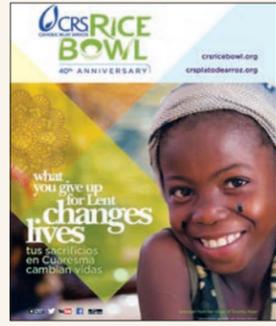




The

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Rice Bowl effort helps people in need in archdiocese and world, page 15A.

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In pastoral letter, Indiana bishops say needs of poor must be a priority

Criterion staff report

The five Catholic bishops in Indiana have issued a pastoral letter on poverty inviting and challenging people in the state to make the needs of the poor a priority, and to take action to reduce the effects of poverty.



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

The letter, titled "Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana," is

signed by Indianapolis Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty, Gary Bishop Donald J. Hying, Fort Wayne-South Bend Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Evansville Bishop

Charles C. Thompson.

The bishops noted in the introduction to the pastoral letter that they are called to carry on Christ's work in service to all people, but that they have a particular obligation to care for the most vulnerable members of God's family, especially the poor.

"Using the simple formula of SEE, JUDGE, ACT, we invite and challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects," the bishops wrote.

A record 1,015,127 Indiana residents are living in poverty (at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level), according to the *The Status of Working Families*

in Indiana, 2015 Report by the Indiana Institute for Working Families.

The bishops said it is their hope that Catholics throughout the state will read the pastoral letter, reflect on it and help the bishops consider how the Church should respond. The letter contains several questions for reflection. The bishops are also asking people to take part in a survey to gather more information they will use to further address the issue of poverty in Indiana.

The survey can be found in English at www.archindy.org/povertysurvey, and in Spanish at www.archindy.org/povertysurveyspanish.

"Such reflection is crucial for our mission in the world today," the bishops wrote. "Pope Francis invites us to see the profound connection between evangelization and human advancement, which must necessarily find expression and develop in every effort of evangelization ["The Joy of

the Gospel," #178].

"We look forward to working with you to proclaim the Good News by strengthening family life, promoting just employment and ensuring a quality education and comprehensive health care for all Hoosiers, especially the poor and vulnerable." †

Catholic Bishops of Indiana

Poverty at the Crossroads

The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana

- Read the entire pastoral letter in both English and Spanish, pages 1B-8B.
- Read a related editorial on page 4A.
- Read a related column on page 12A.

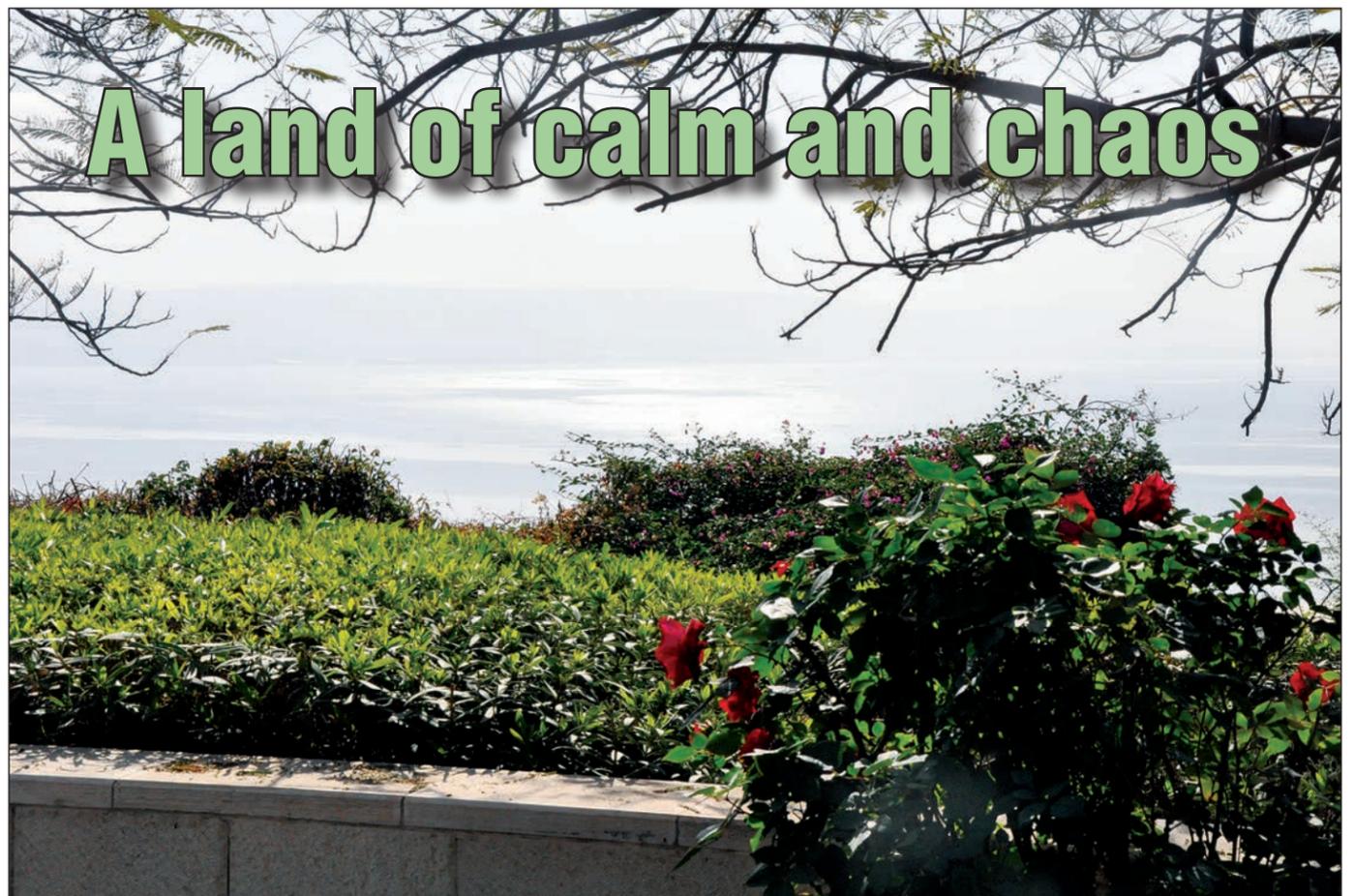
Court orders review of Notre Dame's case on HHS mandate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Supreme Court on March 9 ordered the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reconsider its previous ruling and review—in light of the June Hobby Lobby decision—whether the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana must pay for coverage of contraceptives, abortifacients and sterilization in employee and student health insurance plans.

The Supreme Court last June 30 said that the families that own Hobby Lobby, a chain of arts and crafts stores, and Conestoga Wood Specialties need not comply with a federal mandate to include abortion inducing drugs, sterilizations and contraceptives in employee health insurance.

The Affordable Care Act includes provisions requiring employee health insurance to cover such medicines and procedures. While there are exemptions for certain types of religious institutions, the circumstances are limited as to which

See MANDATE, page 2A



The Sea of Galilee shimmers in the background on Feb. 7 in this view from the Mount of Beatitudes on the northern shore of the sea, also known as Lake Tiberius. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

'There's a militarized wall around Bethlehem?' and other Holy Land pilgrimage observations

(Editor's note: On Feb. 4-15, 51 pilgrims from in and around the archdiocese, including Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, traveled through the Holy Land. The following is a reflection written by staff reporter Natalie Hoefler, who covered the pilgrimage for The Criterion. See a related story on page 10A. A photo essay and quotes from pilgrims during the Galilee portion of the pilgrimage are included on pages 8A-9A. Next week's issue will highlight the Jerusalem portion of the pilgrimage.)

By Natalie Hoefler

The sky was clear as we sat in the wooden boat that plied the waters of the Sea of Galilee. I inhaled deeply then exhaled slowly, taking in the view.

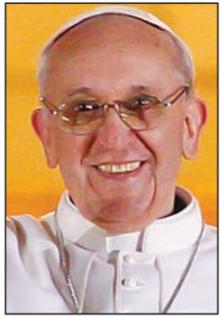
See PILGRIMAGE, page 7A



Christian leaders pray in front of the Israeli separation wall near Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem, West Bank, on May 29, 2010, the beginning of the World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel. Pictured in the center, from left, are Father Naim Ateek, director of Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center; Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem; and Melkite Father Yacoub Abu Saada of Mother of Christ Melkite Catholic Church in Bethlehem. (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)

Pope: Mass in vernacular helps people understand God, live the faith

ROME (CNS)—Allowing priests to celebrate Mass in the language of the local congregation rather than in Latin allowed the faithful to understand and be encouraged by the word of God, Pope Francis said.



Pope Francis

“You cannot turn back, we have to always go forward, always forward and who goes back is making a mistake,” he told parishioners after commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first time a pope celebrated Mass in the vernacular following the Second Vatican Council.

“Let us give thanks to the Lord for what he has done in his Church in these 50 years of liturgical reform. It was really a courageous move by the Church to get closer to the people of God so that they could understand well what it does, and this is important for us: to follow Mass like this,” he said as he left Rome’s Church of All Saints on March 7.

On the same date in 1965, Blessed Paul VI publicly

celebrated Mass in Italian for the first time in accordance with the norms established by the Second Vatican Council.

In his homily at the parish, Pope Francis said people need to be able to connect the liturgy to their own lives. “The liturgy isn’t something odd, over there, far away” that has no bearing on one’s everyday life, he said.

“The Church calls us to have and promote an authentic liturgical life so that there can be harmony between what the liturgy celebrates, and what we live out” with the aim of expressing in life what has been received in faith.

He said the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, “*Sacrosanctum Concilium*,” defined the liturgy as “the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.”

While the liturgy is, in part, about doctrine and ritual, its real essence is to be “a source of life and light for our journey of faith,” he said.

Going to church is not just about observing one’s duty and “feeling right with a God who then must not be too ‘bothersome’ ” afterward in one’s daily life, he said.

People go to church “to encounter the Lord and find in his grace at work in the sacraments the strength to think and

act according to the Gospel,” he said.

“Therefore, we cannot fool ourselves, entering into the Lord’s house and, with prayers and devotional practices, ‘covering up’ behaviors that are contrary to the demands of justice, honesty and charity toward others,” Pope Francis said.

Authentic worship and liturgical celebrations should lead people toward “a real conversion” of heart by letting them hear “the voice of the Lord, who guides them along the path of rectitude and Christian perfection.”

Just like Jesus sought to “cleanse” or purify the temple by driving out the moneychangers, people must continue to be committed to “the purification and inner cleansing of the Church,” the pope said, so that it be a spiritual place and not a superficial place of worship “made of material sacrifices and based on personal interests.”

The pope said he hoped that commemorating the first papal Mass in the vernacular rather than Latin would remind people that the house of God is meant to be a source of spiritual strength, where they can hear his word and feel “not like foreigners, but as brothers and sisters” who are united in their love for Christ. †

Archbishop: Respect for human dignity anchored the civil rights movement

SELMA, Ala. (CNS)—The message of the civil rights movement has always been that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and that the dignity of all must be respected, said Mobile Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi.



Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi

He was the main celebrant and homilist at a Mass on March 8 at Queen of Peace Church in Selma marking the 50th anniversary of the 1965 civil rights marches from Selma to Montgomery.

Respect for the dignity of all remains the challenge for today, Archbishop Rodi said, adding that he wondered what the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who led the marches and was “first and foremost a religious leader,” would think about things today.

“Do we respect the dignity of the elderly, the immigrant, the baby in womb? That continues to be the struggle for each of us,” Archbishop Rodi said in a homily that

described the Catholic Church’s persistent presence in addressing both the spiritual and temporal needs of God’s people.

He said that the media often leave out “Rev.” in describing the civil rights giant, and in doing so they are omitting the spiritual and primary vehicle that carried his nonviolent quest forward—one anchored in the dignity of the human person.

Concelebrants included three of the nation’s African-American Catholic bishops—Louisiana Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, Washington Auxiliary Bishop Martin D. Holley and retired Bishop John H. Ricard of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Fla.

On March 7, 1965, led by Rev. King and other civil rights figures, marchers risked imprisonment and injury to make a peaceful procession from Selma across the Edmund Pettus Bridge to Montgomery. They were protesting infringement of voting rights against African-Americans in Selma and the brutal murder of a demonstrator by a state trooper a month earlier.

Through newspaper accounts and television coverage,

the world saw blacks and whites, men and women, clergy of all faiths, Catholic priests and nuns, walking arm-in-arm across the bridge in Selma and then scattering as police released tear gas and beat some of them over the heads with truncheons. That day came to be known as “Bloody Sunday.”

Rev. King galvanized marchers for a second march—on March 9, 1965—but he turned it around at the bridge, at the urging of members of Congress who wanted federal protection for the demonstrators but had not yet secured it. A third march took place on March 21, 1965, with federal protection for participants. On Aug. 6, 1965, the federal Voting Rights Act was passed, and it was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson.

This year on March 7 in Selma, President Barack Obama, first lady Michelle Obama and the couple’s two daughters were joined by U.S. Rep. John Lewis, D-Georgia, an Alabama native who walked with Rev. King in 1965, in leading an estimated 40,000 people who came from all over the country to take part in a commemorative march on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. †

MANDATE

continued from page 1A

employers may claim a religious exemption. The Hobby Lobby case dealt strictly with certain types of for-profit employers.

In that case, the court said the federal government could have chosen ways to provide uniform access to contraceptives, sterilization and abortifacients that were less of an infringement on the religious rights of the owners of the businesses. It said under the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act such “closely held” companies can assert religious views that protect them from the mandate.

There are many gray areas for how to determine what types of employers qualify for provisions that exempt or accommodate religious institutions whose owners say use of contraceptives, sterilization and abortifacients violates the teachings of their faiths.

The mandate—under rules issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—requires nearly all employers to cover contraceptives,

sterilizations and some abortion-inducing drugs in employee health insurance plans. It includes a narrow exemption for some religious employers that fit certain criteria. Religious employers that are not exempt can comply with a third-party accommodation.

Dozens of lawsuits in process around the country raise questions related to compliance with the mandate for schools, private employers, religious orders, faith-based media companies and others. Some of those lawsuits are based on the employers’ objections to the process required to seek an accommodation or exemption.

In its lawsuit, Notre Dame argued that the mandate’s purpose “is to discriminate against religious institutions and organizations that oppose abortion and contraception.”

In the original 7th Circuit ruling, Judge Richard Posner, joined by Judge David Hamilton, said Notre Dame has the option of following the accommodation that says employers who object to the coverage on moral grounds can fill out a form and direct a third party to provide the coverage to their employees.

Posner wrote: “If the government is entitled to require that female contraceptives be provided to women free of charge, we have trouble understanding how signing the form that declares Notre Dame’s authorized refusal to pay for contraceptives for its students or staff, and mailing the authorization document to those companies, which under federal law are obligated to pick up the tab, could be thought to ‘trigger’ the provision of female contraceptives.”

The Supreme Court’s March 9 order simply vacated the 7th Circuit’s judgment, and told it to reconsider the case in light of the Hobby Lobby ruling.

In a statement, Mark Rienzi, senior counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which represents many plaintiffs who are challenging the mandate, described the Supreme Court’s remand order as “a major blow to the federal government’s contraception mandate.”

The Becket Fund statement said the 7th Circuit ruling had made Notre Dame “the only nonprofit religious ministry in the nation without protection from the HHS mandate. The federal government has relied heavily on that decision in

courts around the country, arguing that it should be able to impose similar burdens on religious ministries like the Little Sisters of the Poor.”

The Becket Fund said more than 750 plaintiffs in other nonprofit cases have been granted protection from the mandate. Substantial fines apply if institutions refuse to comply with the HHS mandate. †

Official Appointment

Effective immediately

Deacon Michael Braun, deacon and pastoral associate of Family Life at St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, appointed chaplain coordinator pro tem at Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis, while continuing his appointment at St. Simon the Apostle Parish.

This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Indianapolis. †

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Newborn incubator bill passes House, heads to Senate

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A rise in abandoned infants in Indiana prompted one lawmaker to take action.

Rep. Casey Cox, R-Ft. Wayne, authored a bill to expand Indiana's safe haven law to provide a monitored incubator for parents

in crisis to safely give up their child without fear of punishment or face-to-face interaction. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the legislation.

The legislation, House Bill 1016, would authorize the state to approve qualifying service providers to install and operate a newborn safety incubator, which would be monitored for immediate response once a baby was dropped off.

Cox, who presented his bill to the House Public Health Committee on Feb. 19, said that the goal of the legislation is to "reduce infant mortality" in the state, saying this type of infant mortality is "completely avoidable."

According to the Ambulance Medical Technician (AMT) Children of Hope Foundation, nationwide there are an estimated 200 abandoned newborns each year that are abandoned and die before someone finds them. Cox said that the actual number is estimated to be about three times higher due to the babies that die but are never found.

Cox explained that Indiana created safe haven laws in the 1990s in response to an increase in abandoned babies, which allowed parents to relinquish parental rights of a child in certain circumstances. He noted

that all 50 states have some version of the safe haven law.

Cox said that as long as there are no signs of abuse, Indiana's current safe haven law allows legal anonymity, but not full anonymity. Current law requires an in-person, face-to-face interaction between parents, a police officer, firefighter or hospital personnel in order to gain legal immunity protection.

"The face-to-face interaction is debilitating to the purpose of the safe haven law," Cox said. "Can we further the policy? Can we make the existing safe haven law better by providing a greater amount of anonymity? I think we can."

Cox said this concept of baby incubators dates back to the Middle Ages. In 1198, in response to numerous abandonments and drowning of babies in the Tiber River, Pope Innocent III directed certain monasteries to begin accepting abandoned infants anonymously through walls or windows. Troubled mothers could place their child in a cylinder, commonly known as a foundling wheel, which when turned around would deliver the baby from the outside to the inside of the monastery. The mother would ring a bell alerting the monastery that a baby had been put into their care.

Cox said that this concept, updated to modern-day standards, continues. The external-internal incubators today, also commonly referred to as "baby hatches," are often built in police stations or hospitals. According to Cox, they are in operation all over the world and provide full anonymity for troubled parents wishing to relinquish their baby.

"There are numerous examples in Europe and Canada," he said. Germany has 100 of these units in operation,



'The face-to-face interaction is debilitating to the purpose of the safe haven law. Can we further the policy? Can we make the existing safe haven law better by providing a greater amount of anonymity? I think we can.'

—Rep. Casey Cox

he said, and Pakistan has 300. Other countries currently using the incubator process include Switzerland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, Italy and Vatican City. The external-internal infant incubators are typically temperature- and climate-controlled, and emit a silent alarm notifying first responders that a baby has been dropped off.

Monica Kelsey, a firefighter in Fort Wayne, Ind., told the panel that her mother had abandoned her as an infant. "The problem with the safe haven law now is these girls have to walk into a facility and hand over their baby," she said. "They have gone nine months without telling anyone they were pregnant, and they are in crisis mode. They don't want to be seen, and this is the only alternative that we have to keep these children safe."

According to Kelsey, 13 babies have been relinquished in Indiana under the safe haven law. Thirty-three have been abandoned. Thirteen of the 33 infants were found deceased. "We have a problem," said Kelsey.

Sue Swayze, who represented Indiana Right to Life at the hearing, said, "We stand in support of the bill. We think it's visionary. It helps a desperate mother with a place to put her baby."

Indianapolis resident Linda Znachka, founder of "He Knows Your Name" ministry, also testified in support of the bill. Znachka said she formed her ministry in 2009 when a baby was found deceased in a downtown Indianapolis dumpster.

After calling the coroner's office, Znachka learned that the baby would be buried in a mass grave. Znachko said she was "appalled" that in the 21st century there would be such disregard for a child's dignity. This set Znachko on a five-year mission seeking to bring awareness and dignity to death for babies. Znachko legally adopts abandoned babies who have died, gives them a name and provides a proper burial.

House Bill 1016 passed the House on Feb. 24 by a 94-0 vote, and has been assigned to the Senate Public Health and Provider Services Committee. The bill is expected to receive a hearing by the Senate panel before the end of March.

(For more information about the Indiana Catholic Conference, its Indiana Catholic Action Network and the bills it is following in the Indiana General Assembly this year, log on to www.indianacc.org. Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

Cardinal Edward M. Egan, retired archbishop of New York, dies at age 82

NEW YORK (CNS)—

Cardinal Edward M. Egan, who retired as archbishop of New York in 2009, died on March 5. The cause of death was cardiac arrest. He was 82.

After collapsing at his residence that afternoon, he was taken to NYU Langone Medical Center, where doctors pronounced him dead at 2:20 p.m.

A funeral Mass for Cardinal Egan was celebrated on March 10 at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York told Catholics of the archdiocese he was saddened to tell them "our beloved" Cardinal Egan "has gone home to the Lord."

"Join me, please, in thanking God for his life, especially his generous and faithful priesthood. Pray as well that the powerful mercy of Jesus, in which our cardinal had such trust, has ushered him into heaven," said Cardinal Dolan, who succeeded Cardinal Egan.

Cardinal Dolan in his statement said that Cardinal Egan "had a peaceful death, passing away right after lunch today, with the prayers and sacraments of his loyal priest secretary, Father Douglas Crawford, in his residence at the Chapel of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."

He said the retired archbishop was rushed from the residence to the medical center, where he was pronounced dead.

Pope Francis offered his condolences in a telegram to Cardinal Dolan.

"I join you in commending the late cardinal's noble soul to God, the father of mercies," the pope said, "with gratitude for his years of episcopal ministry among Christ's flock in Bridgeport [Connecticut] and New York,

his distinguished service to the Apostolic See, and his expert contribution to the revision of the Church's law in the years following the Second Vatican Council."

A former auxiliary bishop of New York, then-Bishop Egan was named to head the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., in 1988, and was appointed as archbishop of New York in 2000. He was named a cardinal in 2001.

In the planning stages for Pope Benedict XVI's 2008 visit, Cardinal Egan put a constant focus on the spiritual side of the visit, organizers said at the time. He wanted the visit to be spiritually enriching for as many people as possible, and not just Catholics.

During his tenure as head of the New York Archdiocese, Cardinal Egan also had to tackle a budget shortfall and changing demographics. That led to parish realignment decisions in 2007, 10 parishes closed, another 11 merged with other parishes, and five new parishes were established. A year earlier, nine schools had to close.

A three-year process led to the New York parish realignment decisions and involved a lot of listening and learning, the cardinal said at the time.

"The good news is that the process works," he said. "Every decision was the result of an in-depth study of the needs of the faithful here in the Archdiocese of New York."

With his death, the College of Cardinals now has 226 members, 125 of whom are under age 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

At the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Cardinal Egan was a current member of the Committee on Migration and a consultant to the Committee on Pro-Life Activities, as well as a member of the board of bishops for the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement that Cardinal Egan "spread love and knowledge, and brought comfort to countless New

Yorkers and others across the country and the world who sought his guidance and counsel—especially in the aftermath of 9/11."

