last year while serving as associate pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.

Christ the King parishioner Liz Sowinski of Indianapolis and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Kathy Sadler of Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, also will receive Pro Vita Awards for distinguished pro-life work as Gabriel Project volunteers.

Also receiving Pro Vita Awards are St. Pius X parishioners Tom and Jackie Quarto of Indianapolis, who will be honored for their exemplary service to the archdiocesan Birthline ministry, and St. John the Apostle parishioner Pat Car of Bloomington and St. Thomas More parishioner Bernadette Roy of Mooresville, who will be recognized for facilitating the archdiocesan post-abortion reconciliation ministry through Rachel's Companions and Rachel's Vineyard Retreats.

Sister Diane said pro-life ministries operate on very limited budgets and need financial support to continue serving people in need.

"The Office for Pro-Life Ministry and the

Gabriel Project depend on donations to make possible various pro-life projects, initiatives and charitable works in the archdiocese," she said. "All our efforts on behalf of life require funding to be effective."

Archdiocesan ministries include educational programs, post-abortion healing and an annual pro-life pilgrimage for youth as well as material assistance and crisis pregnancy intervention through Birthline services.

The Gabriel Project has 35 parish-based groups in Indiana that network to help women and families experiencing crisis pregnancies by providing the practical support they need to carry their babies to term.

Last year, 133 women were documented by Truth and Compassion Ministry in Indiana as having walked away from an abortion clinic, Hartman said, and 134 babies were saved because one mother was pregnant with twins.

"We thank God for the opportunity to defend the rights of women, who deserve love and not abortion," she said. "The sidewalk counselors offer those women help from the Gabriel Project and assure them that they are not alone. We are waiting to love and help them as our sisters in Christ."

The Gabriel Project relies on volunteer support and donations, Hartman said. "The other amazing thing about this project is that it provides a way for an entire parish to become active in pro-life work at a very up-close and personal level."

(To purchase tickets for the Catholic Pro-Life Dinner, call the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry at 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1569, before the Feb. 24 deadline. Tickets purchased after Feb. 15 are \$45 each or \$400 per table.) †

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Rest in peace

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

BAILEY, Geraldine D., 67, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Jan. 15. Wife of Earl Bailey. Mother of Debbie Evans, Chris, David, Earl, Jim and Mark Bailey. Sister of Sandy Bowling, Ida Butler and Jack McGlaughlin. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of three.

BANET, Wilfred E., 80, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd's Knobs, Jan. 24. Father of Cheryl Ducharme, Robin Seamon, David, Donald, Gerald and Terry Banet. Brother of Norma Andres, Martha Moore, Aileen, Clarence, Larry, Merle and Maurice Banet. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of eight.

BELTER, Marcia B., 83, St. Louis, Batesville, Feb. 1. Mother of Mari Beth Wagner, Lili Wietlisbach, Jude, Mark and Paul Belter. Sister of Dorothy Harmeyer. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 12. Great-great-grandmother of one.

BERRY, George R. Jr., 72, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Jan. 19. Husband of Christine (Chavis) Berry. Father of Gwendolyn Fimbach, Angela White and Jorge Berry. Brother of Denesse Pears and Clifford Bonds. Grandfather of five.

BRASE, Donald Maurice, 76, St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis, Jan. 22. Father of Shondell Patterson, A.J., Brian, Greg, Matthew, Scott and Stewart Brase. Brother of Harriett Ottenweller, Clarence, Paul, Ted and William Brase.

CLEVELAND, Peggy R., 77, St. Mary, Lanesville, Jan. 25. Mother of Paula Bertloff, Pamela Litch and Peter Cleveland Jr. Sister of Lynda Morgan and Betty Richey. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of six.

FENOGLIO, Katherine, 99, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Jan. 28. Mother of Rose Mary Beauchamp. Sister of Josephine Burton, Julia Cvengros, Helen Sungaila and Steve Marcinko. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of six.

FOSTER, Mary C., 81, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Jan. 15. Mother of Pamela and Mark Foster. Sister of Helen Murphy and Betty Schlegel. Grandmother of three.

FREY, Paul R., 88, St. Louis, Batesville, Jan. 31. Husband of Katie Frey. Father of Melanie Garlitch, David, James, Louis, Michael and Patrick Frey. Brother of Alvina Kunkel and Lawrence Frey. Grandfather of 17.

JANSEN, Mary L. (Landwerlen), 78, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Jan. 27. Wife of Ralph Jansen. Mother of Mary Ann Arnold, Dave, Jerry, Jim, Joe, John and Paul Jansen. Sister of Shirley Dilger, Joyce Wuensch and Leo Landwerlen. Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of three.