After the terrorist attacks brought down the twin towers of the World Trade Center, then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani called on the cardinal for his spiritual help. Cardinal Egan ministered to the victims and distributed rosaries to rescue workers. He also celebrated many funeral Masses for those who perished in the attacks or died trying to help people amid the rubble.

Richard E. Barnes, executive director of the New York State Catholic Conference, said Cardinal Egan's contributions to the conference's work "cannot be overstated."

"He was a tireless defender of the poor and vulnerable, the unborn, the sick and the elderly," Barnes said. "He had a particular devotion to Catholic education, calling it the Church's most important charitable ministry, and he raised untold millions to ensure its viability."

Cardinal Egan also was a friend of the Jewish people in New York and during his earlier years in Chicago. The cities are home to two of the largest Jewish communities outside of Israel.

The archbishop of New York especially "plays a critical role in advancing Catholic-Jewish relations, and Cardinal Egan is remembered as a friend who humbly built upon his Jewish relationships and lived out with the Jewish people the 'Nostra Aetate' ideal of the oneness of 'the community of all peoples,'" said Rabbi Noam Marans, the American Jewish Committee's director of interreligious and intergroup relations.

"Nostra Aetate" is the Second Vatican Council's 1965 Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

Cardinal Egan was the first head of the New York Archdiocese to retire from the post. The three bishops and eight archbishops who preceded him all died in office. †

After two years in office, pope has 90 percent favorable rating

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Two years after he was elected pope, Pope Francis' popularity rating among U.S. Catholics is at 90 percent, surpassing Pope Benedict XVI's best-ever popularity, and rivaling that of St. John Paul II.

Pope Francis, who is scheduled to visit Washington, New York and Philadelphia in September, garnered a "very favorable" view from 57 percent of U.S. Catholics, and "mostly favorable" from another 33 percent.

By comparison, Pope Benedict's highest favorability rating was 83 percent in April 2008, when he visited the United States. St. John Paul achieved favorability scores of 93 percent in May 1990 and June 1996, and 91 percent in May 1987, four months before his second U.S. visit. All of those scores were nearly a decade or more into his papacy.

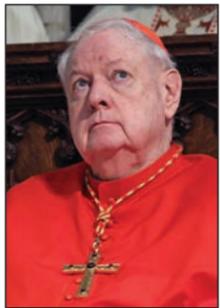
All polls were conducted by the Pew Research Center, which issued its findings on March 5.

Pope Francis scored 84 percent favorability at his March 2013 election, dipped to 79 percent that September, then rose to 85 percent in February 2014.

Among all Americans in the Pew survey, Pope Francis' favorability ratings also have increased over the past two years. He started at 57 percent at the time of his election, inched upward to 58 percent the following September, increased to 66 percent last year and hit 70 percent this year.

In the latest survey, there was no segment of the U.S. population where Pope Francis did not gain majority favorability. In fact, every segment gave the pope a margin of at least 5-to-2 support.

Catholics who said they attend Mass regularly gave Pope Francis a 95 percent favorability rating, including two-thirds who said they held a very favorable opinion of the pope. †



Cardinal Edward M. Egan



Rev. Msgr. Raymond T. Bosler, Founding Editor, 1915 - 1994

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Editorial

Catholic Bishops of Indiana

Poverty at the Crossroads



The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana

Toward a Church that is poor and for the poor

Upon his election as Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis declared himself to be one with the poor. He also shared with the world his longing for a Church that is poor and is for the poor.

Jesus said, "The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me" (Mk 14:7, Mt. 26:11).

Was Jesus telling his disciples that the poor are not a priority? Not at all. That would hardly be consistent with his words and actions throughout his public ministry. Jesus was poor, and he was for the poor, in exactly the way the Pope Francis longs for.

This week, the Catholic bishops of Indiana issued a pastoral letter "Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana." The purpose of this letter is "to call attention to the poverty that exists right here within the state that calls itself the 'Crossroads of America.'"

Using the simple formula of See, Judge, Act, the bishops invite and challenge everyone, beginning with themselves, "to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects."

See. The bishops quote the parable (Lk 16:19-21) about the poor "street person" named Lazarus, and the rich man who passed him every day without noticing him. "It is apparent that the rich man could not—or would not—see the poverty that was right in front of his eyes." Does this parable apply to us, the bishops ask? "Have we chosen not to see our brothers and sisters who are poor?"

Judge. Poverty is not just a personal or family problem. It is an indictment of the societies and civil institutions that are based on human inequality and the survival of the fittest. Poverty destroys families. It creates an unbalanced and unproductive economy. It weakens our schools and our health care institutions. It promotes addiction, crime and all sorts of immorality. Christians are called to make informed decisions about policies and practices at the local, regional, national and global levels that will identify the root

causes of poverty and work to eradicate them. We are challenged to elect political leaders who do more than give lip service to the needs of the poor and oppressed, especially the most vulnerable members of our society—the unborn, elderly, infirm and marginalized.

Act. "We invite all who read these words to join us in reaching out to the poor members of our state. We challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to engage the leaders of business, government and voluntary organizations throughout our state in effecting meaningful changes in the policies and practices that perpetuate in all its manifestations."

This call to act affirms that "actions do speak louder than words," but it also underscores the seriousness and complexity of the problem. If eradicating poverty were uncomplicated, or easily accomplished, it would have been done long ago.

Unfortunately, the poor are always with us, which is another way of saying that the root causes of poverty are deeply ingrained in our sinful human condition. To eliminate poverty, we must convert our minds and hearts; we must change the way we see ourselves and our world; and we must allow the grace of Christ to transform our individual and communal actions so that we build up (rather than tear down) our sisters and brothers who are poor.

"If we give priority to family life, work, education and health care," the bishops write, "an economically strong, well-educated and healthy Indiana" will be the result. It's simple, but not easy.

What can we do to help alleviate poverty? Pray. Strengthen families (starting with our own). Advocate for quality, accessibility and affordability in education and health care. Support Catholic Charities and other social service agencies in Indiana through generous stewardship of time, talent and treasure.

"Catholic social teaching insists that the needs of the poor must take priority," the bishops say in "Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana."

Now is the time to see it for what it is, to make judgments about root causes and solutions, and to act as Jesus did to help all who suffer from the devastating effects of poverty—here and now—in the Crossroads of America.

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/John F. Fink

Remembering Father Ted

For his funeral, Father Ted chose the scriptural readings Is 26:6-9, Ps 23, Rom 14:7-12 and Mt 25:31-45. They reflect the interests of a man who devoted his life to justice and service to the poor. He was 97 when he died on Feb. 26.



Father Ted, of course, was Holy Cross Father Theodore Martin Hesburgh, but people who knew him called him Father Ted—and he was known by a lot of people. Among the 13 people who spoke at a memorial tribute program after his funeral on March 4 were former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence. President Barack Obama's tribute was shared in a video message. Two cardinals and six bishops, including Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, participated at his funeral.

Articles about Father Ted usually refer to his 35 years as president of the University of Notre Dame, his 16 presidential appointments, his service to four popes, his 150 honorary degrees, his Presidential Medal of Freedom, or his Congressional Gold Medal.

He was undoubtedly one of the most influential Catholic Americans of the 20th century since he served in more capacities and on more boards and committees than any other—often the first or only Catholic to fill those positions. Even in his 80s, he was a member of numerous boards of directors until age forced him to cut back.

But Father Ted always insisted, and meant it, that he was first of all a priest. For more than 70 years, he tried to celebrate Mass every day and succeeded, except for a few days.

He said Mass in some amazing places: in the Chilean Andes, in the middle of an African jungle, in Antarctica. He told me once that he smuggled altar wine into Saudi Arabia in a reamed-out deodorant container so he could say Mass. He prayed that the Lord would permit him to say Mass on the day of his death. He did.

Be Our Guest/John D. Short

Father Hesburgh leaves legacy of devoted priesthood, friendship to many

On Wednesday, March 4, I joined thousands of University of Notre Dame alumni, friends and religious leaders, including our own Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, on the Notre Dame campus to remember Holy Cross Father Ted Hesburgh, who died on Feb. 26 at 97.

Our family held a special friendship with Father Ted since the 1970s. He reminded us often of the Gospel message of faith, hope and love.

As worldly as his life was in service to God, country and Notre Dame, at the end of the day his priesthood and devoted friendship define his legacy.

He traveled often to Indianapolis. Bill McGowan, Class of 1957, or I would always meet him at his Notre Dame plane on the runway to drive him to appointments and dinners. Those will always be our favorite memories—driving around Indianapolis sharing stories with Father Ted.

I'll never forget a drive to Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, as he told me that he'd just flown in from Boston, having just been elected chairman of the Harvard Board of Overseers. He was incredulous they would want a Catholic priest.

My final visit to see him was in the fall of 2014. As we gazed at the Golden Dome from the window in his library office, we

He was also faithful to praying the entire Liturgy of the Hours until macular degeneration took away his eyesight. After that, he told me, he prayed three rosaries every day. Of course, he always had a great devotion to Mary.

About that macular degeneration: I don't think most people realized that Father Ted was almost totally blind for about the last 15 years of his life. When he talked to you, he looked right into your eyes, and you had a hard time realizing that he couldn't see you. He didn't let his blindness stop him from learning. People read to him, and he regularly listened to audio tapes of books that he received.

Father Ted loved everything about being a priest: preaching, counseling, baptizing, witnessing marriages and hearing confessions. He always wore his Roman collar in public because, he said, he was able to help a lot of people who would stop him because of that collar.

Somehow I got on the list of people who received Father Ted's travel diaries. In return, at his request, I sent him mine. I was always amazed that, as busy as he was, he found time to read my diaries and comment on them.

After his retirement as president of Notre Dame, when he returned there after a year of travel, he devoted himself to five areas that he thought could affect all of humanity: peace in a nuclear age; human rights and justice worldwide; human development in terms of new economic, social and political structures in the Third World; the abuse of the ecology, the next great threat to humanity; and ecumenism and interfaith dialogue.

I have long kept on my desk this quotation from Father Ted: "The key to life's success is the ambition to do as much as you can, as well as you can, for as long as you can, and to not despair over the things you cannot do." That is what Father Ted pledged to do, and I think he was successful.

May he have eternal happiness in heaven.

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion. He graduated from Notre Dame in 1953, Father Hesburgh's first graduation class as president.) †

Letters Policy

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

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

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

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO JOSEPH W. TOBIN



REJOICE IN THE LORD

ALÉGRENSE EN EL SEÑOR

Geography of Holy Land gives witness to God's involvement with all creation

It is sometimes said that the geography of the Holy Land constitutes a "fifth Gospel." Having followed in the footsteps of Jesus last month—up high mountains with breathtaking views, across the barren desert and the lush Galilean countryside—and having sailed on the Sea of Galilee and gazed at the wonder of the Dead Sea, I have a whole new understanding of what "the fifth Gospel" means.

Since the beginning of time, men and women have searched for God on mountain peaks and in arid deserts. The Gospels tell us that Jesus spent a lot of time by himself, away from the crowds, in the presence of his heavenly Father. He prayed, he fasted and he overcame temptation by giving himself completely to his Father's will in these moments of silent prayer and meditation.

But as Pope Francis tells us in his Lenten message this year, God is never aloof from his people. The time that Jesus spent alone in desert or mountain retreats prepared him to be fully engaged with the people he

loved.

Our recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land took us to many of the places that witnessed Jesus' interaction with large crowds. For example, we visited the mountain where he fed more than 5,000 people with just five loaves and two fish. We toured the town of Capernaum in Galilee where four men lowered a paralyzed man through a hole in the roof of the house where Jesus was teaching. We also walked through the ruins of a local Capernaum synagogue where Jesus proclaimed himself to be the bread of life.

It's amazing how the geography of the Scriptures can augment the story of God's love for us in the most concrete and vivid detail. The Scriptures come alive in new ways as a result of the illustration provided by the places where Jesus' teaching and his miracles actually took place!

Picture yourself in a small boat on a large body of water during a sudden storm. One word from Jesus, and the raging sea is calm, the crisis is averted. All of nature is humbled before the mystery of the Creator God. But God

is not distant or aloof. He is one with his creation. He is present with us no matter who, what or where we are—and regardless of the internal or external forces that attempt to pull us away from the power of God's love.

Pope Francis' theme for this Lent is overcoming the temptation that the Holy Father calls "indifference." Life's challenges, personal hurts and disappointments, and the unfairness we often have to endure can cause us to build protective walls around our hearts. Being closed in on ourselves, we think we are safe from what Shakespeare's Hamlet called "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." But this safety is only an illusion, the pope tells us. Only by opening our hearts and casting off our indifference can we be truly happy and fulfilled.

Our Lord was never aloof or indifferent to the suffering of others. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and even raised the dead. Why? Because he cares deeply about us and is deeply engaged in our lives.

The geography of the Holy Land

gives witness to God's personal involvement with all his creation—wind and sea, deserts, mountains and fertile valleys. This is the kind of testimony regularly given by St. Francis of Assisi, who insisted that God's glory is revealed in Brother Sun and Sister Moon and in animals wild and tame who praise God in all that they do.

My fellow pilgrims and I experienced firsthand the miraculous truth that the land where Jesus walked underscores how much he cared for others, especially the poor and suffering people who sought him out precisely because they knew how much he loved them.

This Lent, let's thank God for the wonder of all creation. And let's also pray that we will be able to open our hearts to others as Jesus did whether he was teaching on a high mountain, cooking breakfast for his disciples beside the Sea of Galilee, or passing through the locked doors that prevented his followers from "going out to the peripheries" (as Pope Francis would say) to become fully engaged in the lives of the Jews and Gentiles they were called to evangelize in Jesus' name. †

La geografía de Tierra Santa es testimonio de la intervención de Dios en toda la creación

Se ha dicho en ocasiones que la geografía de Tierra Santa representa el "quinto evangelio." Tras haber caminado sobre los pasos de Jesús durante el pasado mes, en las alturas de montes con vistas espectaculares, por el desierto yermo y por las exuberantes campiñas de galileas, y luego de haber navegado por el Mar de Galilea y haberme maravillado con las vistas del Mar Muerto, tengo una nueva noción de lo que significa el "quinto evangelio."

Desde el inicio de los tiempos, hombres y mujeres han buscado a Dios en las cimas de las montañas y en los desiertos áridos. Los evangelios nos dicen que Jesús pasó mucho tiempo solo, alejado de las multitudes, en presencia de su Padre celestial. Allí oró, hizo ayuno y resistió tentaciones entregándose por completo a la voluntad de su Padre en esos momentos de oración y meditación silente.

Pero tal como nos lo dice el papa Francisco en su mensaje para la Cuaresma de este año, Dios jamás es indiferente a su pueblo. El tiempo que pasó Jesús solo en sus retiros en el desierto o la montaña lo prepararon para estar completamente unido al pueblo al que amaba.

Nuestra reciente peregrinación a

Tierra Santa, nos condujo a muchos de los lugares que presenciaron la interacción de Jesús con las multitudes. Por ejemplo, visitamos la montaña donde alimentó a más de 5,000 personas con tan solo cinco hogazas de pan y dos pescados. Realizamos un recorrido por el pueblo de Cafarnaúm en Galilea, donde cuatro hombres hicieron descender a un paralítico a través de un agujero en el techo de la casa donde Jesús estaba impartiendo sus enseñanzas. También caminamos por las ruinas de la sinagoga de Cafarnaúm, donde Jesús proclamó a sí mismo como el pan de vida.

Resulta increíble cómo la geografía de las Escrituras surte un efecto amplificador sobre la historia de amor de Dios por nosotros, y le imparte detalles concretos y vívidos. Las escrituras cobran vida de nuevas formas gracias a la imagen que brindan los lugares donde Jesús enseñó y donde verdaderamente sucedieron sus milagros.

Imagínese que usted está en una pequeña embarcación en un enorme océano durante una tormenta repentina; con una palabra de Jesús, el mar embravecido se calma y la crisis se supera. Toda la naturaleza se doblega ante el misterio del Dios creador. Pero Dios no es un ser distante ni indiferente; Él es uno con Su creación. Se encuentra

presente entre nosotros, sin importar quiénes seamos, qué hagamos o dónde estemos e independientemente de las fuerzas interiores o exteriores que intentan apartarnos del poder del amor de Dios.

El tema del papa Francisco para esta Cuaresma es superar la tentación que el Santo Padre llama "indiferencia." Los desafíos de la vida, las heridas personales y las desilusiones, así como la injusticia que a menudo debemos soportar, pueden provocar que levantemos un muro protector en torno a nuestros corazones. Al encerrarnos en nosotros mismos creemos estar a salvo de lo que el Hamlet de Shakespeare llamó "sufrir los golpes y dardos de la insultante fortuna." Pero el Papa nos dice que esta seguridad es tan solo una ilusión. Únicamente al abrir nuestros corazones y desterrar nuestra indiferencia podemos sentirnos verdaderamente felices y plenos.

Nuestro Señor jamás se mostró indiferente ni fue ajeno al sufrimiento de los demás; alimentó al hambriento, curó al enfermo e incluso levantó a los muertos. ¿Por qué? Porque nos quiere profundamente y porque está muy comprometido con nuestras vidas.

La geografía de Tierra Santa es testimonio de la intervención personal

de Dios en toda Su creación: viento y mar, desiertos, montañas y valles fértiles. Este es el tipo de testimonio que daba San Francisco de Asís, quien insistía en que la gloria de Dios se revelaba en el Hermano Sol y la Hermana Luna, así como en los animales salvajes y domesticados que alaban a Dios con todas sus acciones.

Mis compañeros de peregrinación y yo vivimos de primera mano la milagrosa verdad de que la tierra por la que caminó Jesús resalta cuánto se preocupaba por los demás, especialmente por los pobres y los afligidos que lo buscaban precisamente porque sabían lo mucho que él los amaba.

En esta Cuaresma démosle gracias a Dios por la maravilla de toda la creación. Y también oremos para poder abrir nuestros corazones al prójimo tal como lo hizo Jesús, ya sea al enseñar en la cima de una montaña, al preparar el desayuno para sus discípulos junto al Mar de Galilea, o atravesando las puertas cerradas que impedían a sus seguidores "salir a la periferia" (como diría el papa Francisco) para participar activamente en la vida de los judíos y los gentiles a los que estaban llamados a evangelizar en el nombre de Jesús. †

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

Events Calendar

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

March 13

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 N. Central Avenue, Indianapolis. **Rosary, Mass, Stations of the Cross, Benediction,** 6 p.m., Mass, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508 or mrivelli@sjoa.org.

St. Lawrence Parish, Fr. Conen Hall, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 5:30-7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-4065.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, parish hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 5-7 p.m., carry-out available, Stations of the Cross, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis, 7 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th St., Beech Grove. **Fish fry,** 5:30-7 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454 or Mstark@holyname.cc.

Our Lord Jesus Christ the King Church, 833 S. Triangle Road, Paoli. **Stations of the Cross, 4:30 p.m., fish fry** following the stations. Information: 812-936-4568 or ChristtheKing1948@gmail.com.

All Saints Parish, 8044 Yorkridge Road, Yorkville. **Fish fry,** 4:30-7 p.m. Information: 812-576-4302 or parishoffice@etczone.com.

March 14

St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Single Seniors** meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-4207.

Sacred Heart Chapel, 8212 W. Hendricks Road, Bloomington. **Concert, "Children of Hope,"** Eric Genuis, composer and pianist, presenter, 7 p.m., no charge. Information: 812-825-4642 ext. 1 or marianoais@bluemarble.net.

All Saints Parish, 7536 Church Lane, St. Leon. **Spring craft show,** handmade arts and crafts, lunch, bake sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., free admission. Information: 812-576-4302 or ParishOffice@etczone.com.

St. John Vianney Church, 15176 Blessed Mother Boulevard, Fishers (Diocese of Lafayette). **"Battle Ready Rally,"** RADIX, Doug Barry, host of EWTN's "Life on the Rock" and founder of RADIX, men, women and children ages 7 and older, 7 p.m., no charge. Information: 317-485-0150 or stjohnvianney-fishers.com.

March 14-15

Villages of Oak Manor, clubhouse, Carey Road and 171st St., Westfield (Diocese of Lafayette). **Knights of Columbus #11044 and Our Lady of Mount Carmel present The Society for the Preservation of Roman Catholic Heritage (SPORCH), sacred art show open house and sale,** Sat. 3-8 p.m., Sun. noon-5 p.m. Information: 317-619-4354 or woelfel@comcast.net.

March 15

Holy Cross School, gym, 125 N. Oriental Ave., Indianapolis. **Annual St. Patrick's Day Party,** 3-7 p.m., babysitting available. Information: 317-435-2853 or treckley@sbcglobal.net.

St. Barnabas Parish, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis. **"CSI Jerusalem,"** presentation on behind-the-scenes of the Crucifixion, including medical, historical and scientific information, plus life-size replica of the Shroud of Turin, presented by Drs. Joseph Bergeron and Chuck Dietzen, 6:30 p.m. in church, free-will offerings accepted.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **St. Joseph's Table** benefitting Lumen Christi School,

11 a.m.-2 p.m., \$8 adults, \$4 children. Information: 317-632-3174 or JAdamsLC@Live.com.

St. Malachy School, gym, 7410 N. 1000 East, Brownsburg. **Altar Society, Longaberger bingo,** 2 p.m. Information: 317-268-4238 or altarsociety@stmalachy.org.

March 18

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Drive East, Indianapolis. **Wednesday Soup Supper,** Mass, 5:30 p.m., soup supper, 6:30-7:15 p.m. Information: 317-259-4373, ext. 256 or dearollo@stluke.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 4650 N. Shadeland Ave., Indianapolis. **Life in Christ Lenten Series,** 7:00-8:30pm. Sharing and reflecting on the sensory images of the Lenten Gospels. "Preserving Life for Eternity—Focus on Smell." Information: beiltrah@sbcglobal.net.

March 19

St. Joseph Parish, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration,** interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Marian University, Evans Center, 3200 Cold Springs

Road, Indianapolis. **"Hope for Healing,"** the *Healing Hidden Hurts* short film project debut and supporter appreciation evening, hosted by Board of Directors, the Knights for Life and the Marian University San Damiano Scholars, 6-8:30 p.m. preceding the film is a rosary walk and Mass. Information: 317-490-1267 or healinghiddenhurts.org.

March 20

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange Mass,** breakfast and program, "A Serial Entrepreneur's Journey to Stewardship for the Church," Eric Davis, executive director of the Lafayette Catholic School System, 7-9 a.m., \$15 members, \$21 non-members, breakfast included. Reservations and information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Rosary, Mass, Stations of the Cross, Benediction,** 6 p.m., Mass, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508 or mrivelli@sjoa.org.

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St. Lawrence Parish, Fr. Conen Hall, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 5:30-7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-4065.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, parish hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 5-7 p.m., carry-out available, Stations of the Cross, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis, 7 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, 7225 Southeastern Ave., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-357-1200 or indymiller@gmail.com.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th St., Beech Grove. **Fish fry,** 5:30-7 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454 or Mstark@holyname.cc

All Saints Parish, 8044 Yorkridge Road, Yorkville. **Fish fry,** 4:30-7 p.m. Information: 812-576-4302 or parishoffice@etczone.com. †

Retreats and Programs

March 27-29

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 Mt. St. Francis Drive, Mt. St. Francis. **Passion retreat,** Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter, presenter. Information: 812-923-8817 or www.mountsaintfrancis.org.

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

Cardinal Ritter students seek help with food drive for Indianapolis charities

Students at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis are hoping to collect 15,000 items in a drive to help Holy Family Shelter, food pantries and other local charities in the Indianapolis area.

Through March 20, items such as canned goods, paper towels, toilet paper and packaged, non-perishable foods can

be brought to the school's main lobby at 3360 W. 30th St. in Indianapolis.

The drive is oriented toward the school's service goal of changing the world one small step at a time.

For more information, contact Joel Hubert, the school's service learning coordinator, at jhubert@cardinalritter.org. †

Discount for May 16-17 marriage retreat in Indianapolis ends March 19

A team of five couples from St. Michael Parish in Greenfield have coordinated a Catholic Marriage Retreat to be held at Marriott East Hotel, 7202 E. 21st St., in Indianapolis on May 16-17.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin has approved the retreat, which will include exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, opportunities for confession, renewal of marriage vows and Mass.

The two-day retreat will feature presentations from three speakers:

- Legionary of Christ Father Matthew Summe, the eighth of 10 children who has led many retreats, provides spiritual direction and serves as chaplain to Regnum Christi members in the greater Indianapolis area;
- Christine Turo-Shields, ACSW, LCSW and LCAC, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis who has 25 years of counseling experience with individuals, married couples, families and groups;

- and Scott Seibert, MSW, LCL, the archdiocesan coordinator of marriage and family enrichment who has five years of marriage and family counseling experience and training in Theology of the Body, and who is a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield.

The retreat includes presentations, time for discussion, a question-and-answer session, and time to meet with counselors or to receive spiritual direction from priests. The evening includes dance lessons and an evening dance.

The cost of the retreat is \$350 for couples who register by March 19, and \$450 for couples who register by May 1. Any couple married less than five years will receive a \$50 discount.

The cost includes materials, lunch and dinner on May 16, and breakfast and lunch on May 17.

For more information or to register, contact Jeff Seeger at marriage.retreat.tkc@gmail.com. †

Irish singer and songwriter Eunan McIntyre to perform at Marian University on March 21

Marian University Theatre, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis will feature a family-friendly afternoon with award-winning Irish singer/songwriter Eunan McIntyre on March 21 at 3 p.m.

Best known for his songwriting and warm personality, McIntyre reaches into the heart of the audience with his Irish humor and his music. He will offer traditional Irish ballads as well as some of his own award-winning music.

Having toured the United States, Canada, Denmark, Luxembourg, Spain, and Switzerland, Eunan also has a

local history, playing the Greening of the Canal in Indianapolis every year since 2011.

To date, Eunan has released five albums and a new DVD based on his own material. His most recent album, "The Place That I Call Home," was released in 2014.

Tickets are \$7.50 for adults, \$4 for high school and college students, and \$2 for children under age 13.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.marian.edu, by e-mailing tickets@marian.edu or by calling 317-995-6588. †



Scholarship recipients

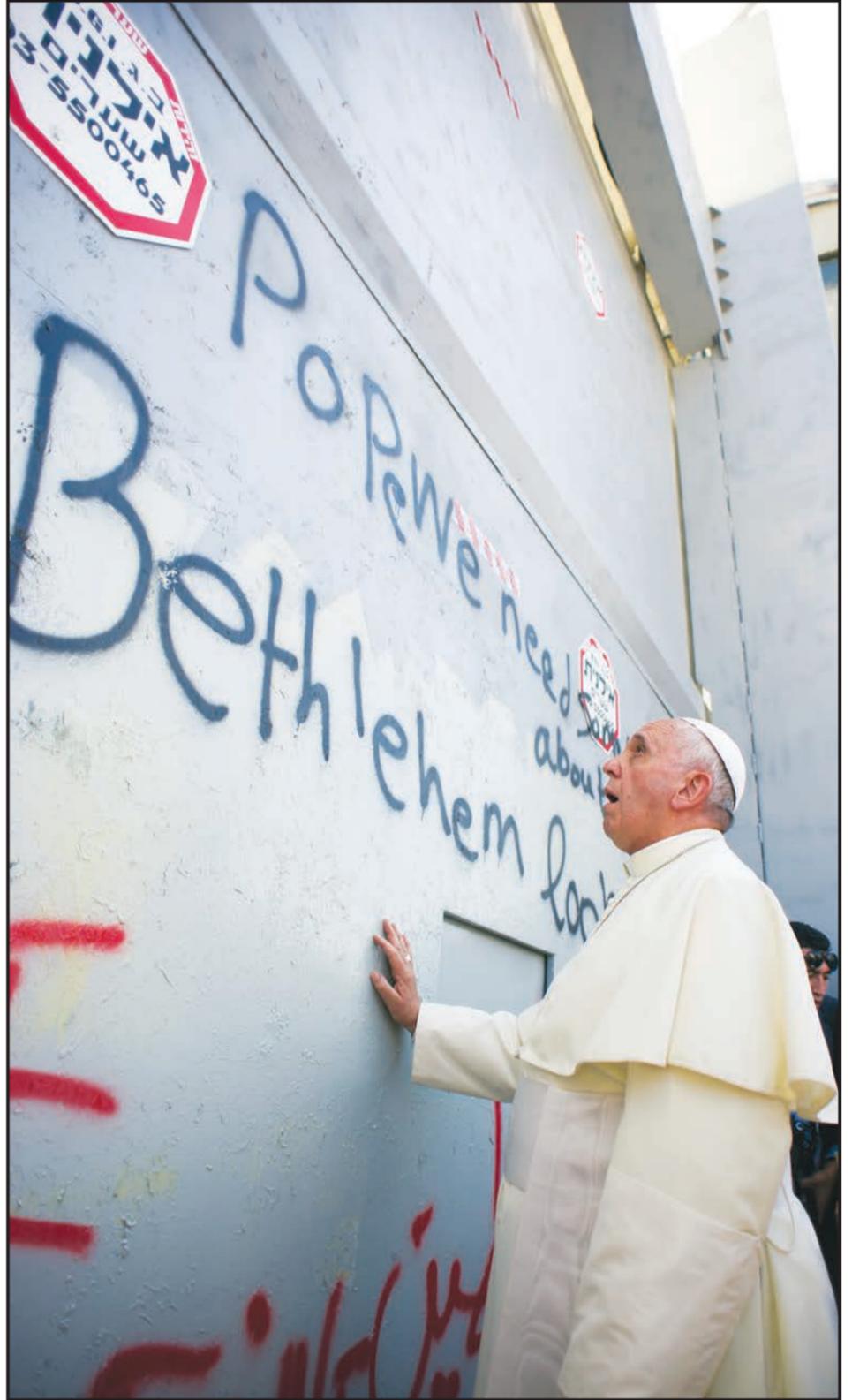
Colleen, left, Anthony and Mark Lahr pose with Brooke N. Lahr Fund scholarship award recipients Renner Guntz of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis and Christine Campbell of St. Charles Borromeo in Bloomington on Feb. 25, the birthday of the late Brooke Lahr, who died in 2013 after being struck by a car while serving as a missionary in Mexico. The Lahrs established the fund through the archdiocese's Catholic Community Foundation to create scholarships for teens and young adults in the archdiocese seeking to participate in international mission trips, a passion of their deceased daughter. The photo was taken in the St. Alphonsus Liguori Chapel at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



A tourist boat similar to the fishing boats used in Christ's time sits at anchor on the Sea of Galilee on Feb. 7. The pilgrims rode such a boat from Tiberius to the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, also known as Lake Tiberius. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Palestinian laborers work on a stage on May 6, 2009, near the Israeli separation wall in preparation for Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the Aida Refugee Camp in the West Bank town of Bethlehem. (CNS photo/Fadi Arouri, Reuters)



Pope Francis stops in front of the Israeli security wall in Bethlehem, West Bank on May 25, 2014. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano, pool)

PILGRIMAGE

continued from page 1A

To the east and the north, green hills continued their watch as they did in the time of Christ. To the west, the mountains of Jordan seemed to slumber in a shroud of mist.

Such a peaceful feeling it was, riding upon the lake in the early morning quiet.

Yet thanks to the small size of the "sea" (33 miles long by 13 miles wide), its shallow depth and its location between two mountain ranges which trap weather systems, a storm on that same placid lake can create waves as high as 12 feet, large enough to swamp the Apostles' boat and cause them to cry out, "Lord, save us!" (Mt 8:25)

That contrast of calm and chaos on the Sea of Galilee is an apt analogy to describe the Holy Land in general.

It is a land where views like the deep blue of the Mediterranean Sea and the lush vista from Mount Tabor can produce such serenity, yet where religious, ethnic and political differences create a palpable tension that seems ready to combust at any moment.

One simply can't walk away from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land without spiritual growth. As life moves forward, I find myself reading Scripture in a more engaging manner, visualizing the places we visited that are named in the Bible. I read the New Testament now with cultural and historical insights shared by our tour guide Tony Azraq, a Melkite Catholic whose full-time profession as an archaeologist made him a wealth of knowledge. I marvel at memories of the sometimes lush, sometimes stark, yet always awe-invoking landscape.

But mostly, I walked away from the Holy Land with enlightenment of the

That contrast of calm and chaos on the Sea of Galilee is an apt analogy to describe the Holy Land in general.

situation for Christians in Israel—and a heart disturbed by what I witnessed.

In Nazareth, the childhood home of Jesus, Muslims now comprise nearly 70 percent of the population, according to a 2009 Israel Central Bureau of Statistics report. The town used to be predominantly Christian.

It was jarring and, for me, disturbing to hear the intoned Muslim prayers blare from the loudspeaker of a nearby mosque into St. Joseph Church in Nazareth as Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin celebrated Mass.

And there was no hiding the shock on my face when Azraq mentioned the wall constructed by Israel around Bethlehem, located about six miles south of Jerusalem. Within that militarized wall, Bethlehem—which lies in the political mess known as the West Bank—is governed by the Palestinian Authority.

I never saw the Berlin Wall, but I imagine in its day it resembled the wall now encompassing Bethlehem: thick concrete slabs about 20-25 feet tall, with barbed wire and electrical fencing on top. Driving through the military checkpoint into Bethlehem felt like entering a prison compound.

The Israeli government says the barrier, erected more than 10 years ago during a surge in Palestinian suicide bombings, is necessary for the country's security. Palestinians see it as an illegal effort by Israel simply to grab land.

There is likely truth in both arguments. But regardless, the wall results in checkpoints that limit the coming and going of Bethlehem's population.

According to Azraq—and confirmed by a search I did of several reputable websites—Bethlehem residents are only allowed into Jerusalem and other parts of the West Bank with special permits; must wait in long lines and endure invasive searches before being allowed through a checkpoint; are restricted as to what roads they are allowed to drive on; and occasionally are subject to strict curfews.

The economic impact of these restrictions was obvious. Whereas Nazareth, Jerusalem and other places we visited moved with the obvious ebb and flow of daily life, Bethlehem seemed dormant, almost devoid of commercial life and the activity of a normal town on a normal business day.

Like Nazareth, Bethlehem used to be predominantly Christian. And like Nazareth, the town now boasts a Muslim majority, with the Christian population down to an estimated 20-25 percent, according to *Christians and Christianity in the Jewish State*, published in 2012.

But that's just a statistic. No amount of reading or research can relay the psychological, emotional and cultural impact of living in such a tense, challenging environment day in and day out.

Take, for instance, the story Azraq told us of his Jerusalem-born brother—making him technically an Israeli citizen—and his Bethlehem-residing sister-in-law, who as a resident of that town is considered a Palestinian. To live with her husband, she had to be smuggled out of Bethlehem because a 2006 law bans marriage between Israeli and Palestinian citizens.

After she gave birth to their first child, it was discovered at the hospital that she was a Palestinian from Bethlehem. Azraq's sister-in-law was deported back to Bethlehem, where she now lives separate from her husband and child.

It matters not that both Azraq's brother and sister-in-law are Christian, or that they love each other deeply, or that she is needed to care for their infant. She simply came from the wrong side of a wall, and that is that.

Azraq's brother is appealing to an Israeli court for permission for his wife to move to Jerusalem. They are praying for a compassionate judge.

Such restrictive laws, economic hardship and a rise in Islamic extremism have caused an exodus of Christians from the Holy Land.

Granted, Christians are not the only ones to suffer or flee. But it is the Christian presence—or lack thereof—in the land where God chose to become incarnate and Christ established his Church that leaves me disheartened.

The desire for the holy high ground in the region—and I mean that in a figurative rather than moral sense—has made the area a hotbed of hatred and unresolved conflict.

What a dichotomy this is, in the land where the God who is love came to dwell among us, that we "might not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). †

Galilee portion of the 2015 Archdiocese of Indianapolis pilgrimage to the Holy Land



Pilgrims approach the Church of the Transfiguration atop Mount Tabor on Feb. 8. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Pilgrims pose for a group photo on the Mount of Beatitudes with the Sea of Galilee in the background on Feb. 7. Posing in front are bus driver George Abuehawa and tour guide Tony Azraq.



Pilgrims receive Communion from Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin in St. Peter Church in Jaffa, Israel, on Feb. 5.



In the chapel of a Carmelite monastery on Mount Carmel in Israel, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin blesses scapulars with holy water on Feb. 6.



In Stella Maris Church on Feb. 6, pilgrims look at a shrine to Elijah in a cave on Mount Carmel where it is believed the prophet dwelled for a time. The church was built around the cave.



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin celebrated Mass for the pilgrims on Feb. 5, the second day of the pilgrimage, in St. Peter Church in Jaffa. The Mediterranean Sea sparkles in the background.



The Jezreel Valley stretches below a Carmelite monastery on Mount Carmel in this Feb. 6 photo.



The rock upon which Caesarea Philippi stood looms over the pilgrims on Feb. 7 as they gaze down into a cave where children were sacrificed to the god Pan at a temple there in the time of Christ. Caesarea Philippi is the area in which Christ declared the Apostle Simon to be the rock upon which he would build the Church (Mt 16:18).



The Galilee region spans to the distance in this view from atop Mount Tabor on Feb. 8.



In this Feb. 8 photo, a mosaic of the Transfiguration shimmers over the sanctuary of the Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor.



A fifth-century mosaic of loaves and fishes adorns the floor before the altar of the church built around the site believed to be where the miracle of the multiplication occurred in the town of Tabgha on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The pilgrims visited the site on Feb. 7.



On Feb. 6, pilgrims overlook the remains of the hippodrome where Christians were thrown to lions in Caesarea, a 2,000-year-old former royal compound on the Mediterranean Sea.



On a fishing boat fashioned after smaller fishing boats of the time of Christ, pilgrims watch on Feb. 7 as a man demonstrates how the Apostles would have fished with a circular net on the Sea of Galilee.



Couples on the pilgrimage renew their wedding vows in a ceremony led by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin at a chapel in Cana on Feb. 8.



Rita Casey, 86, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, waves as she floats with no effort in the salt-dense water of the Dead Sea on Feb. 9. Ron Greulich, a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, looks on.



In the foreground with their backs to the camera, Father Joseph Newton, left, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and retired Father Robert Mazolla prepare to concelebrate Mass for the pilgrims on Feb. 7 in an outdoor amphitheater next to the Church of the Primacy of Peter on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.



In Capernaum on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee on Feb. 9, pilgrims listen as tour guide Tony Azraq, center foreground, describes the surroundings—a fourth-century synagogue built over the foundation of a first-century synagogue where it is believed Jesus taught.

Emotions evident as pilgrims reflect about walking in the footsteps of Christ

"It was such a beautiful day with a lovely breeze. I was very conscious we were celebrating Mass near where Jesus established the primacy of Peter. I took a good look at that beach, and thought of Peter jumping in the water because he couldn't wait [to get to Jesus on the shore]."
—Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

"To think we're walking where the blood of Christians was spilled. It is sobering."
—Katherine Krapf, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis

"The view [from Mt. Carmel] was unreal in every direction."
—Mary Klusas, a member of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood

"I picture the Apostles moving from place to place. We're on a bus—they were walking it."
—Mary Dougherty, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis

"What a great blessing it was to be able to renew my baptismal vows on my birthday."
—Pat Maher, a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis

"It's something to travel and see things you only see on TV, but when you travel and see things like this and it's in your spirit, too, there's no comparison. It's such a wonderful feeling."
—Domoni Rouse, a member of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis

"When you looked in [the Church of the Primacy of Peter], you saw that big rock. Someone asked me, 'Could that be the rock where Jesus spread out the food and cooked it over a fire so they could eat it?' I said, 'Well, there probably aren't too many rocks that size in this area.' I mean, that was a huge rock. It probably was the rock he used, and they just preserved it."
—Larry Dougherty, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis

"Just to be here is a way of touching that magnificent love that God has for us, that he sent his Son to walk among us."
—Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

"Our predecessors of faith would certainly not have forgotten the home where Mary lived. We can be confident that that's the same home, not just on faith but by the fact of the [early Christian-era] mosaics discovered by it."
—James Dubach, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis

"It was so nice to renew our [wedding] vows, with so many others who were renewing their vows, with the archbishop [presiding]."
—Ron Greulich, a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis

"I think the visit to the synagogue at Capernaum was important for me because of Jesus' famous sermon there in Luke [chapter] four, which is also what St. Alphonsus [Liguori] cited as the reason for starting the Redemptorists."
—Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

"I was just amazed at the bravery of my fellow pilgrims who went into the Dead Sea, especially Rita [Casey], who has had 86 springtimes!"
—Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

Catholic Bishops of Indiana

Poverty at the Crossroads



The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana



INTRODUCTION

Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members.

—Pope Francis, apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*, n. 186

As bishops who serve the people of God, our concern is for everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation, race, ethnic background, economic or social status. Christ came to save all humankind. As his ministers, we have been given the responsibility to carry on Christ's work in service to all our sisters and brothers here in the state of Indiana.

At the same time, we bishops have a particular obligation to care for the most vulnerable members of God's family. That is why we pay special attention to the unborn, to the sick and the elderly, to prisoners, to those who suffer from various forms of addiction or mental illness, and to the education of people from many different backgrounds and circumstances. That is also why we care, in a very special way, for those brothers and sisters of ours who are poor.

With this particular responsibility in mind, we bishops address this pastoral letter to faithful Catholics as well as to all people of good will here in Indiana. We want to call attention to the poverty that

exists right here within the state that calls itself the "Crossroads of America." We hope to help all of us better understand the many challenges facing our brothers and sisters here in Indiana and consider with you how our Church should respond.

The Gospels insist that God's heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that God himself has "become poor" (2 Cor. 8: 9). Jesus recognized their suffering, and he had compassion for their loneliness and fear. He never looked away from their plight or acted as if it did not concern him. Always, our Lord stood with the poor—comforting their sorrows, healing their wounds and feeding their bodies and their souls. He challenged his friends to recognize the poor and not remain unmoved.

All disciples of Jesus Christ are called to love the poor as he did. As people of faith, we are invited to see the poor, to allow the Word of God to illuminate the reality of poverty, and to respond with transformed hearts.

Using the simple formula of SEE, JUDGE, ACT, we invite and challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects.

I. SEE

There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table.

—Luke 16:19-21

Jesus tells the powerful story of a poor "street person" named Lazarus, and the rich man who passed by him each day without noticing him. It is apparent that the rich man could not—or would not—see the poverty that was right in front of his eyes. As a result, he was blind to the poor man's need and—just as tragic—to the opportunities God gave him day after day to share his abundant gifts. At the conclusion of the story, we learn that this blindness cost the rich man a place in the company of Abraham.

How does this parable of Jesus speak to us today here in the state of Indiana? What are we not seeing as, day after day, we go about our busy lives? Are we incapable—or worse—have we chosen not to see our sisters and brothers who are poor? Are we blind to the impact poverty has on families, neighborhoods and entire communities, and unquestioning as to its causes?

We may not encounter poor people as we go about our daily business, but they are there just the same. As an appendix to this letter, we include some sobering statistics regarding poverty, homelessness, unemployment and hunger right here in the Hoosier State. Most of us have no idea how serious—and widespread—this problem is. Like the rich man in Jesus' parable, we fail to see what is right before our eyes. In addition, we miss the opportunities our Lord gives us to recognize him in the face of the poor.

Statistics can appear cold and impersonal. If those facts do not help us to "see" the poor in our midst, we might want to consider a definition of poverty in terms of its impact on everyday life. Father Larry Snyder, former president of Catholic Charities USA, draws upon the experience of Catholic Charities workers throughout the country to explain that individuals are poor if:

- they cannot afford housing that is clean, safe, and in good repair;
- they cannot afford nutritious food

for themselves and their family on a regular basis;

- they cannot consistently pay their utility bills even though it is a priority;
- their children are not adequately clothed for school with clean clothes that fit and are in good repair, and they do not have proper clothing for work; or,
- they cannot afford to go to the doctor for any kind of illness for fear that the visit will be beyond their means to pay for it.

Many Hoosiers live in these circumstances. What are some of the realities that we are challenged to see clearly as citizens of Indiana concerned about human dignity, family life and the social and economic health of our state?

We believe it is important to point out that the consequences of the severe economic downturn that began in 2008-2009, a period that some call the "Great Recession," caused many more Hoosiers to face the despair of poverty. A growing number of our small towns and rural communities, which had been the backbone of our state, have seen crucial industries disappear. The social and economic conditions caused by poverty in

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SEE

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these communities as well as in our larger cities have had serious consequences, including the breakdown of family life, an increase in the manufacture, sale and use of drugs; violence in our homes and in our streets and the resulting increase in our state's prison population.

Multigenerational poverty, measured by the number of individuals in economic distress whose parents, grandparents and perhaps great-grandparents also suffered severe economic instability, is a reality whose impact on human dignity, family stability and healthy communities is immense. Members of families in the grip of multigenerational poverty are far less likely to possess the internal, intangible resources that would encourage them to acquire the education, life skills and employment opportunities that are available to other members of their communities and that are critical to breaking the cycle of poverty. Without the skills and experiences necessary to make positive personal and employment decisions, poor choices appear predetermined and the vicious cycle of poverty remains intact.