JONES, Linda, 57, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Jan. 22. Wife of Alton Jones. Daughter of Joan Smith.

MATTINGLY, Charles Lex, 84, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus

(Little Flower), Indianapolis, Jan. 10. Father of Daniel and Stephen Mattingly. Brother of Helen Collins and Patricia Hoff. Grandfather of five.

McCLAIN, Mary Margaret, 64, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Jan. 23. Wife of Ray McClain. Mother of Amy, Matt and Ray McClain. Sister of Barbara Schunk and Joseph Turk. Grandmother of four.

McGEEVER, Rachel, 66, St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis, Jan. 17. Wife of Patrick McGeever. Mother of Kathleen Hyzer, Brendon and Timothy McGeever. Sister of James and Paul Maloney. Grandmother of three.

McGINLEY, John F., 72, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Jan. 22. Husband of Katie (LaFata) McGinley. Father of Ellen Davis, Mary Catherine Skripsky, Christine, Jon, Joseph, Kevin and Vincent McGinley. Brother of Mary Ann Dillard, Chuck, Daniel, Jim, Michael and Thomas McGinley. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of six.

MEDSKER, Charles E., 88, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Jan. 20. Husband of Grace (Vargo) Medsker. Father of Marilyn Pearsey and John Medsker. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of three.

MUNGER, June Lois, 81, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Jan. 28. Wife of Donald Munger. Mother of James and Robert Munger. Sister of Barbara Blanco. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of one.

NADDY, Therese Lorraine (Curry), 81, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, Jan. 23. Wife of William Naddy. Mother of Mary Ann Boswinkel, Julie Danielson, Lisa Goertemiller, Carmel Harr, Therese Severin, Carol Sparhawk, Patrice, John and William Naddy. Sister of Patricia O'Keefe and Joseph Curry. Grandmother of 10.

PEPPER, Martha Jane, 81, SS. Francis and Clare, Greenwood, Jan. 25. Mother of Karen Jackson and Kim Stecher. Sister of Ida Harmon and Fay Lee. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of one.

PFLUM, Marjorie M., 79, St. Michael, Brookville, Jan. 17. Wife of Charles Pflum. Mother of Deborah Beasley, Sherry Sauerland, Marty, Rick and Steve Pflum. Sister of Gene Gillman.

Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 23. Step-great-grandmother of four.

RICHEY, Patricia A., 73, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Jan. 25. Mother of Kristin McMillan, Eileen Null, Jackie Shoemaker, Mary Jo Swenson, David and Michael Richey. Sister of LaVonne Jacob and Charles Butler. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of six.

SCHMALTZ, Betty L. (Waldon), 78, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Jan. 26. Mother of Deborah Barroso. Sister of Phyllis Sexton. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of seven.

SELIG, Edward M., 69, Holy Family, New Albany, Jan. 24. Father of Melissa Bottorff, David and Mike Selig. Brother of Jim Meunier. Grandfather of four.

STEIGERWALD, Mary Ann, 86, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Jan. 26. Mother of Ann Peppin and David Steigerwald. Sister of Oscar Oberting. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of three.

TALLARIGO, Sharon, 45, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Jan. 14. Wife of Bobby Tallarigo. Mother of Anna and Emily Tallarigo. Daughter of James and Marilyn

Kunkel. Sister of Genny Steinmetz and Kenny Kunkel.

WARD, Janice S. (Kreutzer), 66, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Jan. 23. Wife of Charles A. Ward. Mother of Sheila Derevage, Suzanne Stiko and Mark Kreutzer. Stepmother of Edward, Michael, Kenneth and Robert Ward. Daughter of Mary Welch.

Stepsister of Janet Sue Stephens. Grandmother of five. Step-grandmother of eight.

ZOELLER, David, 88, St. Mary, New Albany, Jan. 23. Father of Susan Hollis, Chris, James and Rick Zoeller. Brother of Margaret Veath and Urban Zoeller. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 10. †

Franciscan Sister Jean Gabriel Jones ministered to Native Americans

Franciscan Sister Jean Gabriel Jones died on Jan. 20 at St. Clare Hall, the health care facility for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, in Oldenburg. She was 84.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 24 at the motherhouse chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Helen Virginia Jones was born on Nov. 1, 1922, in Cincinnati.

She entered the Oldenburg Franciscan community on Sept. 8, 1940, and professed her final vows on Aug. 12, 1946.