Catholics in the five dioceses of Indiana remain committed to serving those who are in immediate need through our charitable agencies, parishes, schools and health care organizations. The generosity of our people is extraordinary and evident through thousands of hours of loving service every week across the length and breadth of our state. As bishops, we recognize the goodness of diverse people and institutions throughout Indiana, and we thank God for the love and compassion shown to so many of our brothers and sisters in their time of need.

Yet, this compassionate response does not absolve us from asking hard questions. We believe it is essential that we make a prayerful, honest assessment of how we arrived at where we are today. If we truly are going to identify the causes and manifestations of poverty and create a pathway for positive, long-term and sustainable change, we must strengthen the foundations upon which individuals and families build economic stability and realize their hopes for the future.

As Christians, we are called to recognize Jesus in the face of the poor. Seeing our brothers and sisters as they are—members of God's family who have gifts to share with us and whose need compels us to share our gifts in return—is an essential element of Christian charity. Seeing ourselves as stewards of all God's gifts is integral to authentic Christian discipleship.

In the account of the Final Judgment in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 25: 31-46), both the good and the evil people are surprised at how closely the glorified Lord identifies with the poor. Hence they ask: "Lord, when did we see you ...?" If we truly seek to follow Jesus and to live as he lived, we will clearly acknowledge the poverty of those around us, and we will respond with open and generous hearts to their immediate and long-term needs.

Questions for reflection

1. Have you been surprised to discover relatives, friends or neighbors in distress as a result of changes in our state's economy over the last five to ten years?
2. Where do you see the reality of poverty in Indiana?
3. How is your parish, school and diocese now responding to the poor in its midst?

II. JUDGE

Both Christian preaching and life are meant to have an impact on society.
—Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, n. 180

In his apostolic exhortation,



Pope Francis observes: "No one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions." He makes it clear that the Church "cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice," but must work with all people of good will to build a better world (cf. *"Evangelii Gaudium"* n. 183).

The root causes of poverty are complex, and must be addressed effectively by a holistic and multifaceted approach to social, economic, cultural and spiritual development. While we may be tempted to direct our attention and charitable resources toward addressing the immediate needs of the poor for food, shelter and health care, in justice we cannot neglect the more thorny public policy issues. We need to face these, if we wish to address the fundamental causes of poverty here in Indiana, as well as in our nation and global community.

As bishops, we claim no expertise in the practical details of political theory, economics or the social sciences. We must, however, emphasize some universal truths—such as the dignity of every human person, the basic human rights that apply to all, regardless of their economic, social, racial or cultural circumstances, and the importance of religious freedom for individuals and communities. As pastors, we wish to speak with and for those who suffer from the dark effects of poverty here in Indiana, including victims of multigenerational poverty as well as those who more recently have found themselves without work and struggle for the basic necessities of life.

We see the following areas as meriting careful reflection and study by Catholics and all Hoosiers. We do not advocate an empty academic exercise but rather a necessary step towards making decisions that will lead to substantive change. These key areas are Family Life, Employment, Education and Health Care. Although it is not possible for us to address these issues in detail in this letter, we will offer some observations that we hope would stimulate discussion and lead to positive action.

FAMILY LIFE

We Catholics believe that a crucial element in God's plan for humanity is marriage, which we understand as the union of one man and one woman who make a commitment to each other for life and become "one flesh" (Gn 2:24). This sacred union forms the family, the basic unit of society, which is dedicated to the transmission of new life (children

and to stewardship of all God's creation. The Church teaches that the family is a kind of "school of deeper humanity," love and hope for society (Vatican II, *"Gaudium et Spes,"* n. 52). Our families teach us who we are as individuals and as members of human society. The family is also where we first learn how to live—how to take care of ourselves, how to share our gifts and talents with others, and how to collaborate and live in harmony with our neighbors whether close to home or far away.

Without the family, children cannot grow beyond a sterile isolation. Without the family, unity among people and nations loses its most basic catalyst, and coexistence deteriorates into a pragmatic sort of commerce—"conceivable only on the basis of utility, on a calculus of fear, but not on the goodness of living together, not on the joy that the mere presence of others can give" (Pope Francis, *"Lumen Fidei,"* n. 51).

Family teaches us that we are God's children, brothers and sisters called to participate in the life of God himself. This is where we learn to recognize the sacredness of every human life as well as the beauty and necessity of living together in peace. This is where we discover the fundamental principle that grounds all human rights and dignity: that every person, regardless of sex, race, religion or economic or social status is deserving of our respect. Experience teaches us that the family is the only lasting, solid foundation on which healthy societies can be built.

Family teaches us how to live. In the family, we learn the basics of economy, the value of work, the meaning of sexuality, the joy of self-giving, the importance of breaking bread together and having fun with family members and friends. These are not small things. They have a huge impact on our quality of life and on our ability to interact with others—extended family, neighbors, fellow citizens and even strangers (including "aliens" or "enemies" who are unlike us and whose differences appear to threaten our security).

We are keenly aware that this understanding of the meaning of the family represents an ideal that rarely is achieved in its fullness. A significant brokenness can exist in families today (as in every age), and each of us can name the ways that families fail to live up to the grand vision that our Church proposes for marriage and family life. Our own experience of brokenness teaches us the value of compassion and forgiveness.

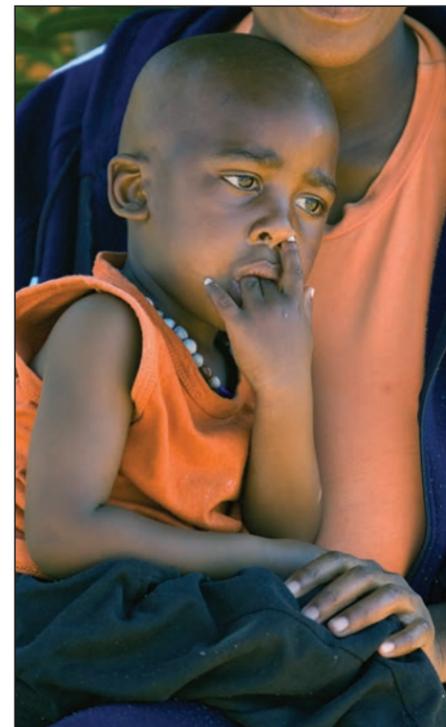
We believe that it is worth fighting for the family. We are convinced that our individual lives and our world are

enriched by "the sanctuary of life and love" that good families provide. We believe that every child should grow up in the warmth and protective care of a loving family. We deeply regret that the challenges facing families today threaten the health and happiness of individuals and the common good of human society.

As pastors, we witness the struggle that young families, especially single-parent families, have in breaking out of the cycle of poverty in order to provide food, clothing, shelter, education and health care for their children. Finding (and keeping!) good jobs is much more difficult for teenage parents, especially if they are not married, because they frequently lack the necessary education, skills and experience to compete in today's job market. Add to this handicap the costs associated with transportation and health care, and the challenges can be overwhelming.

In addition, as the number of underage and single-parent families continues to grow, the number of fathers who are unable or unwilling to support their children also increases. Strong marriages and healthy families provide an environment that can help overcome the most severe economic challenges. Unfortunately, the stress of economic instability, substance abuse and domestic violence, combined with other social and cultural factors, contributes to the disintegration of marriages, disrupts stable families and often results in substance abuse and other addictive behaviors.

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JUDGE

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Our society today permits—even encourages—behavior that works against a healthy family life. Consumerism can promote reckless spending and unsustainable debt. Promiscuity is fueled by attitudes that disrespect the beauty of human sexuality and the sanctity of marriage and family life. All segments of our society suffer from the effects of cultural and economic threats to the health and vitality of families, but the poor, especially multigenerational poor, are especially vulnerable to negative social and economic influences that undermine family life. It has even been said that stable marriages are increasingly the luxury of the rich.

To address the long-term effects of poverty in our society, we must strengthen marriage and family life. As St. John Paul II wrote in his apostolic exhortation on the family, *“Familiaris Consortio,”* “The future of humanity passes by way of the family” (n. 86). When families are strong, society is strong. When families are broken and unstable, all human communities suffer. At the same time, we recognize that instability of marriage and family life is intensified by poverty, which can produce an intolerable stress that limits human development. And, since single-parent families are increasingly the norm for the poor, the Church must make a special effort to understand their circumstances and offer the wisdom of her tradition.

EMPLOYMENT

“The economy must serve people, not the other way around” is a succinct paraphrase of a crucial statement by St. John Paul II in his encyclical, *“Laborem Exercens”*: “In the first place, work is for man and not man for work” (n. 6.6). Work is more than simply a way to make a living; it is a continuing participation in God’s creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected. These include the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize, to private property, and to economic initiative.

For St. John Paul II, this powerful statement—work is for man; man is not for work—is the principle that governs the success or failure of all economic systems. The human person is what is most important, not economic theory or social structures. The human person, the one who works, is not a means to an end, but the primary beneficiary of his or her own labor.

Every worker has a fundamental dignity because he or she is made in the image and likeness of God. Workers are co-creators with God in building the human community. Workers are not commodities. They are not instruments of production or tools in the hands of owners or managers, who are entitled to use them and then set them aside at the end of the day or the completion of a particular project.

Indiana is home to thousands of the so-called “working poor.” These are women and men who have jobs but whose income is not enough to sustain them or to cover the necessities of life, including food, housing, health care, transportation and childcare. For these families, full-time, year-round work by itself is not enough to lift them out of poverty.

St. John Paul II teaches, “A just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system” (*“Laborem Exercens,”* n. 19). Why? Because the laborer truly is worthy of his or her wage (cf. Lk 10:7). And because a society that cares for the least of its citizens—including the unemployed, the underemployed and uninsured—is a society that will flourish in the sight of God and in its material and spiritual well-being.

EDUCATION

There is an intimate connection between family, employment and education. Parents are the first and principal educators of their children. As we noted above, it is in the family where we first learn the value of work, the importance of collaboration and teamwork, and the moral principles that are key to a faithful, productive and successful work environment.

The Catholic Church is strongly committed to education and, particularly, the education of the poor. More than two centuries of experience convince us about the powerful role that education plays in breaking the cycle of poverty and helping families, producing thriving citizens, workers and professionals.

We also attest to the effect that poverty has on a family’s ability to provide children with a quality education. Poor children are often hungry, undernourished and prone to limited attention spans. Crying for attention, they frequently exhibit inappropriate behaviors. They may live in cars or temporary shelters and seldom find sufficient physical rest. Recurrent moves mean that regular school attendance is difficult, if not impossible. No wonder poor children struggle to learn, develop and test their skills and abilities, and recognize the importance of completing their education in order to compete with others in demanding job markets.

Our Catholic tradition commits us to the education of the whole person—mind, body and spirit. We refuse to be fatalistic about the future hopes and dreams of families and children who are poor, including the multigenerational poor. We have seen with our own eyes the difference that a quality education can make in the lives of children and their families.

As Pope Francis reminds us, to be truly “with and for the poor,” we must provide all children—but especially those who are poor—“with an education that teaches critical thinking and encourages the development of mature moral values” (*“The Joy of the Gospel,”* n. 64). This is the way out of poverty for individuals and families, and the best way to build a society that is just, economically productive and dedicated to promoting and defending the human dignity of all its citizens.

HEALTH CARE

For decades, the Catholic bishops of the United States have been unwavering advocates for comprehensive reforms that will lead to health care for all, especially the weakest and most vulnerable. We believe that health care is fundamental to human life and dignity. It is also a critical component of our Church’s ministry. In collaboration with professionals throughout Indiana, the Catholic Church provides health care, purchases health care and tries to enhance the health care system. The Catholic community serves the sick and uninsured in emergency rooms, homeless shelters and on the doorsteps of our parish churches. We bring both strong convictions and practical experience to the challenge of health care.

Many lower-income individuals and families in our state lack the resources to meet the expense of their health care. For these families, significant premiums and cost-sharing charges can serve as barriers to obtaining coverage or seeing a doctor. Therefore, we believe that existing cost-sharing protections should be maintained, and new health insurance coverage options must protect the lowest income enrollees from burdensome cost sharing. We also call for much-needed funding for safety-net clinics, hospitals and other facilities that provide health care to the poor and vulnerable members of our communities.

We believe that health care is not a privilege, but a right and a requirement to protect the life and dignity of every



person. All people, regardless of their circumstances, should have access to comprehensive, quality and affordable health care. It should not depend on where they were born, their stage of life, where or whether they or their parents work, how much they earn or where they live.

Questions for reflection

1. Do you agree that the Church has a responsibility to speak on behalf of the poor?
2. Is there an issue that is more important for the Church’s consideration than the four mentioned in this section (Family Life, Employment, Education and Health Care)?

III. ACT

It is dangerous to dwell in the realm of words alone, of images and rhetoric. Realities are greater than ideas

—Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, n. 231

This letter is a call to act with justice and charity. We invite all who read these words to join us in reaching out to the poor members of our state. We challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to engage the leaders of business, government and voluntary organizations throughout our state in effecting meaningful changes in the policies and practices that perpetuate poverty in all its manifestations.

Actions do speak louder than words, especially when we intend to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give shelter to the homeless, and provide employment, education and health care to all members of our community. Together with women and men of good will, we want to offer hope to all who suffer, and we seek to build a just society that can alleviate the long-term effects of poverty here in Indiana and throughout our nation and the world.

Through institutions and organizations such as Catholic Charities, Catholic hospitals, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, parish social ministries, elementary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities, our Church responds to an increasing number of people who are in desperate need of housing, medical care, food, transportation, education and other necessities. The Catholic Church in Indiana is a leading advocate for just social structures that will preserve families while addressing the systemic problems of poverty. The challenges are

formidable, but with transformed and hopeful hearts, we must act.

At the same time, we join all people of good will in calling for the development and implementation of strategies that address the root causes of poverty here in the “Crossroads of America.” Our response intends to provide for the immediate needs of our sisters and brothers and, at the same time, take seriously the underlying issues that prevent our state’s employment, educational and health care systems from effectively meeting the needs of individuals and families in all corners of Indiana.

The call to act justly demands an organized and systematic response to the issues of poverty in Indiana. Direct service of the poor at the level of our parishes and other communities is necessary and should be esteemed as a means of practicing Christian charity. However, isolated action alone will not suffice. Only a multifaceted, community-wide approach will truly reduce the debilitating and demoralizing effects of long-term, multigenerational poverty throughout our state.

FAMILY LIFE

We invite the Catholic faithful and all people of good will to work to reduce poverty by intentionally focusing on one of the root causes of poverty in Indiana. Grounded in our Catholic faith and tradition we recommend that we:

- strengthen and support Indiana’s families by assigning the highest priority to the wellbeing of children in the family and society.

Strengthening families requires that we support marriage and the ideal of families with two parents who live together and share responsibility for their children. Today, many families are broken, and most struggle under significant stress. All families need our loving support and assistance now, even as we work for a future in which healthy families can thrive. Therefore, we propose that a single question guide us in all service and program decisions made by government agencies, private institutions and Church ministries regarding families:

- Do programs and policies place a primary emphasis on child welfare and enhance—not detract from—strong marriages and family life?

The task of strengthening support for Indiana’s families is formidable. In order to be successful, organized and sustained efforts are needed throughout the state. We propose that every Catholic diocese, parish, educational institution

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and health care organization in our state serve as a catalyst for local, grassroots efforts focused on mitigating poverty in its community. All people of goodwill, regardless of their religious tradition, should be invited to join in a collaborative and systematic effort to attend to the needs of Hoosier children and their families.

We propose that we set clear, measurable goals for our efforts to alleviate poverty by meeting the needs of married couples and families in our state. While not all outcomes can be easily calculated, clearly defined goals will assist us in setting and accomplishing objectives that are ambitious but achievable with the help of God's grace.

As we have already observed, there are undeniable links between family life, employment, education and health care. Poverty brings intolerable stress on the family's ability to carry out its mission as the fundamental unit of society. Families are called to be stewards of all God's gifts, and this requires an environment of stability and peace that can provide each family member with opportunities to exercise his or her responsibilities for the common good. A supportive family environment results in healthier, happier and more hopeful individuals who are more likely to work for the common good and participate in community activities.

EMPLOYMENT

To address the serious challenges facing our economy in the state of Indiana today, we must look carefully at the impact of policies, legislation and governmental regulations on real people—the women and men who struggle to earn a living, support their families and make ends meet. We cannot fix the economy by employing abstract theory that is detached from those whose lives are at stake. As St. John Paul II tells us, we cannot simply look at material needs (food, shelter, clothing, health care, etc.), as important as these are for individuals, families and communities. We should also foster a spirituality of work, which recognizes its profound impact on the intellectual, social, cultural and religious life of individuals, families and communities.

The Church does not propose detailed programs aimed at creating jobs or promoting economic development. However, the Church does remind governmental, business and community leaders that the only truly effective measure of sound economic policy and practice is the extent to which real people thrive and grow as persons and as workers.

In addition to the economic benefits of stable employment, work offers individuals increased opportunities to enhance their personal dignity. Work should be the primary means by which parents provide for their families and contribute to a healthy community. Governmental programs should exist principally to provide an adequate safety net for individuals who are in transitional situations or suffer from incapacitating illness or injury.

- Therefore, we propose that the state of Indiana dedicate resources toward improving the opportunity for Hoosier families to find meaningful, economically rewarding work.
- Plans for economic development ought to include strategies aimed at breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty.

EDUCATION

A good, well-rounded education that begins as early in life as possible establishes a foundation for a promising future for children and encourages the formation of productive, contributing citizens and healthy families. Every child

should have the opportunity to develop his or her full potential, and it is the responsibility of parents and the wider community to help make possible the growth and success of all children.

With this in mind, we bishops commit our dioceses, parishes, schools and social services agencies to working with state and local governments as well as business and civic leaders to achieve the following objectives:

- Strengthening marriage and family life by supporting the role of parents as the primary educators of their children (including programs that make it possible for parents to choose schools for their children and to engage them more effectively in their children's education);
- Encouraging the state of Indiana to dedicate the resources needed to provide for early childhood education, especially among underserved populations;
- Reducing *de facto* segregation or isolation by race, ethnicity or income in order to provide all students with opportunities to learn with and from peers from diverse social and economic backgrounds;
- Achieving "best practices" and effective policies for teaching and learning, including class size, length of school days, number of school days per year, tutoring and mentorships;
- Attracting, retaining and rewarding teachers and administrators who place the education of children first and who possess the formation necessary to meet the needs of children from economically challenged and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

HEALTH CARE

We bishops in Indiana repeat the call for a genuine reform of health care that is accessible and affordable for all. We invite all Hoosiers to join us in working for health care systems that will:

- Promote and defend human dignity from the moment of conception until natural death;
- Attend to the whole person (body, mind and spirit), while pursuing a genuine pluralism that respects freedom of religion and conscience;
- Care for poor and vulnerable persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, economic or social or legal status;
- Practice a careful stewardship of resources by restraining costs and applying them equitably across the spectrum of those who must pay for health care.

If we give priority to family life, work, education and health care, an economically strong, well-educated and healthy Indiana will have fewer individuals, especially men, in prison. Unwed pregnancy rates will decrease. More young women and men will be able to pursue post-secondary education and training for careers. The number of multiple-family residences and the constant migration from one residence to another will decrease, helping to provide more consistency in educational opportunities for children. Fewer grandparents will be required to assume full responsibility for rearing children because more mothers and fathers will be present and active in their children's lives.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

What can we do to help alleviate poverty in Indiana, now and in the future? What actions can we take that will make a difference in the lives of our fellow Hoosiers who suffer from the immediate and long-term effects of poverty?

First, we can "storm heaven" with confidence that our prayers will be heard and answered. As a community of faith, we believe in the power of prayer. We trust that our cry for our "daily bread," is heard and answered by our heavenly Father. However, prayer is also attentively listening to what God has to say to us.



If we ask God to help us better serve the needs of the poor, whom he loves, surely he will show us the way.

Next, we can work to strengthen families. Starting with our own families—our spouses, children, grandchildren and extended families—we can show that family comes first. We can work to set aside some of the whirlwind of distractions promoted in contemporary culture in order to spend time with family, supporting and encouraging those whom we love most in the world. Reaching beyond the limits of our own families, we can share our time and talent with our neighbors, our fellow parishioners and members of our communities. We can support legislation and public policies that are pro-marriage and pro-family life. We can work to elect public officials whose actions really do speak louder than their words when it comes to protecting and enhancing family life.

Then, we can advocate for economic vitality and for access to affordable, quality education and health care. As we have tried to demonstrate, employment, education and health care are critical means for alleviating the long-term effects of poverty in our state. To this end, we bishops strongly urge all individuals, families and Catholic institutions to speak on behalf of comprehensive and just legislation and social policies in these crucial areas. We invite all people of good will to join us in finding and implementing both immediate and long-term solutions to the problems faced by those who are poor and vulnerable in our communities.

Finally, we all can support Catholic Charities and other social service agencies in our state through generous stewardship of our time, talent and treasure. As stewards of all the gifts we have each received from a generous and loving God, we are invited and challenged to respond to the Lord with increased gratitude and generosity.

Questions for reflection

1. How does my community (parish, school, institution) directly serve the needs of the poor?
2. How could my community unite with others in a strategy to alleviate the most fundamental causes of poverty in Indiana?

CONCLUSION

In the Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the great King, who sends his servants to "the highways and hedgerows" to invite everyone to his feast (cf. Lk. 14:23). Today, Jesus sends us, his disciples, to the "Crossroads of America," to extend his loving care for the least of his brothers and sisters.

Loving care for the poor and vulnerable is a consistent theme in Sacred Scripture. Our Lord's teaching about the last judgment is quite specific. We will be judged worthy or unworthy of eternal life based on how we treated Christ himself

in the "least" of his sisters and brothers—especially the hungry and thirsty, the naked and homeless, the prisoner and the stranger. Jesus' admonition about how our lives will be judged is pointed and unequivocal: what we do to the poor and the destitute—"the least of these my brothers and sisters"—we do to the Lord himself.

This is a sober warning. Most of us think mainly about ourselves and about our families and friends. The poor? We may feel a vague sense of moral obligation to them, but too often the poor are distant, anonymous and invisible. That is why Catholic social teaching insists that the needs of the poor must take priority. Otherwise, we might not see them or quickly forget about them as we go about our daily business.

We do not mean the publication of this letter to be the final word about the Church's response to poverty in our state. We hope that every Catholic community will consider this letter, and the five dioceses of Indiana intend to collect this reflection and continue the conversation.

Such reflection is crucial for our mission in the world today. Pope Francis invites us to see the profound connection between evangelization and human advancement, which must necessarily find expression and develop in every effort of evangelization ("The Joy of the Gospel," n. 178). We look forward to working with you to proclaim the Good News by strengthening family life, promoting just employment and ensuring a quality education and comprehensive health care for all Hoosiers, especially the poor and vulnerable.

+ Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

+ Timothy L. Doherty

Most Rev. Timothy L. Doherty
Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

+ Donald J. Hying

Most Rev. Donald J. Hying
Diocese of Gary

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

+ Charles C. Thompson

Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson
Diocese of Evansville

Obispos Católicos de Indiana

Pobreza en la Encrucijada



La respuesta de la Iglesia ante la pobreza en Indiana



INTRODUCCIÓN

De nuestra fe en Cristo hecho pobre, y siempre cercano a los pobres y excluidos, brota la preocupación por el desarrollo integral de los más abandonados de la sociedad.

—Papa Francisco, exhortación apostólica *Evangelii Gaudium* La alegría del Evangelio, n.º 186

Como obispos que sirven al pueblo de Dios, nos concierne todo el mundo, independientemente de su credo, raza, origen étnico o situación socioeconómica. Cristo vino para salvar a toda la humanidad. Como sus ministros, se nos ha entregado la responsabilidad de proseguir con la labor de Cristo al servicio de todos nuestros hermanos y hermanas aquí en el estado de Indiana.

Al mismo tiempo, los obispos poseemos la obligación especial de cuidar a los integrantes más vulnerables de la familia de Dios. Es por ello que prestamos especial atención a aquellos seres que todavía no han nacido, a los enfermos y los ancianos, a los prisioneros, a aquellos aquejados por distintas formas de adicción o de padecimiento mental, y nos preocupamos por la educación de las personas procedentes de distintos orígenes y circunstancias. Este es el motivo por el cual nos preocupamos de un modo muy especial por nuestros hermanos y hermanas que se encuentran en la pobreza.

Teniendo presente esta responsabilidad especial, los obispos dirigimos esta carta pastoral tanto a los fieles católicos, como a toda la gente de buena voluntad de Indiana. Deseamos llamar la atención sobre la pobreza que existe aquí mismo,

dentro del Estado que se hace llamar la “Encrucijada de Estados Unidos”. Esperamos contribuir a lograr un mejor entendimiento de los numerosos desafíos que enfrentan nuestros hermanos aquí en Indiana y reflexionar junto con ustedes de qué manera debe responder la Iglesia.

El evangelio hace énfasis en que en el corazón de Dios existe un lugar especial para los pobres, tanto así que se “hizo pobre” (2 Cor 8:9). Jesús reconoció su sufrimiento y era compasivo ante su soledad y sus temores. Jamás pasó por alto sus aprietos ni se comportó como si no le importaran. Nuestro Señor siempre estuvo al lado de los pobres, consolándolos en sus tribulaciones, sanando sus heridas, y nutriendo sus cuerpos y sus almas. Jesucristo exhortó a sus amigos a que reconocieran la verdad de los pobres y que no permanecieran impávidos.

Todos los discípulos de Jesucristo están llamados a amar a los pobres tal como él lo hizo. Como pueblo de fe, se nos invita a reconocer al pobre, a dejar que la Palabra de Dios ilumine la realidad de la pobreza y a responder con corazones transformados.

Mediante una fórmula sencilla—VER, JUZGAR, ACTUAR—invitamos y exhortamos a todos, comenzando por nosotros mismos, a prestar más atención a los pobres de nuestra comunidad, a identificar las cuestiones sistémicas que perpetúan el ciclo de la pobreza para personas y familias, y a aplicar medidas puntuales para reducir las repercusiones a largo plazo de la pobreza en nuestro estado, al mismo tiempo que nos acercamos y ayudamos a aquellos que sufren sus devastadoras consecuencias aquí y ahora.

I. RECONOCER

Había un hombre rico que se vestía lujosamente y daba espléndidos banquetes todos los días. A la puerta de su casa se tendía un mendigo llamado Lázaro, que estaba cubierto de llagas y que hubiera querido llenarse el estómago con lo que caía de la mesa del rico
—Lucas 16:19-21

Jesús relata la poderosa historia de un pobre que deambulaba por las calles, llamado Lázaro, y del hombre rico que pasaba junto a él todos los días sin percatarse de su existencia. Resulta evidente que el hombre rico no podía—o no quería—ver la pobreza que tenía justo delante de sus ojos. En consecuencia, no era capaz de reconocer la necesidad del hombre pobre y, casi tan trágico como esto, las oportunidades que Dios le presentaba día tras día para compartir sus abundantes dones. Al final del relato, nos enteramos de que esto le costó al hombre rico un lugar en la compañía de Abraham.

¿Cómo se aplica esta parábola de Jesús a nosotros aquí en el estado de Indiana? ¿Qué es lo que no estamos viendo día tras día mientras nos afanamos con nuestras vidas? ¿Acaso somos incapaces—o peor aún—hemos elegido ignorar a nuestros hermanos y hermanas pobres? ¿Somos incapaces de ver el efecto que surte la pobreza en las familias, los barrios y en comunidades enteras, sin preguntarnos qué la origina?

Quizás en el transcurso de nuestra vida cotidiana no veamos personas pobres, pero eso no quiere decir que no estén allí. En un anexo a esta carta incluimos algunas estadísticas impresionantes en relación con la pobreza, la indigencia, el desempleo y el hambre aquí mismo, en el estado de los hoosier. La mayoría de nosotros no tiene idea de la gravedad de este problema y de lo difundido que está. Al igual que el hombre rico de la parábola de Jesús, no logramos ver lo que se encuentra ante nuestros ojos. Además, perdemos las oportunidades que el Señor nos presenta para reconocerlo en el rostro de los pobres.

Las estadísticas quizás luzcan frías e impersonales; pero si esos hechos no nos ayudan a “ver” a los pobres que se encuentran entre nosotros, quizás nos convendría analizar la definición de la pobreza en cuanto sus repercusiones sobre la vida cotidiana. El padre Larry Snyder,

el ex presidente de Catholic Charities USA, se apoya en la experiencia de los trabajadores de Catholic Charities de todo el país para explicar que una persona se considera pobre si:

- no puede costearse una vivienda limpia, segura y en buenas condiciones;
- no puede costear sistemáticamente alimentos nutritivos para sí mismo y para su familia;
- no puede pagar sistemáticamente las facturas de los servicios, aunque esto sea una prioridad;
- sus hijos no van vestidos a la escuela con ropa adecuada y limpia, y que estén en buenas condiciones;
- no puede permitirse ir al médico por ningún tipo de enfermedad, por temor a que la consulta esté muy por encima de lo que puede pagar.

Muchos habitantes de Indiana viven en estas condiciones. ¿Cuáles son algunas de las realidades que se nos desafía a ver claramente, como ciudadanos de Indiana preocupados por la dignidad humana, la vida familiar y la salud económica y social de nuestro Estado?

Consideramos que es importante señalar que las consecuencias de la grave desaceleración económica que comenzó entre los años 2008 y 2009, un período que algunos denominan la “Gran Recesión”, provocó que muchos más habitantes de Indiana se enfrentaran a la desesperación de la pobreza. Una cantidad cada vez mayor de nuestros pequeños poblados y comunidades rurales, que antiguamente eran la espina dorsal de nuestro Estado, han presenciado la desaparición de industrias cruciales para ellos. Las condiciones económicas y sociales que ocasiona la pobreza en estas comunidades, así como en las grandes ciudades, han tenido consecuencias graves, inclusive el desmoronamiento de la vida familiar, un aumento en la fabricación, venta y consumo de drogas, violencia en los hogares y en las calles, y un aumento de la población en los penales del estado, producto de todo esto.

La pobreza multigeneracional, medida por la cantidad de personas que atraviesan dificultades económicas y cuyos padres, abuelos, e incluso quizás, bisabuelos, también sufrieron inestabilidad económica grave, es una realidad que tiene enormes repercusiones para la dignidad humana, la estabilidad familiar y la salud de las comunidades. Es mucho menos probable

RECONOCER

continuado de página 5B

que los integrantes de familias víctimas de la pobreza multigeneracional posean los recursos interiores e intangibles que los motivará a adquirir los conocimientos, las destrezas de vida y las oportunidades laborales que se encuentran disponibles para otros miembros de sus comunidades y que resultan esenciales para romper el ciclo de la pobreza. Sin las destrezas y las experiencias necesarias para tomar decisiones personales y laborales positivas, parecen estar predeterminados a tomar decisiones menos acertadas y, por consiguiente, el círculo vicioso de la pobreza se perpetúa.

A través de nuestras agencias de caridad y nuestras parroquias, escuelas y organizaciones para el cuidado de la salud, los católicos procedentes de las cinco diócesis de Indiana se encuentran profundamente comprometidos al servicio de los más necesitados. La generosidad de nuestro pueblo es extraordinaria y se evidencia en las miles de horas de amoroso servicio que se entregan todas las semanas a todo lo largo y ancho de nuestro estado. Como obispos, reconocemos la bondad de todas esas personas e instituciones diseminadas por todo Indiana, y les damos gracias a Dios por el amor y la compasión que demuestran ante todos esos hermanos y hermanas necesitados.

No obstante, esta respuesta compasiva no nos exonera de formular preguntas difíciles. Consideramos que es esencial que realicemos una evaluación piadosa y honesta de lo que conllevó a que nos encontremos en nuestra situación actual. Si verdaderamente vamos a identificar las causas y las manifestaciones de la pobreza y crear una vía para lograr un cambio positivo, duradero y sostenible, debemos fortalecer las bases sobre las que se erige la estabilidad económica individual y familiar, y que permite hacer realidad los sueños para el futuro.

Como cristianos estamos llamados a reconocer a Jesús en el rostro de los necesitados. Un elemento esencial de la caridad cristiana es ver a nuestros hermanos y hermanas tal y como son: como miembros de la familia de Dios que tienen obsequios para compartir con nosotros y cuya necesidad nos obliga a compartir los nuestros también. Asumirlos como administradores de todos los dones de Dios es un aspecto integral de ser auténticamente discípulos de Cristo.

En el relato del Juicio Final, en el Evangelio según San Mateo (Mt 25:31-46), tanto los buenos como los malos se sorprenden de que el Señor glorificado se identifique tan íntimamente con los pobres. Y por lo tanto preguntan: “¿Señor, cuándo te vimos...?” Si en verdad buscamos seguir a Jesús y vivir como él vivió, evidentemente reconoceremos la pobreza que nos rodea y responderemos con corazones abiertos y generosos ante sus necesidades inmediatas y a largo plazo.

Preguntas para la reflexión

1. ¿Le ha sorprendido descubrir que hay familiares, amigos o vecinos que enfrentan dificultades a consecuencia de los cambios en la economía de nuestro estado en el transcurso de los últimos cinco a diez años?
2. ¿Dónde ve usted la realidad de la pobreza en Indiana?
3. ¿De qué manera responde su parroquia, escuela y diócesis a los más necesitados entre nosotros?

II. PONDERAR

Tanto el anuncio como la experiencia cristiana tienden a provocar consecuencias sociales.

—Papa Francisco, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n.º 180

En su exhortación apostólica, el papa Francisco observa: “nadie puede exigirnos que releguemos la religión a la intimidad secreta de las personas, sin influencia alguna en la vida social y nacional, sin preocuparnos por la salud de las instituciones de la sociedad civil, sin opinar sobre los acontecimientos que afectan a los ciudadanos”. Deja muy en claro que la Iglesia “no puede ni debe quedarse al margen en la lucha por la justicia”, sino que debe colaborar con todas las personas de buena voluntad para construir un mundo mejor (cf *Evangelii Gaudium*, n.º 183).

El origen de la pobreza es complejo y sus causas deben abordarse de forma eficaz mediante un enfoque integral y multifacético al desarrollo social, económico, cultural y espiritual. Si bien quizás nos sintamos tentados a concentrar nuestra atención y recursos de caridad para solucionar las necesidades inmediatas de alimento, vivienda y salud para los pobres, en propiedad no podemos ignorar las cuestiones más escabrosas relativas a la política pública. Si deseamos brindar solución a las causas fundamentales de la pobreza aquí en Indiana, así como en nuestro país y en la comunidad global, debemos enfrentar esas cuestiones.

Como obispos, no pretendemos afirmar que somos expertos en los aspectos prácticos de la teoría política, económica o de las ciencias sociales. Sin embargo, debemos hacer énfasis en ciertas verdades universales, tales como la dignidad de cada persona humana, los derechos humanos fundamentales que nos corresponden a todos, independientemente de las circunstancias económicas, sociales, raciales o culturales, y la importancia de la libertad de credo para las personas y las comunidades. Como pastores, deseamos entablar un diálogo con y en representación de aquellos que sufren los efectos nefastos de la pobreza aquí en Indiana, lo que abarca las víctimas de la pobreza multigeneracional, así como aquellos que en época más reciente se han quedado sin trabajo y tienen dificultades para satisfacer las necesidades básicas de la vida.

Observamos que los aspectos que enumeramos a continuación merecen una cuidadosa reflexión y estudio por parte de los católicos y de todos los habitantes de Indiana. No proponemos un ejercicio académico fútil, sino dar un paso necesario para tomar las decisiones que conllevarán a un cambio de fondo. Estos aspectos claves son: vida familiar, empleo, educación y atención de salud. Si bien en esta carta no podemos abordar cada una de estas cuestiones en detalle, ofreceremos algunas sugerencias que esperamos estimulen el diálogo y conlleven a una acción positiva.

VIDA FAMILIAR

Los católicos creemos que el matrimonio es un elemento crucial del plan de Dios para la humanidad, entendido como la unión de un hombre y una mujer que se comprometen por el resto de sus vidas y se vuelven “una sola carne” (Gn 2:24). Esta unión sagrada conforma la familia, la unidad básica de la sociedad que se dedica a la transmisión de nueva vida (los hijos) y a la administración de la creación de Dios. La Iglesia enseña que la familia es una suerte de “escuela de humanidad más profunda”, amor y esperanza para la sociedad (Concilio Vaticano II, *Gaudium et Spes*, n.º 52). La familia nos enseña quiénes somos como persona y como integrantes de la sociedad humana. La familia también es el lugar donde aprendemos inicialmente a vivir, a hacernos cargo de nosotros mismos, a compartir nuestros dones y nuestros talentos con los demás y a colaborar y vivir en armonía con nuestro prójimo, ya sean los que se encuentran cerca de nosotros o separados por la distancia.

Sin la familia, los niños no pueden crecer más allá del aislamiento estéril. Sin la familia, la unidad entre las personas y las naciones pierde su catalizador



más elemental y la coexistencia degenera en un tipo de unión comercial pragmática, concebida “sólo como fundada en la utilidad, en la suma de intereses, en el miedo, pero no en la bondad de vivir juntos, ni en la alegría que la sola presencia del otro puede suscitar” (papa Francisco, encíclica *Lumen Fidei*, n.º 51).

La familia nos enseña que somos los hijos de Dios, hermanos y hermanas llamados a participar en la vida misma de Dios. Es allí donde aprendemos a reconocer el carácter sagrado de cada vida humana, así como la belleza y la necesidad de vivir juntos de forma pacífica. Es allí donde descubrimos el principio fundamental sobre el que se erigen los derechos y la dignidad del ser humano: que cada persona, sin importar su sexo, raza, credo, situación económica o social, merece nuestro respeto. La experiencia nos enseña que la familia constituye los cimientos sólidos y duraderos sobre los cuales se construyen sociedades sanas.

La familia nos enseña a vivir. En la familia aprendemos las nociones básicas de economía, el valor del trabajo, el significado de la sexualidad, la alegría de la entrega desinteresada, la importancia de partir el pan juntos y de divertirnos con familiares y amigos. Estos no son aspectos nimios sino que ejercen una enorme influencia sobre nuestra calidad de vida y nuestra capacidad para interactuar con los demás, ya sea con la familia extendida, los vecinos, otros ciudadanos e incluso con los extraños (inclusive con los “extranjeros” o los “enemigos” que son distintos de nosotros y cuyas diferencias percibimos como una amenaza a nuestra seguridad).

Estamos plenamente conscientes de que esta interpretación del significado de la familia representa un ideal que raramente se alcanza en todo su esplendor. Al igual que ha sucedido históricamente, hoy en día pueden existir muchos quebrantamientos en las familias y cada uno de nosotros podría señalar de qué forma las familias no logran cumplir con la visión a gran escala que propone nuestra Iglesia en cuanto al significado del matrimonio y de la vida familiar. La experiencia personal de estos quebrantamientos nos enseña el valor de la compasión y del perdón.

Creemos que vale la pena luchar por la familia; estamos convencidos de que nuestras vidas individuales y nuestro mundo se enriquecen gracias al “Santuario de vida y de amor” que proporcionan las buenas familias. Creemos que cada niño debe crecer al calor y al amparo de una familia amorosa. Lamentamos profundamente que los desafíos que enfrentan nuestras familias hoy en día amenazan la salud y la felicidad de las personas, así como el bien común de la sociedad humana.

Como pastores, somos testigo de las dificultades que enfrentan las familias jóvenes, especialmente las constituidas por padres o madres solteros, para romper el ciclo de la pobreza y poder proveer alimento, vestido, vivienda, educación y atención de salud para sus hijos. Para los padres adolescentes resulta mucho más difícil encontrar y conservar buenos trabajos, especialmente si no están casados, ya que a menudo carecen de la educación, las destrezas y las experiencias necesarias para competir en el mercado laboral actual. Si sumamos a estas desventajas los gastos de transporte y de atención médica, el desafío resulta

abrumador.

Además, a medida que aumenta la cantidad de familias constituidas por padres o madres menores de edad, o en las que solo está presente el padre o la madre, también aumenta la cantidad de padres y madres que no pueden o no quieren mantener a sus hijos. Los matrimonios fuertes y las familias sanas proporcionan el ambiente ideal que contribuye a superar incluso los desafíos económicos más graves. Lamentablemente, la tensión que genera la inestabilidad económica, las adicciones y la violencia conyugal, en combinación con otros factores sociales y culturales, contribuyen a la desintegración de los matrimonios, perturba a las familias estables y, a menudo, degenera en el consumo de sustancias ilícitas y otras conductas adictivas.

Nuestra sociedad actual permite—e incluso fomenta—conductas que van en contra de una vida familiar sana. El consumismo puede promover el gasto desenfrenado y a contraer deudas impagables. La promiscuidad está atizada por el irrespeto a la belleza de la sexualidad humana y a la santidad del matrimonio y la vida familiar. Todos los estratos de nuestra sociedad sufren los efectos de la amenaza cultural y económica para la salud y la vitalidad de las familias, pero los pobres, especialmente aquellos aquejados por la pobreza multigeneracional, son especialmente vulnerables a las influencias sociales y económicas negativas que socavan la existencia de la vida familiar. Incluso se ha llegado a afirmar que los matrimonios estables son cada vez más un lujo que solo los ricos se pueden dar.

Para abordar los efectos a largo plazo de la pobreza en nuestra sociedad, debemos fortalecer el matrimonio y la vida familiar. Tal como lo expresó San Juan Pablo II en su exhortación apostólica sobre la familia, titulada *Familiaris Consortio*: “El futuro de la humanidad se transmite a través de la familia” (n.º 86). Cuando las familias son fuertes, también lo es la sociedad; cuando las familias se quebrantan y son inestables, todas las comunidades humanas sufren. Al mismo tiempo, reconocemos que la pobreza intensifica la inestabilidad del matrimonio y de la vida familiar, ya que puede provocar una tensión intolerable que limita el desarrollo humano. Y, dado que las familias constituidas solo por el padre o la madre se están convirtiendo cada vez más en la norma para los pobres, la Iglesia debe realizar un esfuerzo especial para comprender estas circunstancias y brindarles la sabiduría de su tradición.

EMPLEO

“La economía debe estar en función de los pueblos, no al contrario” es la paráfrasis sucinta de la declaración fundamental que realizó San Juan Pablo II en su encíclica titulada *Laborem Exercens*: “ante todo, el trabajo está «en función del hombre» y no el hombre «en función del trabajo»” (n.º 6). El trabajo es más que una simple forma de ganarse la vida; es la participación continua en la creación de Dios. Si se ha de proteger la dignidad del trabajo, entonces también deben respetarse los derechos básicos de los trabajadores, entre los que se encuentran el derecho al trabajo productivo, a un salario decente y justo, a organizarse, a la propiedad privada y a la iniciativa económica.

PONDERAR

continuado de pagina 6B

Para San Juan Pablo II, esta poderosa afirmación de que “el trabajo está en función del hombre y no el hombre en función del trabajo”, es el principio rector del éxito o del fracaso de todos los sistemas económicos. La persona humana es lo más importante, no la teoría económica ni las estructuras sociales. La persona humana, el trabajador, no es un medio para lograr un fin, sino el principal beneficiario de su propia labor.

Cada trabajador posee una dignidad fundamental porque él o ella está hecho a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Los trabajadores son, junto con Dios, cocreadores en la construcción de la comunidad humana; no son bienes desechables. No son instrumentos de producción ni herramientas en las manos de propietarios o supervisores, que se sienten con el derecho de usarlos y luego marginarlos al final del día o tras culminar un proyecto en particular.

Indiana es hogar de miles de personas denominadas “trabajadores pobres”. Estos son hombres y mujeres que poseen empleos pero cuyo ingreso no les alcanza para mantenerse o para cubrir las necesidades básicas de la vida, como por ejemplo alimento, vivienda, atención médica, transporte y cuidado infantil. Para estas familias, el trabajo a tiempo completo durante todo el año por sí mismo no es suficiente para salir de la pobreza.

San Juan Pablo II nos enseña que “el salario justo se convierte en todo caso en la verificación concreta de la justicia de todo el sistema socio-económico” (*Laborem Exercens*, n.º 19). ¿Por qué? Porque el trabajador es verdaderamente digno de su salario (cf Lc 10:7), y porque una sociedad que se preocupa por los más necesitados de sus ciudadanos, inclusive los desempleados, los infrautilizados y los que no gozan de seguro médico, es una sociedad que florecerá a la vista de Dios, así como en su bienestar material y espiritual.

EDUCACIÓN

Existe un vínculo íntimo entre familia, empleo y educación. Los padres son los primeros educadores de sus hijos y los más importantes. Tal como señalamos anteriormente, en el seno familiar es donde aprendemos primero el valor del trabajo, la importancia de la colaboración y del trabajo en equipo, y los principios morales que constituyen la clave para gozar de un entorno laboral leal, productivo y exitoso.