Sister Jean Gabriel ministered in secondary education. She taught chemistry, physics and mathematics classes at the former St. Mary Academy in

Indianapolis and Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis.

She also served as an associate professor of chemistry and physics at Marian College in Indianapolis for 20 years.

Sister Jean Gabriel also taught at Rex Mundi High School in Evansville, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese, and in Ohio.

From 1990-99, she ministered to Native Americans in Tohatchi, N.M.

Sister Jean Gabriel retired to the motherhouse in 1999.

She is survived by a sister, Maryrose Engel of Cincinnati.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †

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We need a faith-filled practicing Catholic who is computer savvy, has strong organizational skills, and is a college graduate who is looking for a dynamic and spiritually rich working environment. Some of the duties of this full time position are to oversee RCIA, Christ Renews His Parish, adult religious education opportunities, small church communities and ministry to shut-ins. Now accepting résumés with three references. Please mail to Barbara McCormack, Saint Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church, 1870 W Oak, Zionsville, IN 46077. For more information you may contact Barbara McCormack at drestal@indy.rr.com.
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Archbishop encourages students to be arms of Christ in the world

By Mike Krokos

When life is difficult and someone suffers for any reason, when a situation seems unfair, people of faith have a choice to make: They can either become bitter and resentful or they can take the pain and use it to be the arms of Christ in the world.

That was the message Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein shared with several hundred students at an All-Schools Mass celebrated on Jan. 31 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The liturgy was among the highlights of the archdiocese's celebration of Catholic Schools Week.

In his homily, the archbishop shared the story of a college student and an elderly man on crutches whose encounter showed how any of us—no matter what our situation is in life—can be the arms of Christ.

The student's new shoes got stuck in mud in a parking lot, and the old man walking by used one of his crutches to retrieve the young man's loafers.

"My young friends, think about it. That old man might feel bad because he can't walk. He might be tempted to laugh at a young man who jumped into mud with new shoes," Archbishop Buechlein said.

"Who could really expect him to help a young man stuck in mud? He had trouble getting around on crutches," the archbishop said. "But he did help, and he did so without being asked. Isn't that a way of being the arms of Christ?"

"It is not natural to be generous in pain. It is not easy to be alert to the needs of others around us," the archbishop said. "It is not always easy to be the arms of Christ."

One way to become more Christ-like, Archbishop Buechlein told the students, is to

become people of prayer.

"If we are people who pray like Jesus, we will be generous and caring like Jesus. We can be his arms in the stuff of everyday life," Archbishop Buechlein said.

"Praying is our way of letting Jesus and us know we need him, and that he needs us to be his arms."

There are challenges that confront people when they try to pray, the archbishop noted.

"Sometimes we may feel like we are not worthy of Christ's love, that our prayer isn't good enough," he said. "Always remember, God is the one who makes something good of our prayer. All he asks is that we do it."

Being humble people of prayer will help us take on life's challenges, the archbishop said.

"Jesus wants us to be his arms, ready to help anyone in need even if it seems like they have a better life than ours," he said. "That takes a lot of humility. Generous love and humility are born in prayer."

"If you pray every day, in your own way, everything will be OK. You will be able to say 'yes' to the call of Jesus to be his arms and to make a difference."

Zach Turi and Kaitlin Weber, both freshmen at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, said the archbishop's message hit home with them.

"They were really powerful words," Kaitlin said, "and the archbishop was able to touch each age group by using simple terms."

Zach said he felt being the arms of Christ translates to "helping other people more" in life.

Joan Jordan and Joel Stocksdale, eighth-graders at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, said they plan to take the archbishop's words home with them.

"I think I'll help others [more]," Joan said.

"I hope I can help whoever is in need," Joel added, "no matter [what] their status." †



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein receives the offertory gifts from two students during the Catholic Schools Week Mass.



Several students from St. Gabriel School in Connorsville kneel in prayer during the Jan. 31 Catholic Schools Week Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. From left, they are fifth-graders Victor Riedman and Madison Fain, sixth-graders Hannah Shelton, Missy Schnelle and Mackenzie Fuller, and fifth-grader Jakob Hackleman.



Grace Western, a third-grader at St. Susanna School in Plainfield, leads the congregation in singing the refrain to the responsorial psalm during the Jan. 31 Catholic Schools Week Mass. Standing next to her is another cantor, Delaney Weber, a fourth-grader at St. Susanna.



While Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 priests walk in procession, hundreds of students from Catholic schools across the archdiocese sing the opening hymn at the Jan. 31 Mass.

Classified Directory, continued from page 22

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