La Iglesia Católica posee un compromiso férreo con la educación y especialmente la educación de los pobres. Más de dos siglos de experiencia nos convencerán acerca de la poderosa función que desempeña la educación para romper el ciclo de la pobreza y ayudar a las familias, y para producir ciudadanos, profesionales y trabajadores prósperos.

También damos testimonio del efecto que produce la pobreza sobre la capacidad de una familia para brindar educación de calidad a sus hijos. Los niños pobres a menudo tienen hambre, están desnutridos y tienden a tener períodos de concentración escasos. Carentes de atención, con frecuencia demuestran comportamientos inadecuados. Quizás vivan en automóviles o en albergues temporales y raramente disfrutan de suficiente descanso físico. Las mudanzas constantes significan que la asistencia a la escuela se torna difícil, cuando no imposible. A nadie debería sorprender que los niños pobres tengan dificultades para aprender, desarrollar y poner a prueba sus aptitudes y habilidades, así como para reconocer la importancia que tiene culminar con sus estudios para poder competir con los demás en un mercado laboral exigente.

Nuestra tradición católica nos exige el compromiso de educar a la persona como un ser integral: mente, cuerpo y

espíritu. Nos rehusamos a ser fatalistas en relación con las esperanzas y sueños para el futuro de las familias y los niños pobres, inclusive aquellos que han vivido en la pobreza multigeneracional. Hemos visto con nuestros propios ojos la diferencia que puede hacer una educación de calidad en las vidas de los niños y sus familias.

Tal como nos lo recuerda el papa Francisco, para estar verdaderamente “con y para los pobres”, debemos proporcionar a todos los niños, especialmente a los pobres, “una educación que enseñe a pensar críticamente y que ofrezca un camino de maduración en valores” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n.º 64). Esta es la forma de salir de la pobreza para las personas y las familias, y la mejor forma de construir una sociedad justa, económicamente productiva y dedicada a la promoción y la defensa de la dignidad humana de todos sus ciudadanos.

ATENCIÓN DE SALUD

Durante décadas, los obispos católicos de Estados Unidos han sido los defensores incansables de reformas integrales que conlleven a que todos dispongan de atención de salud, especialmente los más débiles y vulnerables. Creemos que la atención de salud es fundamental para la vida y la dignidad humanas, y constituye un componente esencial del ministerio de nuestra Iglesia. En colaboración con profesionales de todo el estado de Indiana, la Iglesia Católica proporciona atención de salud, adquiere asistencia médica e intenta mejorar el sistema de salud. La comunidad católica atiende a los enfermos y a aquellas personas que no tienen seguro médico en las salas de emergencia, en los albergues para indigentes y en el portal de nuestras iglesias parroquiales. Enfrentamos al desafío de la atención de salud con convicciones enérgicas y experiencia práctica.

En nuestro estado, muchas personas y familias de bajos ingresos carecen de los recursos necesarios para cubrir los gastos de su atención médica. Para estas familias, las costosas primas y los gastos compartidos constituyen barreras para obtener cobertura de seguro o para acudir a un médico. Por consiguiente, consideramos que se deben mantener las medidas de protección de los gastos compartidos existentes y que las nuevas opciones de cobertura de seguro médico deben proteger a los asegurados de más bajos ingresos contra la pesada carga de los gastos compartidos. También solicitamos los fondos tan necesarios para costear clínicas, hospitales y otras instituciones de seguridad social que dispensan atención de salud a los pobres y a los integrantes vulnerables de nuestras comunidades.

Creemos que la atención de salud no es un privilegio sino un derecho y un requisito para proteger la vida y la dignidad de cada persona. Todas las personas, sin importar sus circunstancias, deberían tener acceso a atención de salud integral, de calidad y asequible. Esto no debería depender de dónde nacieron, de la etapa de la vida en la que se encuentren, de dónde trabajan sus padres —o si de hecho trabajan—, cuánto ganan y dónde viven.

Preguntas para la reflexión

1. ¿Está usted de acuerdo con que la Iglesia tiene la responsabilidad de hablar en nombre de los pobres?
2. ¿Existe algún asunto más importante que la Iglesia debería abordar, fuera de los cuatro mencionados en esta sección (vida familiar, empleo, educación y atención de salud)?

III. ACTUAR

Es peligroso vivir en el reino de la sola palabra, de la imagen, del sofisma. La realidad es superior a la idea.

—Papa Francisco, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n.º 231

Esta carta es un llamado a actuar con justicia y caridad. Invitamos a todos aquellos que lean estas palabras a que nos acompañen a acercarnos a los miembros pobres de nuestro estado. Desafiamos a todos, comenzando por nosotros mismos, a involucrar a los líderes de empresas, del gobierno y organizaciones voluntarias en todo el estado, para que estimulen cambios efectivos en las legislaciones y prácticas que perpetúan la pobreza en todas sus manifestaciones.

Las acciones dicen más que mil palabras, especialmente cuando pretendemos alimentar al hambriento, vestir al desnudo, dar vivienda al indigente y proporcionar empleo, educación y atención de salud a todos los miembros de nuestra comunidad. Junto con los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad deseamos ofrecer esperanza a todo el que sufre y procuramos construir una sociedad justa que pueda aminorar los efectos a largo plazo de la pobreza aquí en Indiana, en todo el país y en el mundo.

A través de instituciones y organizaciones tales como Catholic Charities, hospitales católicos, la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paul, los ministerios sociales parroquiales, las escuelas primarias y secundarias, así como los institutos de educación superior y universidades, nuestra Iglesia responde al número creciente de personas que necesitan desesperadamente vivienda, atención médica, alimento, transporte, educación y otras carencias. La Iglesia Católica en Indiana es uno de los principales defensores de las estructuras sociales justas que preservan a las familias y, al mismo tiempo, abordan los problemas sistémicos que causan la pobreza. Los retos son enormes, pero debemos actuar con corazones transformados y llenos de esperanza.

Al mismo tiempo, nos unimos a todas las personas de buena voluntad para pedir la creación e implementación de estrategias que ataquen el origen de la pobreza aquí en la “Encrucijada de Estados Unidos”. La finalidad de nuestra respuesta es atender las necesidades inmediatas de nuestros hermanos y hermanas y, al mismo tiempo, asumir muy seriamente las cuestiones de fondo que impiden que el sistema de empleo, educación y atención de salud de nuestro estado satisfaga efectivamente las necesidades de las personas y las familias que habitan en todos los rincones del Indiana.

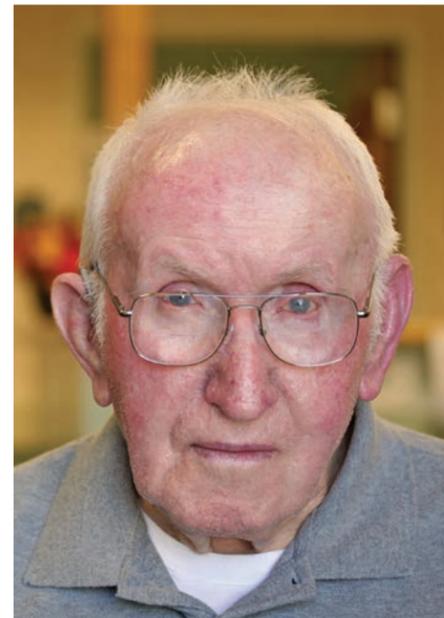
El llamado a la acción exige, con razón, una respuesta organizada y sistemática a los problemas que plantea la pobreza en Indiana. El servicio directo a los pobres en el ámbito de nuestras parroquias y otras comunidades resulta necesario y debe considerarse como una vía para ejercer la caridad cristiana. Sin embargo, las acciones aisladas no serán suficientes por sí mismas. Únicamente un enfoque multifacético que involucre a toda la comunidad podrá disminuir verdaderamente los efectos debilitantes y desmoralizantes que surte a largo plazo la pobreza multigeneracional en todo nuestro estado.

VIDA FAMILIAR

Invitamos a los fieles católicos y a todas las personas de buena voluntad para que cooperen en la lucha para disminuir la pobreza, concentrando su atención en una de las causas fundamentales de la pobreza en Indiana. Anclados en nuestra fe y tradición católicas, recomendamos:

- fortalecer y apoyar a las familias en Indiana, otorgando la prioridad más alta al bienestar de los niños en la familia y en la sociedad.

El fortalecimiento de la familia requiere que apoyemos el matrimonio y el ideal de familias constituidas por un padre y una madre que viven juntos y comparten la responsabilidad de sus hijos. Hoy en día muchas familias están quebrantadas y la mayoría enfrenta enormes presiones. Todas las familias necesitan ahora nuestro apoyo amoroso y



nuestra asistencia, incluso a medida que nos esforzamos para granjearnos un futuro en el que puedan prosperar las familias sanas. Por consiguiente, proponemos que todos los servicios y las decisiones sobre programas que efectúen las agencias gubernamentales, instituciones privadas y ministerios eclesiásticos en relación con la familia, se rijan por una sola pregunta:

- ¿Acaso los programas y las políticas dan un énfasis fundamental al bienestar infantil y mejoran—no desmerecen—los matrimonios sólidos y la vida familiar?

La tarea de fortalecer el apoyo a las familias en Indiana es tremenda y para que tenga éxito se necesitan esfuerzos coordinados y prolongados en todo el estado. Proponemos que cada diócesis, parroquia, institución educativa y organización de salud católica de nuestro estado sirva como catalizador de un esfuerzo local y popular que se concentre en mitigar la pobreza en su comunidad. Se debe invitar a todas las personas de buena voluntad, sin importar su credo, para que se unan a este esfuerzo sistemático y de colaboración para atender las necesidades de los niños y las familias de Indiana.

Proponemos definir metas claras y mensurables para nuestros esfuerzos tendientes a mitigar la pobreza, mediante la satisfacción de las necesidades de las parejas de casados y las familias en nuestro estado. Si bien no se pueden calcular fácilmente todos los resultados, contar con metas claramente definidas nos ayudará a establecer y cumplir objetivos que sean ambiciosos pero alcanzables con la ayuda de la gracia de Dios. Fortalecer y apoyar a la familia en Indiana, al tiempo que

Tal como ya hemos visto, existen vínculos innegables entre la vida familiar, el empleo, la educación y la atención de salud. La pobreza agrega una presión intolerable a la capacidad de la familia para llevar a cabo su misión como la célula fundamental de la sociedad. Las familias están llamadas a ser administradoras de todos los dones de Dios y esto requiere un ambiente de estabilidad y paz que brinde a cada integrante de la familia las oportunidades para ejercer sus responsabilidades para el bien común. Un ambiente familiar solidario produce personas más sanas, felices y llenas de esperanza, que más probablemente se esforzarán por el bien común y participarán en actividades comunitarias.

TRABAJO

Para abordar los grandes desafíos que enfrenta actualmente la economía en el estado de Indiana, debemos examinar cuidadosamente el efecto que surten las políticas, la legislación y las normas gubernamentales sobre la gente real, los hombres y las mujeres que luchan para ganarse la vida, mantener a sus familias y llegar a fin de mes. No podemos reparar la economía mediante la aplicación de teorías de empleo abstractas que nada tienen que ver con aquellos cuyas vidas

ACTUAR

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están en juego. Tal como lo expresa San Juan Pablo II, no podemos simplemente tomar en cuenta las necesidades materiales (alimento, vivienda, vestido, atención de salud, etc.), sin menoscabo de la importancia que tienen para las personas, las familias y las comunidades. También debemos fomentar el trabajo espiritual, que reconoce su profunda influencia sobre la vida intelectual, social, cultural y religiosa de las personas, las familias y las comunidades.

La Iglesia no propone programas detallados dirigidos a crear plazas de trabajo o promover el desarrollo económico. Sin embargo, la Iglesia recuerda a los líderes gubernamentales, empresariales y de la comunidad que la única medida verdaderamente efectiva de que una política económica y su aplicación práctica son realmente sólidas, es hasta qué punto las personas en la vida real crecen y prosperan individualmente y como trabajadores.

Además de los beneficios económicos de un empleo estable, el trabajo brinda a las personas más oportunidades para enaltecer su dignidad personal. El trabajo debería ser la principal forma mediante la cual los padres proveen para sus familias y aportan para el bienestar de una comunidad sana. Los programas gubernamentales deberían existir principalmente para proporcionar una protección social adecuada para aquellas personas que se encuentren en situación de transición o que sufran enfermedades o lesiones incapacitantes.

- Por consiguiente, proponemos que el estado de Indiana dedique recursos para mejorar las oportunidades para las familias hoosier de encontrar trabajos importantes y que sean económicamente satisfactorios.
- Los planes para el desarrollo económico deben incluir estrategias tendientes a romper el ciclo de la pobreza multigeneracional.

EDUCACIÓN

Una educación buena y balanceada que comience tan pronto como se pueda en la vida, establece una base para un futuro prometedor para los niños y fomenta la formación de ciudadanos productivos y familias sanas. Cada niño debe tener la oportunidad de desarrollar su máximo potencial y es responsabilidad de los padres, y de la comunidad en general, de contribuir al crecimiento y al éxito de todos los niños.

Teniendo esto en cuenta, los obispos dedicamos a nuestras diócesis, parroquias, escuelas y agencias de servicio social para que trabajen con líderes del gobierno estatal y local, así como con líderes empresariales y cívicos, para alcanzar los siguientes objetivos:

- fortalecimiento del matrimonio y de la vida familiar mediante el apoyo a la función que desempeñan los padres como los principales educadores de sus hijos (inclusive programas que permitan a los padres elegir escuelas para sus hijos y para que participen más efectivamente en la educación de sus hijos);
- exhortar al estado de Indiana para que dedique los recursos necesarios para brindar educación infantil temprana, especialmente en las poblaciones marginadas;
- reducir la segregación de facto o el aislamiento por raza, origen étnico o ingresos, para proporcionar a todos los alumnos la oportunidad de aprender junto con y de sus compañeros procedentes de distintos entornos sociales y económicos;
- encontrar las “mejores prácticas” y las políticas más eficaces para enseñar y aprender, lo que comprende la cantidad de alumnos por salón, la duración de la jornada escolar, la cantidad de días escolares por año,

tutoría y orientación;

- atraer, conservar y premiar a maestros y directores que coloquen en primer lugar la educación de los niños y que posean la formación necesaria para atender las necesidades de los niños procedentes de hogares que enfrenten dificultades económicas y/o se encuentren en situación de desventaja social.

ATENCIÓN DE SALUD

Los obispos en Indiana repetimos el llamado para que se logre una reforma de salud genuina que sea accesible y asequible para todos. Invitamos a todos los habitantes del estado a que se unan a nuestro esfuerzo por conseguir un sistema de salud que:

- promueva y defienda la dignidad humana, desde el momento de la concepción hasta su muerte natural;
- atienda a la persona como un ser integral (cuerpo, mente y espíritu), practicando al mismo tiempo un pluralismo genuino que respete la libertad de credo y de conciencia;
- atienda a los pobres y a los vulnerables, sin distinción de raza, origen étnico, situación económica, social o legal;
- administrar cuidadosamente los recursos mediante la restricción de costos y su aplicación equitativa en todo el espectro de quienes deben pagar por la atención de salud.

Si otorgamos la prioridad a la vida familiar, el trabajo, la educación y la atención de salud, un estado de Indiana económicamente fuerte, educado y saludable verá menos personas — especialmente hombres— en prisión. Disminuirá la tasa de embarazos fuera del matrimonio. Más jóvenes podrán cursar estudios de educación superior y capacitarse para sus carreras. Disminuirá la cantidad de residencias donde habitan varias familias y el constante traslado de una residencia a otra, lo que ayudará a proporcionar más coherencia en las oportunidades educativas para los niños. Menos abuelos tendrán que asumir la responsabilidad total de la crianza de los niños porque habrá más madres y padres presentes y activos en las vidas de sus hijos.

¿QUÉ PODEMOS HACER?

¿Qué podemos hacer para contribuir a mitigar la pobreza en Indiana, ahora y en el futuro? ¿Qué acciones podemos emprender que marcarán la diferencia en las vidas de nuestros compañeros hoosier que sufren los efectos inmediatos y a largo plazo de la pobreza?

Primero, podemos “inundar el cielo” de oraciones, teniendo la plena confianza de que estas serán escuchadas y recibirán respuesta. Como comunidad de fe, creemos en el poder de la oración. Confiamos en que nuestro padre celestial nos escuchará clamar por nuestro “pan de cada día” y responderá. Sin embargo, la oración también supone escuchar atentamente lo que Dios nos dice. Si le pedimos ayuda a Dios para poder atender mejor las necesidades de los pobres, a quienes Él ama, ciertamente nos mostrará el camino.

Seguidamente, podemos trabajar para fortalecer a la familia. Comenzando por nuestras propias familias, nuestros cónyuges, hijos, nietos y demás familiares, podemos demostrarles que la familia es lo primero. Podemos esforzarnos por hacer a un lado el torbellino de distracciones que promueve la cultura contemporánea, para pasar tiempo con la familia, apoyar y animar a aquellos a quienes más amamos en el mundo. Más allá de los límites de nuestras propias familias, podemos compartir nuestro tiempo y nuestros talentos con el prójimo: nuestros compañeros parroquianos e integrantes de nuestras comunidades. Podemos apoyar legislaciones y políticas públicas que estén a favor del matrimonio y de la vida familiar. Podemos hacer lo que esté a



nuestro alcance para elegir funcionarios públicos cuyas acciones realmente digan más que sus palabras en lo que respecta a la protección y el mejoramiento de la vida familiar.

Además, podemos proponer y defender la vitalidad económica y el acceso a educación y atención médica asequibles y de alta calidad. Tal como hemos tratado de demostrar, el empleo, la educación y la atención de salud son vías cruciales para aminorar los efectos a largo plazo de la pobreza en nuestro estado. Es en este sentido que nosotros, los obispos, exhortamos vehementemente a todas las personas, familias e instituciones católicas para que se pronuncien a favor de legislaciones integrales y justas, así como de políticas sociales en estas áreas fundamentales. Invitamos a todas las personas de buena voluntad a que se unan a nosotros para encontrar e implementar soluciones, tanto inmediatas como a largo plazo, para los problemas que enfrentan los pobres y vulnerables en nuestras comunidades.

Por último, todos podemos brindar nuestro apoyo a Catholic Charities y otras agencias de servicio social en nuestro estado, mediante la generosa administración de nuestro tiempo, talentos y tesoros. Como administradores de todos los dones que cada uno de nosotros ha recibido de nuestro generoso y amoroso Dios, se nos invita y se nos desafía a responder al Señor con enorme gratitud y generosidad.

Preguntas para la reflexión

1. ¿De qué forma mi comunidad (parroquia, escuela, institución) atiende directamente las necesidades de los pobres?
2. ¿De qué forma podría unirse estratégicamente mi comunidad a otras para aminorar las causas más fundamentales de la pobreza en Indiana?

CONCLUSIÓN

En el Evangelio, Jesús narra la parábola del gran rey quien envió a sus sirvientes “por caminos y veredas” para invitar a todos a su banquete (cf Lc 14:23). Hoy, Jesús nos envía a nosotros, sus discípulos, a la “Encrucijada de Estados Unidos” para extender su auxilio amoroso a los menos necesitados de sus hermanos y hermanas.

El auxilio amoroso de los pobres y los vulnerables es un tema recurrente en las Sagradas Escrituras. Las enseñanzas de nuestro Señor acerca del día del Juicio Final son bastante específicas: seremos juzgados dignos o indignos de la vida eterna, dependiendo de cómo hayamos tratado al propio Jesús en los más necesitados de sus hermanos y hermanas, especialmente los hambrientos y sedientos, los que no tenían vestido y los indigentes, los prisioneros y los forasteros. La admonición de Jesús acerca de cómo serán juzgadas nuestras vidas es mordaz e indiscutible: lo que hagamos a los pobres y los desafortunados—“de mis hermanos, aun el más pequeño”—se lo hacemos al propio Señor.

Esta es una advertencia aleccionadora. La mayoría de nosotros piensa principalmente en el propio ser, en familiares y amigos. ¿Y los pobres? Quizás experimentamos una vaga sensación de obligación moral para con ellos, pero demasiado a menudo resultan un concepto lejano, anónimo e invisible. Es por esto que las enseñanzas sociales del catolicismo insisten en que las necesidades del pobre deben tener prioridad. De lo contrario, quizás no lo veamos o nos olvidemos rápidamente de él mientras nos ocupamos de nuestros quehaceres diarios.

La publicación de esta carta no pretende ser la última palabra en cuanto a la respuesta de la Iglesia sobre el tema de la pobreza en nuestro estado. Esperamos que cada comunidad católica la analice, y es la intención de las cinco diócesis de Indiana recopilar las reflexiones que provoque esta carta y proseguir con la conversación.

Tales reflexiones son cruciales para el éxito de nuestra misión en el mundo actual. El papa Francisco nos invita a ver la profunda conexión que existe entre la evangelización y el avance de la humanidad, que necesariamente debe hallar su expresión y desarrollarse en cada iniciativa de evangelización (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n.º 178). Esperamos con ansias la oportunidad de trabajar con ustedes para proclamar la Buena Nueva mediante el fortalecimiento de la vida familiar, el fomento de condiciones de empleo justas, y garantizar una educación de calidad y atención de salud integral para todos los habitantes de Indiana, especialmente los pobres y los vulnerables.

+ Joseph W. Tobin, S.S.R.

Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Arzobispo de Indianapolis

+ Timothy L. Doherty

Most Rev. Timothy L. Doherty
Obispo de Lafayette-in-Indiana

+ Donald J. Hying

Most Rev. Donald J. Hying
Obispo de Gary

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades
Obispo de Fort Wayne-South Bend

+ Charles C. Thompson

Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson
Obispo de Evansville



The pilgrims smile after renewing their baptismal vows in a service led by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin along the Jordan River on Feb. 9. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

How Catholics in central and southern Indiana can help keep a Christian presence in the Holy Land

By Natalie Hoefler

After 11 days on the archdiocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land, I believe that were it not for the presence of the Franciscan order as pilgrimage site custodians, the Christian presence would all but evaporate from the region.

For centuries, the Franciscans have maintained the properties of numerous shrines, chapels and churches in the Holy Land, making them available for pilgrims to visit for veneration, prayer and spiritual renewal.

So what can we in central and southern Indiana do about the situation for our brother and sister Christians in the Holy Land?

The first and most obvious answer is to pray. Pray for Christ's peace to reign in the region. Pray for the Christian families—and all of those negatively affected in terms of economy and freedom.

Next, when your parish hosts visitors from Bethlehem selling religious items, please buy something. It is not a scam. As of December 2013, the unemployment rate in Bethlehem was 23 percent. Those vendors truly need your financial support to help feed their families—and rather than just a donation, you get something lovely in return.

Third, consider donating to the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (www.ffhl.org), which exists to help stem the Christian emigration from the region through educational, humanitarian, job placement and housing programs.

Finally, if at all possible, make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We heard time and again from our Palestinian Catholic tour guide how much our presence means to the Christians there. Not just because we help them economically when we visit, but because in a world where Muslim prayers are broadcast over loudspeakers into their neighborhoods and churches, and where 75 percent of the country's population is Jewish, it helps them know they are not alone in their Christian faith. †



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Father Joseph Newton pose in front of a statue of St. Joseph and the child Jesus in St. Joseph Church in Nazareth on Feb. 8.



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin prays on Feb. 8 before the grotto in Nazareth in which it is believed the Annunciation took place. The grotto lies beneath the Basilica of the Annunciation.

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Make a sacrifice of time spent in prayer during Lent

By Marcellino D'Ambrosio

Everyone knows that Lent is about sacrifice. But generally the notion of sacrifice in our pampered modern world is, to say the least, a bit impoverished.

To recover the authentic meaning and power of sacrifice, we need to take a few moments to review one of the most famous sacrifices of all time.

This notable sacrifice involved Abraham, who had already given up a lot. He left a settled life in the center of the civilized world to wander in a trackless desert. But civilization and comfort are not what he wanted. He really only desired one thing: a son to lead to descendants as numerous as the stars of the sky. The only problem was that his wife was past childbearing age, and could not give him any children.

So he tried to solve the problem in his own way: He had a son with a slave girl. This did not work out well, and his wife sent away the slave and her son.

Next, God intervened, worked a miracle and caused the elderly Sarah to conceive and bear a son for Abraham. His name was Isaac, and he became Abraham's last hope. There was nothing more precious to Abraham than his son. Indeed, to give up his son would be to give up himself.

But what happened? Abraham heard a voice, God's voice, no less, asking him to sacrifice his only son.

This, by the way, is the true meaning of sacrifice in the ancient world. God deserves everything because he has given us everything. Our ancestors instinctively knew that authentic sacrifice could never be just a "nod to God." Rather, sacrifice had to be big and precious enough to represent our entire lives.

That's why human sacrifice was so prevalent in ancient times. The offering of the firstborn was seen as the only adequate worship of the gods responsible for our very existence. In Genesis 22, God stops Abraham before he slays his son, even though God had asked him to do so.

The ordeal had been a test to see if Abraham was truly devoted to God in faith, obedience and gratitude. God didn't want Isaac's blood. He wanted Abraham's heart.

Instead of watching him give up his son, God provides Abraham with a substitute, a ram, which shows the true meaning of all authentic sacrifice: we give to God something precious that represents our very selves.

But the image of Isaac carrying the wood for the sacrifice up the slope of Mount Moriah should tip us off that this story points beyond itself to a future sacrifice beyond all comprehension. The ram caught in the thicket is not the true substitute, and the true sacrifice does not take place upon Mount Moriah. It is the lamb, not the ram, God's son, not Abraham's, that is offered.

Like Isaac, Jesus went toward a sacrifice, this one on Mount Calvary. But unlike Isaac, he did so freely, knowing what that sacrifice would cost him. And his sacrifice accomplished—and still accomplishes—what no animal sacrifice could possibly accomplish: the



A man prays during Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Andrew's Church in the Manhattan borough of New York on March 5, 2014. A good sacrifice to make during Lent is to give more time to God in prayer. (CNS photo/Carlo Allegri, Reuters)

'The greatest gift we can give anyone is our undivided attention.'

eternal salvation of all who are willing to accept the free gift of love.

This is what the whole story is about. From Genesis to Revelation, the theme is the astonishing love of God. We see the love of a God who sacrifices his beloved Son for us, and the love of the Son who leaves behind the brilliant cloud of his transfiguration on Mount Tabor for the agony of Calvary.

There's a mysterious paradox here. Though it is we who owe everything to God, it is God who sacrifices everything for us. Our love for him can only be a faint echo of his unstoppable love for us. "He who did not spare his own Son, but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?" (Rom 8:32).

So this is the true meaning of the Lenten sacrifice. We renew and deepen our dedication to God by sacrificing something that is truly meaningful to us, something that represents our very selves. It's us that God wants, not our chocolate.

I would say that probably the most precious commodity in this harried age is time. So as we go about our fasting and almsgiving, let's not forget to give God some extra time in prayer.

To tell the truth, I can find nowhere in Scripture where God asked us to give up chocolate. But after identifying Jesus as his beloved son on Mount Tabor, he did give us a very clear command: "Listen to him!" (Mk 9:7). The greatest gift we can give anyone is our undivided attention.

So let's resist the impulse to do one more thing on our almighty to-do list. Instead, let's try to silence the din and clatter of our media-saturated lives. Let's sit at his feet as Mary did in her home at Bethany. This, more than anything, is the sacrifice that God wants.

(Marcellino D'Ambrosio writes from Texas. He is co-founder of Crossroads Productions, an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.) †

Sacrifice and fasting can draw the faithful closer to the Holy Spirit

By Janelle Alberts

Nothing has gotten me into more trouble in life than my mouth.

That fact hit me particularly hard as I considered Lent, and what it means to give up or to sacrifice something to



Natalie Garcia, right, chooses food from the shelves with the help of a volunteer at the Sister Regis Food Cupboard in Rochester, N.Y. Giving time during Lent to help people in need can draw Catholics closer to Christ, who fasted for 40 days in the desert before beginning his public ministry. (CNS photo/Mike Crupi)

commemorate the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert where he was tempted by Satan.

I scanned Scripture and, for some reason, landed on the story of Zechariah at the moment the archangel Gabriel told him that he would lose his ability to speak because he didn't believe that his wife would bear him a son.

"Zechariah said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.' And the angel said to him in reply, 'I am Gabriel, who stands before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news. But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time.'" (Lk 1:18-20).

The verses struck me in a new way because I hadn't thought of talking too much as an extravagance—at least not in the manner that we consider during Lent.

Voluntary self-denial or sacrifice, and spiritual exercises, such as finding more quiet time for prayer, are an intrinsic part of Lent.

"These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing [charitable and missionary works]," says the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* of Lent in #1438.

We do it, says the catechism, because "by the solemn 40 days of Lent, the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert" (#540).

Connecting to Jesus' experience during that time is a tall order. Not to put too fine a point on the matter, but the time Jesus spent in the desert was rough. Satan was relentless. Jesus ate nothing, and grew physically weary. However, this sacrifice led to strengthening rather than suffering. What strengthened Jesus—and what can strengthen us—was what led him into the desert in the first place: the Holy Spirit.

We hear in the Gospel of Luke, when he came out of the desert, he was "in the power of the Spirit" (Lk 4:14). He went to the synagogue in Nazareth and, from the scroll of Isaiah, he read aloud, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor" (Lk 4:18).

Our journey of faith through Lent is meant to help us receive the Spirit, perceive the Spirit and walk out in obedience.

At the end of this Lenten season, will our walk through the desert strengthen us? Will it lead us to a place where we won't wonder about God's intentions for us?

(Janelle Alberts is a freelance writer and media relations specialist. She lives in Chagrin, Ohio.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

What Jesus tried to teach Nicodemus during his visit

Parishes have a choice of Gospels for Masses this weekend. The normal "B" cycle of readings, which we are hearing this year, has a passage from St. John's Gospel about Christ's coming glorification through his cross and resurrection. However, in places where there are catechumens, John's Gospel about the curing of the man born blind is permitted—the Gospel always read during cycle "A."

The one about Christ's coming glorification happened early in his ministry, during the visit of Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, who came to see Jesus in Jerusalem at night to avoid observation. Later, he was to speak up for Jesus in the Sanhedrin and, after the crucifixion, he brought about 100 pounds of a mixture of myrrh and aloes for Jesus' burial.

Nicodemus' visit is reported only in John's Gospel because the other three

Gospels don't tell us about Jesus' visits to Jerusalem over a three-year period. It happened near the beginning of Jesus' ministry, while John the Baptist was still baptizing.

Jesus made four points during his conversation with Nicodemus. First, he said that we must be "born from above" (Jn 3:3), and, when Nicodemus misunderstood, said that we must be born of water and the Spirit. Thus we enter into a new and higher life when we are baptized.

Second, Jesus compared the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul to wind. We don't know where the wind comes from or where it goes, and that's the way it is with the Spirit.

Third, he said that the Son of Man (Jesus himself) came down from heaven. Did Nicodemus realize that Jesus was telling him that he existed in heaven as God before coming to Earth?

Finally, he says that he must be "lifted up" (Jn 3:14).

The reading for this weekend, though, doesn't report on all of Nicodemus' visit. It begins with Jesus' final words to him: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,

so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (Jn 3:14-15).

This is a reminder to us that, from the beginning of his public life, Jesus was well aware of what kind of death he would suffer in order to bring us eternal life.

After this, though, the evangelist takes over. No longer quoting Jesus, John tells us that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but might have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

Further, he gives us these powerful words: "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:17).

He goes on to tell us that whoever believes in Jesus will not be condemned, but that those who do not believe have already been condemned. Therefore, although Jesus' purpose in coming into the world was to save it, nevertheless his coming also provoked judgment upon those who condemn themselves by turning away from him through their evil deeds. †



John F. Fink

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Social interaction means more than just passing time

Most people seek the company of others at one time or another. Babies start out as social creatures, even when their play is



side by side rather than interacting with their little pals. If children don't display an effort to make social contact by a certain age, we begin to suspect that they're autistic or at least have some kind of problem.

Parents and other adults encourage their kids to be social. They throw fancy birthday parties for tots, who are clueless about what's going on but who enjoy the presents and the cake and being the center of everyone's attention. Parents arrange play dates and invite their friends' children for sleepovers.

When children have siblings, there are even more opportunities to learn about relationships. And whether they intend to or not, parents teach valuable social lessons every day, both inside and outside the family. They teach cooperation, and the importance of listening to others and respecting their opinions. They teach the wide range of human aspiration and imagination.

Children learn to share with others through social occasions. They may be offended having to share a toy with a fellow daycare client at age 2, but by 5 or 6 they're usually able to enjoy feeling generous. And when they've matured to the level of social interaction which is love, they are ready to share their lives.

The result of such social connection is the building of community. We become good at it, building communities of family, workplaces, friends or parishes. We establish political communities and nations, military alliances and international cooperation groups. Community is a reflection of God because it is a unit dedicated to a good purpose.

A large part of this premise is based upon unselfishness. Community builders are thinking of the good of others first rather than of themselves. They can visualize a bigger picture of what is good for all, as opposed to narrowing in on their personal desires. When the two coincide, that's great, but if not the community builder can still take satisfaction from doing what's best for all.

Now, some folks are more social than others, and that's OK. Some people have one or two close friends, and others have many. Some are always the life of the party, and there's always a party, while others are

happy to sit back and enjoy the scene. Still, both are contributing to a healthy social fabric in their area.

Sometimes social interaction is sad, as with funerals, or impassioned, as in political crises. Sometimes social interaction is instructive, as in school, or exciting, as in being invited to meet the president of the United States or make a speech to one's peers. Sometimes, and hopefully often, it's having fun with people we love, laughing a lot and feeling free.

No matter the context, social interaction of the right kind is always about love: Love of God, or love of certain people or ideas. It's always hopeful and ultimately uplifting. This love is not always about hugs and kisses or swells of emotion for another, nor does it even require that we like everyone.

No, loving social interaction means that we approach everyone we meet with an expectation of good. Who knows, we might be encountering Jesus in disguise? And if they don't turn out to be the Jesus we expect, we can at least give them a break before we pass judgments, and hope they'll do the same for us. †

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

Bruised, Hurting and Dirty/George Kane

Planting seeds of faith and friendship with Dylan, Ryan and Kyle

Missionaries don't always receive warm welcomes, but pressing through an initially cold response can sometimes yield surprising results.



One afternoon, when my roommates Rus and Gabe were out doing street evangelism, Rus felt moved to talk to a young man sitting in a white Crown Victoria. Rus invited Gabe, who was new to mission

work, to start the conversation. Gabe was nervous and did his best to make a friendly introduction, but the young man only glared and said, "I don't want to talk to you guys."

Gabe asked why, and the young man retorted, "Because you guys don't believe what I believe." Undeterred, Rus squatted next to the open window and asked playfully, "How do you know?" At this, the young man cracked a smile, got out of the car, and introduced himself as Dylan. Dylan was thickly built and wore a bowling shirt, baggy jeans and bouncy dreadlocks.

Rus felt moved to tell Dylan about how God wants to use committed friendships to leaven the whole neighborhood, especially to heal it from the destructive effects of

loneliness and drug addiction. He explained that these committed friendships would be the authentic version of brotherhood that gang life distorts, helping men conquer temptation instead of leading them straight into it.

This struck a chord in Dylan, who confided that he had a friend like that named Ryan. Their mothers were addicted to crack cocaine and absent, but their fathers had become fast friends in their joint struggle as single fathers. Right as Dylan finished talking about Ryan, he pointed behind them and said, "Hey, here he is now!" Sure enough, a thin young man with a faint moustache and a Bob Marley jacket walked up and joined the conversation.

Dylan and Ryan told the missionaries story after story about protecting each other from violence, temptation, and even suicide. Dylan told Ryan that when Rus squatted next to the car, Dylan had heard God say, "Talk to these guys!" Soon afterward, their friend Kyle walked up and joined the conversation, too. This group of five brothers, three African-American and two white, stood in the street by Dylan's car for nearly two hours talking about the Lord, reading the Bible and laughing like old friends.

When it was time to end, the five men

put their hands on each other's shoulders and prayed that the Lord would establish their joint friendship as a light to the neighborhood. Dylan and Ryan also prayed for jobs, and to be able to see their kids more often. Looking around the circle, hands on Rus' and Ryan's shoulders, Kyle exclaimed, "Man, this is totally the Lord! The whole neighborhood needs this!"

Kyle's perspective reminds me of Pope Francis' call to those seeking to renew their cities to look "with a gaze of faith which sees God dwelling in their homes, in their streets and square. God's presence accompanies the sincere efforts of individuals and groups to find encouragement and meaning in their lives" (*"Evangelii Gaudium," #71*).

We've been able to see Dylan, Ryan and Kyle regularly since then, and I'm happy to report that, less than a month after we prayed, Ryan and Dylan both had jobs and were seeing their kids often.

Thank you, Lord!

(George Kane is a graduate of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and a former member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. You can read more of his columns at georgekane.wordpress.com.) †

Faith, Hope and Charity/

David Siler

How will you respond?

The five Indiana bishops have released a pastoral letter discussing the issue of poverty in the state of Indiana.



I hope that you will take the time to read the letter, which can be found at www.archindy.org, and I pray that it will inspire you, your family, your colleagues and your parish to action.

I pray, too, that you will take an additional step and respond to the survey, which the bishops will use to inform them in the development of a pastoral plan to reduce poverty in our state.

The work on this pastoral letter began a couple of years ago—before we knew that we would welcome a new pope who would greatly emphasize the Church's responsibility to serve the poor.

Through your reading of the pastoral letter, you will find that a major point of emphasis is the role of the family in either contributing to or mitigating poverty, depending on the health and well-being of families.

Little did we know when discussions first began regarding the pastoral letter that Pope Francis would call for the Synod of Bishops to discuss the family. At the same time, some of our key civic leaders in Indiana are currently calling new attention to the breakdown of families, and the resulting poverty that often follows.

All this is to say that the content and the timing of the bishops' pastoral letter on poverty is not mere coincidence, but appears to be a clear movement of the Holy Spirit. It is now time for all of us to get caught up in this movement of the Spirit, and contribute our time, talents and treasures for the benefit of those who are suffering due to their economic situation.

Words can be very limiting, and can carry a great deal of prejudice and misunderstanding. The words "poverty" and "poor" come to mind.

The word "poor" does not suffice in describing what the pastoral letter intends to communicate. Father Larry Snyder, former president of Catholic Charities U.S.A., has a well-reasoned definition of poverty in his book, *Think and Act Anew: How Poverty in America Affects Us All and What We Can Do about It*. That definition, though not perfect, is used in the bishops' pastoral letter to offer a common understanding of the situation.

This definition of poverty explains that individuals are considered poor if:

- they cannot afford housing that is clean, safe and in good repair;
- they cannot afford nutritious food for themselves and their family on a regular basis;
- they cannot consistently pay their utility bills even though it is a priority;
- their children are not adequately clothed for school with clean clothes that fit and are in good repair, and they do not have proper clothing for work;
- they cannot afford to go to the doctor for any kind of illness because they fear that the visit will be beyond their means to pay for it.

Many people in our archdiocese, our state and our country constantly face those struggles. Let's keep their struggles in mind as all of us discern how we will respond in love to help our brothers and sisters in need.

(David Siler is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries. E-mail him at dsiler@archindy.org.) †

Fourth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 15, 2015

- 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
- Ephesians 2:4-10
- John 3:14-21

This weekend the Church celebrates "Laetare Sunday." Its name is drawn from what is the first word in Latin of the Entrance Antiphon for the Mass of the Fourth Sunday of Lent, "Rejoice!" Lent is well underway. Easter is not that far in the future.

The reason for rejoicing is not so trivial as to say that the drabness and penance of Lent will soon end. Rather, it is a lesson about life. The drabness and trials of earthly life someday will end. The glory of heaven awaits—just as Easter awaits.

Once the Church required, and still allows, celebrants at Mass to wear vestments of a rose color. It is not as if the more somber violet of Lent today is diluted. Rather, the violet is brightened by the sunbeams of the approaching dawn. That dawn, of course, will be the brilliant flash of the Resurrection.

The Second Book of Chronicles supplies this weekend with its first reading. Once Chronicles was in a single volume. As time passed, and as editors and translators had their way, it was separated into two volumes. Thus it has remained, and thus it exists in all modern translations of the Bible.

It is part of the Bible's historical set of volumes. While these volumes tell of the history of God's people, their purpose is not so much to report history as to reveal developments in the people's religious experience.

This reading recalls the bitter events that led to the Chosen People's defeat by the Babylonians, and the removal of many Hebrews, their numbers now unknown, to Babylon. In Babylon, they were not exactly enslaved. Nor were they hostages, held to prevent rebellion by their kin people back home. Nonetheless, they led an unhappy life in a foreign and unwelcoming culture.

God ultimately freed his people through the human instrument of Cyrus, the Persian king who overwhelmed Babylonia.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians is the source of the second reading. It is an eloquent proclamation of God's mercy. Paul declares that humans were doomed to everlasting death before the coming of Christ. They attained everlasting life through the salvation offered by Christ.

St. John's Gospel furnishes the last reading, recalling a moment in the Exodus, that long march by the Hebrews from Egypt, where they had been slaves, to the Promised Land. The march took them across the stark and unforgiving Sinai Peninsula. Trials were many, hunger and thirst among them. They lost their way. Another trial was the threat of venomous snakes.

Again, God supplied relief. He told Moses, the leader, to lift a bronze snake on a staff, and to hold this staff high. God promised that all who looked upon the serpent on the staff would survive.

The implication of the crucifixion is clear. The Gospel subtly reminds us that all who place their faith in the crucified Lord will live.

The Gospel continues. It is a moving description of God's mercy. Humans can find joy, and they can find eternal life. But only in and through Jesus can they find joy and life.

Reflection

The Church gently, but firmly, leads us onward through Lent. It reassures us that Easter is not far into the future. In fact, it will come in only a few more weeks.

If Lent has been productive, Easter should be a moment of joyful, personal resurrection. In faith, we then also should rise, ourselves being raised by our identity with Christ from the death of sin.

Lent's productivity and effectiveness, however, depend upon us. We ourselves, by our commitment to God, and then by our prayer and penance, decide the value of Lent personally for ourselves.

The Church today urges us to continue to make Lent effective, to look ahead to resurrection. †



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Daily Readings

Monday, March 16

Isaiah 65:17-21
Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b
John 4:43-54

Tuesday, March 17

St. Patrick, bishop
Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12
Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
John 5:1-16

Wednesday, March 18

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 49:8-15
Psalm 145:8-9, 13c-14, 17-18
John 5:17-20

Thursday, March 19

St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16
Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29
Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22
Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a
or Luke 2:41-51a

Friday, March 20

Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22
Psalm 34:17-21, 23
John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday, March 21

Jeremiah 11:18-20
Psalm 7:2-3, 9b-12
Luke 7:40-53

Sunday, March 22

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:3-4, 12-15
Hebrews 5:7-9
John 12:20-33

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Stipends for clergy who officiate at weddings must be entirely voluntary

Q My son and his fiancée will be married later this year, and are wondering what the average stipend would be for the priest who officiates their wedding ceremony. They are assuming that there is no set fee, but want to give what is reasonable. (Indiana)



A Some parishes establish suggested fees for the use of a church for a wedding. Sometimes this is referred to as a "facility fee." It helps to cover the costs for heat, electricity, cleaning, etc. Such fees may range from \$100 for a smaller church to several hundred dollars for a large church or cathedral.

The amount is often reduced for parishioners because they help to maintain the parish by their weekly offerings. The parish where I serve has no such fee, and I would feel uncomfortable having one. But I recognize that another parish might be struggling financially and need this income.

A stipend is something different. In this case, it would be a freewill offering given to the priest (or deacon) who officiated at the wedding ceremony. It should never be indicated that this offering is fixed, or even expected, since it is purely voluntary.

Where does that stipend go? Well, the Church's *Code of Canon Law* stipulates (in #1267) that, unless the contrary is indicated, that money goes into the general parish fund. As a diocesan priest responsible for my own support, my rule of thumb is this: If a couple following the wedding gives me a check made out in my name, or cash, in a thank you note written to me, I honor what seems to be the intent of the donor and keep the gift.

But if the check, as often happens, is made out to the parish, that gift of course belongs to the parish. If money is simply handed to me in a plain envelope, I deposit it in the parish's account.

To answer your question more specifically, in my experience, a freewill offering for a wedding most commonly turns out to be \$100 or \$150. When couples realize that they are spending upward of \$20,000 on the wedding clothes, flowers and reception, they tend to treat the celebrant generously.

In all of this, the overarching rule is set in canon #848, which mandates that the

minister take special care to see "that the needy are not deprived of the assistance of the sacraments because of poverty." Because of this, and because people have a natural reluctance to tell you that they are poor, I have strong misgivings about suggesting any specific amount for fees or for stipends.

Q I am a non-Catholic Christian, but for years have been wondering if I should "convert" to Catholicism. Spiritual things have always been of utmost importance to me, and one might say that the seeking of truth has been my life's purpose.

I have come to have great respect for the Roman Catholic Church, and I believe that Pope Francis is truly a man of God. I have come close several times to becoming a Catholic, but want to be sure that it is the right thing for me to do.

And so my question is this: How can I know for certain that the Catholic Church is the one true Church? Is there anything that I can do (prayers, fasting, etc.) to get some kind of confirmation from God that the Catholic Church is the true one? And how certain do I need to be before converting to Catholicism? (Michigan)

A It strikes me that you are perhaps looking for more certainty than you need. The journey of faith does not normally produce the sort of mathematical certainty that results from a theorem in geometry. Faith comes essentially as a gift, and even the holiest of saints have had experiences of doubt in the midst of their belief.

For you to become a Catholic, you need to be comfortable with the basic teachings of the Church. You need also the conviction that, for all its human frailties, the Catholic Church approximates most closely the Church Jesus came to establish.

What I think you should do is seek out a priest experienced in working with those who would like to be received into the full communion of the Church and sort out with him your feelings and misgivings. Most of all, continue to pray that the Lord will guide you in your search and lead you to inner peace.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.) †

My Journey to God



Cataracts of My Heart

By Ron Lewis

Ron Lewis is a member of St. Anthony Parish in Clarksville. Pope Francis adjusts his glasses as he leads his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Aug. 27, 2014. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

I'm beginning to understand that I waver in faith
Because my spiritual vision is in need of correction.
I miss the mark so often because I fail to see
With the same perspective,
Heavenly Father, as you.

So I repent of both near- and far-sightedness today.
There are "cataracts" on the eyes of my heart.
With the skill of a masterful surgeon, dear Lord,
Would you remove them and take them away?

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.

BAKER, Ida Mae, 100, Holy Family, New Albany, Feb. 15. Mother of Laura Buehler. Sister of Geneva Jewel. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of two.

BUSSELL, Irene (Broderick), 100, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, Jan. 6. Mother of Mary Jo and Stephen Bussell.

BUTLER, Patricia J., 79, St. Mary, Lanesville, Feb. 16. Mother of Karen Flynn, Kathy Turner and Al Butler. Sister of Dorothy Oakes, Martha Owen and Donald Smith. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

CHUDYK, Melvyn M., 72, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Feb. 15. Husband of Kathie Chudyk. Father of Jillian Powell and Kyle Chudyk. Grandfather of five.

CIECIURA, Dr. Steven J., 88, St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute, Feb. 9. Husband of Elizabeth Cieciura. Father of Anne

O'Rourke, Dr. Craig and Mark Cieciura. Stepfather of Annie Bauer and Kristin Berghoff. Grandfather of 12.

FRICK, Stephen Roy, 73, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Feb. 15. Husband of Sally Frick. Father of Robyn Rooks, Mike and Ron Frick. Brother of Beth Clevenger, Dan, Darwin and Tim Frick. Grandfather of eight.

GRAF, Bertha, 86, St. John Paul II, Clark County, Jan. 22. Sister of Matilda Cooke, Celine Davidson, Lucille Triplett and Bob Graf.

HESSIG, Dorothy Mae, 77, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Feb. 16. Mother of Beverly Beier, Diane King, Dave and Mike Hessig. Sister of Mildred Harpenau, Alice and Helen Stillwell, Donald, Paul and Roger Seifrig. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 12.

LEIMGRUBER, John E., 56, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Feb. 17. Brother of Patricia Sampson, Charlie and Karl Leimgruber.

MILLER, Doris Jean Ann, 74, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Feb. 3. Wife of Stanley Miller. Mother of Debora Russell, Douglas and Michael Miller.

OCASIO, Phyllis Jean, 81, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Feb. 12. Mother of David and Mark Noland, Lesley and Tonya Ocasio. Sister of Carol and Peggy. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of one.

PAVY, Wilfred L., 90, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg,

Feb. 15. Husband of Roberta Pavy. Father of Becky Dickinson, Debbie Massie and Pam Reese. Stepfather of Diane Caudill, Ann Craven, Bessie Henson, Donna Wehmeyer and Jim Robinson. Brother of Joyce Briggs, Donald and Kenneth Pavy. Grandfather of 10. Step-grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 23. Step-great-grandfather of 14.

SMITH, Ruth L., 81, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Feb. 16. Mother of Mary Andrews, Mussetta Osborn, Vicki Powell and Kirby Smith. Sister of Mary Crawford, Leonard and Mike Riley. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 14.

UHL, Charles, 93, St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute, Feb. 16. Father of Jane Minderman, Mark and Steve Uhl. Brother of Mary Libs, Lorine Martin, Mary Ann McElroy and Sharon Newton. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of 11.

WILSON, Elizabeth, 83, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Feb. 11. Wife of Floyd Wilson. Mother of Patty Burke and Larry Wilson. Sister of Lawrence DeSutter. Grandmother of four. †



Honoring Father Hesburgh

Holy Cross Father Edward Malloy, who retired in 2005 as the 16th president of the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, reflects on the life of Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, former president of the university, at his wake in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on Notre Dame's campus on March 3. Father Hesburgh died on Feb. 26 at age 97 in the Holy Cross House adjacent to the university. (CNS photo/Matt Cashore, University of Notre Dame)

Carmelite Sister Ruth Ann Boyle joined Monastery of the Resurrection

Carmelite Sister Ruth Ann Boyle died on Jan. 28 at Margaret Mary Health Hospital in Batesville. She was 58.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 2 at the Motherhouse Chapel of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. Burial followed in a separate plot for the Carmelite sisters in the cemetery of the Oldenburg Franciscans.

Ruth Ann Boyle was born on Oct. 23, 1956, in Ashland, Wis.

She entered the former Carmel Community Contemplative Institute in Columbus, Ohio, in 1977. She professed first vows there on Sept. 9, 1981 and final vows on Sept. 12, 1984. The community was later closed in 1991.

Sister Ruth Ann then joined the Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection, at the time in Indianapolis, that same year. She

professed first vows as part of that community on June 10, 1994, and final vows on June 6, 1997.

In her cloistered life among the Carmelites of the Monastery of the Resurrection, Sister Ruth Ann contributed to its former website, www.praythenews.com. She also assisted in the sisters' production of altar bread, in work in the sacristy and in liturgical music.

When the community moved to Oldenburg in 2008, Sister Ruth Ann assisted with liturgical music in the Franciscan community there.

She is survived by her father, Ken Boyle of Hoyt Lakes, Minn., a brother, Alan Boyle, and her sisters, Lurene, Donna, Terri and Jacqueline.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Carmelite Sisters, P.O. Box 260, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †

Patricia Ann DeVault, 89, gave significant support to the Church in central and southern Indiana

Patricia Ann (Clarke) DeVault, who made significant contributions to the ministry of the Church in central and southern Indiana in parishes, archdiocesan agencies and archdiocesan stewardship campaigns, died on March 2 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis. She was 89.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 5 at the St. Augustine Home chapel. Burial followed at Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis.

DeVault was born on Jan. 5, 1926, in Indianapolis where she grew up as a member of the former St. Catherine of Siena Parish.

In 1947, she joined the Daughters of Charity. She earned a degree in nursing in 1951 at the St. Joseph School of Nursing in Chicago. DeVault subsequently served in the order in St. Louis and Nashville.

After eight years in the Daughters of Charity, DeVault left the order and married James P. Byrne. After her husband's death in 1961, DeVault returned to Indianapolis with her son Anthony and continued her career in nursing.

In 1985, she married Indianapolis attorney Paul DeVault, who later died in 1993.

In addition to helping others through nursing, Patricia DeVault volunteered at St. Anthony Parish and served on the board of directors of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, both in Indianapolis. She also assisted in the archdiocesan United Catholic Appeal.

In the late 1990s, DeVault served as a co-chair of the "Legacy of Hope: From Generation to Generation" archdiocesan capital and endowment campaign, the first such campaign in the history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Of the campaign, which raised \$94 million, DeVault said to *The Criterion* in 1999, "This is our Church, and we have to continue to support it. That's simply how it is."

She is survived by her son, Anthony Byrne; a brother, Ted Clarke; one step-grandchild and one step-great grandchild.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345, W. 86th St., Indianapolis, IN 46222. †



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\$31.50 includes a room to use for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and the use of the common areas and grounds of the retreat house. If you would like to spend the night, there is an additional cost of \$35.75, which will include overnight accommodations and a light supper. Come for 1,2,3,4, or 5 days/evenings – it's completely up to you!

Spiritual direction may also be scheduled for an additional suggested donation. Please contact Mary Schaffner at mschaffner@archindy.org or (317) 545-7681 ext. 11 if you are interested in meeting with a spiritual director.

To register, please go to www.archindy.org/fatima or call 317-545-7681.



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Rice Bowl effort helps people in need in archdiocese and world

By Michaela Raffin

The oddly-shaped little cardboard bowl which shows up during Lent in school classrooms and parish offices is familiar to so many Catholics. However, Catholics may not be familiar with the impact of that unassuming bowl on someone in great need.

The bowl is part of the Rice Bowl program, a fundraiser held throughout Lent for Catholic Relief Services (CRS). As the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic Church in the United States, CRS works in 91 countries, reaching 100 million of the world's poorest people regardless of race, religion or nationality.

The money raised during the Rice Bowl program goes toward aiding CRS initiatives worldwide. Of the proceeds collected, 25 percent will remain in the archdiocese to help the local poor and needy.

The Garden Door Ministry operated by St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis is one of the efforts in the archdiocese that will benefit from the Rice Bowl program.

The Garden Door ministry is open five days a week and serves meals—usually a sandwich and a bottle of water—to neighbors or anyone who comes to the door of the parish. St. John parishioners volunteer in two-hour shifts to work the door, greet homeless neighbors and offer assistance. This outreach sometimes includes offering toiletries, seasonal clothing and bus passes for those

seeking transportation to and from a new job.

“St. John’s being located right in the heart of downtown has to be a beacon of truth, hope and love to the community,” said Joshua Schaffner, director of catechesis and discipleship at St. John. “First and foremost, we must reach those in need—our homeless neighbors. If we don’t reach out to them, we miss the call of Christ to love our neighbors.”

The parish plans to use the Rice Bowl funds to enhance those efforts and create other ways of bringing Christ to the community.

“We hope to do some kind of community event in the spring or summer for our neighbors, similar to our fall neighborhood cookout where we just grill in our parking lot and have a big party where everyone is welcome,” said Schaffner. “We hope to do that in the spring during Easter where we can evangelize as well.”

Many other parishes have similar outreach efforts to help people in need. Judy Hogon is coordinator for the St. Benedict Parish Soup Kitchen in Terre Haute.

“One family—there were about 10 of them with their children—all lived in one house and their stove went out,” Hogon said. “They would come to the soup kitchen, and we would feed them, and then we would pass out containers of soup and leftover sandwiches to the family for the weekend.”

Besides helping the parish to serve the hungry, the money received from the Rice Bowl program will help the soup kitchen

to buy new pots and pans “so we don’t have scorched soup!” said Hogon.

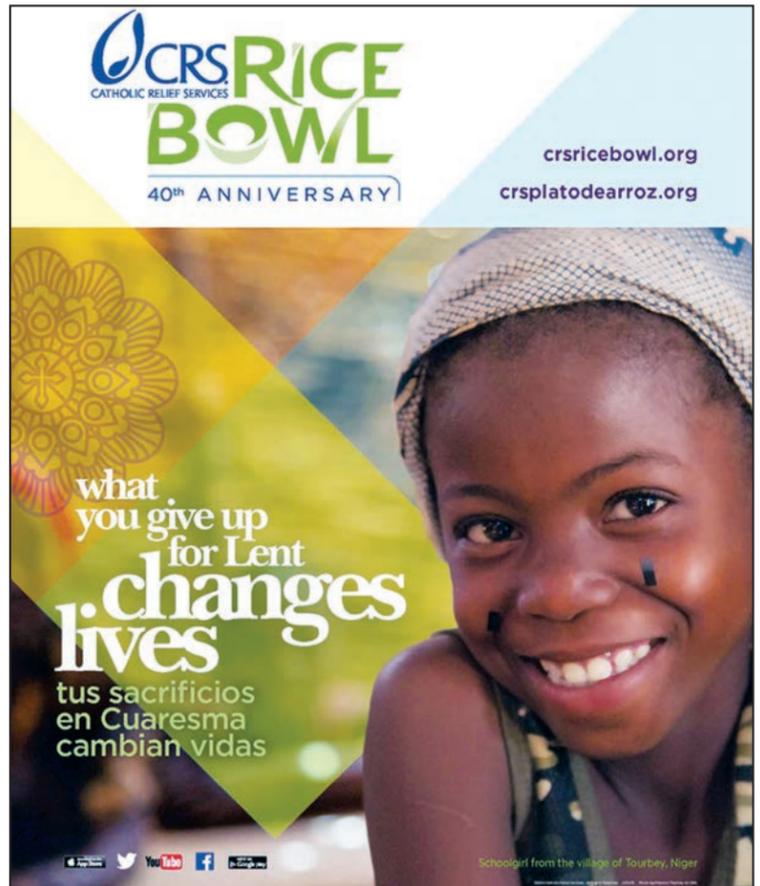
The Rice Bowl program encapsulates the sacrificial attitude that Catholics strive to attain during Lent. By sacrificing small amounts each day and putting that money in the cardboard Rice Bowls, Catholics can participate in almsgiving throughout the Lenten season.

“I think the statement that is on the top of a Rice Bowl box sums it up beautifully; ‘What you give up for Lent changes lives,’” said Theresa Chamblee, director of Catholic Relief Services for the archdiocese.

Although the connection between the Rice Bowl and almsgiving is clear, the program also does much more for Catholics wanting to grow spiritually during Lent.

“What many people may not realize is that the CRS Rice Bowl is not just about almsgiving, but there is an entire program built around prayer, fasting, learning and giving,” Chamblee said. “There are activities for young adults and families, with the goal to bring people closer to Christ and fulfill his commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves—neighbors both locally and globally.”

This year, CRS has launched a new video initiative called “What is Lent?” The video series is available at www.crsricebowl.org/what-is-lent. There is also a CRS Rice Bowl app for smartphones that offers daily reflections, stories of hope and even meatless recipes for Fridays.



The app can be downloaded for free at www.crs.org.

Participating in the Rice Bowl program is about much more than simply giving: It teaches Catholics about the importance of charity, love and spiritual growth during the Lenten season.

“The CRS Rice Bowl helps me remember that there is a world greater than the one I perceive that I live in,” Chamblee said. “It provides me with a tangible way

to live out our Lord’s two greatest commandments which are to love God with all my heart, soul and mind, and to love my neighbor as myself.”

(To participate, check with your parish or visit the CRS Rice Bowl website at www.crsricebowl.org, or call Theresa Chamblee, archdiocesan Rice Bowl coordinator, at 317-236-1404 or 800-282-9836, ext. 1404) †

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services was reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

- March 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- March 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- March 21, 10 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright

Bloomington Deanery

- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
- March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer
- March 26, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
- April 1, 4 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery

- March 24, 6 p.m., Richmond Catholic Community at St. Mary, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield
- March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
- March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Mary
- March 26, 7 p.m. for St. Rita and Holy Angels at St. Rita

Indianapolis North Deanery

- March 15, 2-3:30 p.m. at St. Matthew the Apostle
- March 16, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc
- March 17, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc

Indianapolis South Deanery

- March 16, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
- March 30, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

- 6-7:30 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville (individual confession available every Wednesday during Lent)
- March 16, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
- March 18, 7 p.m. for St. Anthony and St. Christopher at St. Christopher
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield

New Albany Deanery

- March 19, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany (individual confession)
- March 29, 4 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery

- March 22, 4 p.m. for American Martyrs, Scottsburg and

St. Patrick, Salem, at St. Patrick, Salem

Tell City Deanery

- March 22, 2 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery

- 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle (individual confession available every Monday during Lent)
- 7 p.m. at St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute (individual confession available every Wednesday during Lent)
- 7:30 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil (individual confession available every Wednesday during Lent)
- March 18, 6 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
- March 25, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
- March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute †

Lenten activities available online

Be sure to visit *The Criterion*’s Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent.

The page consists of links to daily readings, archived Lenten columns by Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features. †

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

Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis,
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1410

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
chill@archindy.org

Terre Haute Deanery faith community reaches out through parish app

By Sean Gallagher

BRAZIL—Easter is often a feast in the Church year when many non-practicing Catholics will return to Mass for the first time in months, if not years.

Some parishes have sought to attract such visitors on these occasions back to a more full participation in the life of the Church.

Annunciation Parish in Brazil launched this week a software application, popularly known as an “app,” in part to reach out to such non-practicing Catholics, said Father John Hollowell, pastor of the Terre Haute Deanery faith community.

The app will quickly allow people who download it to their smart phones or tablets to see the parish calendar, read daily Mass readings, make an appointment with Father Hollowell or view videos of his homilies and other videos about the sacraments.

“One of the potential benefits of the app is to draw in parishioners who have fallen away from the faith,” Father Hollowell said. “If they download the app, they may be more likely to explore and watch a video or read an article, and thus hopefully come home to the Church. Also, visitors to the parish and those looking to learn more about our parish will have something to explore on their phones as well.”

The app was designed by Albuquerque, N.M.-based web developer Sue Jiron, who specializes in creating apps for parishes and dioceses. Information about her work can be found at churchapplady.com.

Father Hollowell noted that while Annunciation Parish’s website had been adapted to work well on smart phones and

tablets, an app made connecting people to the parish’s online presence easier.

“If you pulled up the calendar on the website on a phone, you’d have to do some navigating, zooming in and out and clicking on days,” he said. “With the app, the day’s events just pop right up. We wanted to make things as user-friendly as possible.”

He also said that the development of the app was a recognition of the growing use of smart phones and tablets throughout society.

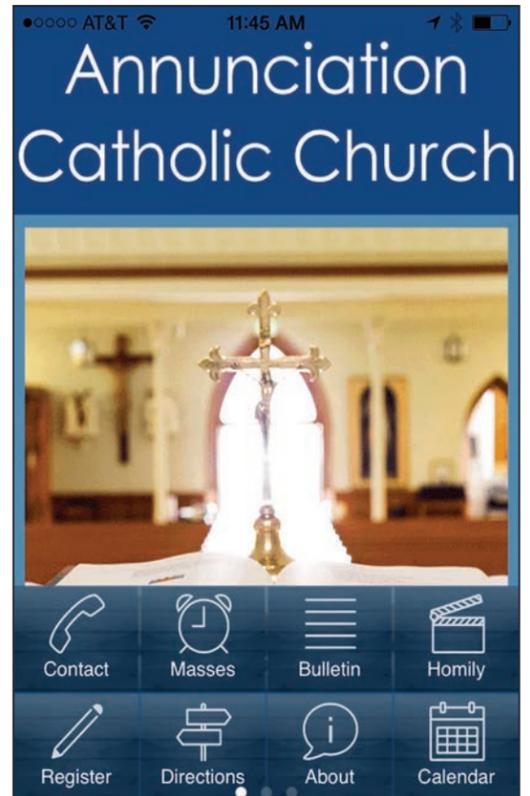
“You have to go where the people are at,” Father Hollowell said. “People are craving community. And a lot of times they’re seeking that community electronically. And so, I think we’re trying to do what we can to provide another way for our parish to be more like a family and to be more connected with each other.”

Annunciation parishioner Heidi Spugnardi downloaded an early experimental version of the app and liked it.

“It’s extremely helpful,” she said. “You can hit a button and make an appointment to see Father [Hollowell] without making a phone call. You can hit a button and see what the [Mass] readings are. Everything’s right there.”

(A link to the software application for Annunciation Parish in Brazil can be found at annunciationbrazil.org.) †

This is the app for Annunciation Parish in Brazil. Users of the app can quickly scan the parish’s calendar, reflect on daily Mass readings and watch videos of homilies by Father John Hollowell, the parish’s pastor. (Submitted photo)



What was in the news on March 12, 1965? The pope’s Mass in Italian, horror in Selma and St. Meinrad is closing its high school

By Brandon A. Evans

This week, we continue to examine what was going on in the Church and the world 50 years ago as seen through the pages of *The Criterion*.

Here are some of the items found in the March 12, 1965, issue of *The Criterion*:

• **Pope offers Italian Mass at altar facing the people**

“ROME—Pope Paul VI marked the introduction of Italian in the Mass on

the first Sunday of Lent by going to a downtown parish and celebrating the Eucharist at an altar facing the people. About 5,000 people overflowed All Saints’ Church on the new Appian Way for the Mass [March 7]. Despite pleas to the contrary by the master of ceremonies, the Bishop of Rome was applauded as he entered the church. ... Instead of the traditional Roman or fiddleback chasuble, he wore a fuller Gothic-cut one of Lenten purple. ... After the Gospel

was proclaimed, the pope began a half-hour homily in which he called the celebration of the vernacular Mass ‘a truly extraordinary event.’ ”

• **A priest’s report: Nightmare in Selma**
• **Clergy, Sisters join Selma protest march**

“SELMA, Ala.—Hundreds of priests, ministers and rabbis gathered here in defiance of a federal judge’s injunction and threats of violence to join the Rev. Martin Luther King in a protest march demanding equal voting rights for Negroes. ‘They feel that the Church is really on trial—just as it was in Nazi Germany—and this is the moment of truth,’ declared Father Geno Baroni of Washington, D.C. ‘They know that a man would be dead in spirit if he is not free to follow his conscience,’ the priest said. Several hundred clergy from many parts of the country—among them an estimated 35 to 40 Catholic priests—flocked here. ... Later on, a number of Catholic sisters joined the demonstrators. They planned to march the 50 miles from Selma to the state capital at Montgomery in protest against denial of voting rights to Negroes. When the demonstrators were turned back by state troopers firing tear gas and wielding clubs in an outburst of violence, they knelt in the streets in prayer vigils.”

• **St. Meinrad closing its high school**

“ST. MEINRAD, Ind.—The high school department of St. Meinrad Seminary, which has educated priests for the archdiocese for nearly 100 years, will be discontinued, according to an announcement this week by Archabbot Bonaventure Knaebel, O.S.B. ... Archabbot Bonaventure cited the need to expand seminary facilities on the college and theology level, and the existence of other high school programs for the secondary education for priesthood candidates as reasons for the action.”

- **Msgr. Hamill dies; former chancellor**
- **Jeffersonville man in ordination class**
- **\$24,000 willed to Church agencies**
- **51 percent ‘favor’ private school aid**
- **Clergy shortage acute: Married diaconate called a necessity**
- **Is minimum wage of \$1.25 realistic?**

“Each one must **GIVE** as he has decided in his **heart**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God** loves a cheerful giver.”

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To see how the United Catholic Appeal supports the ministries throughout central and southern Indiana, watch the Ministry Minute videos found here: <http://www.archindy.org/UCA/video.html>



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