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Mission of mercy

'Food Fast' brings Clarksville youths 'in tune with others' suffering,' page 7.

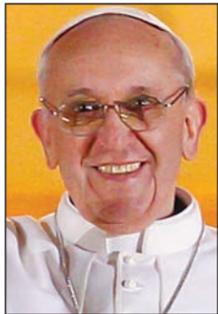
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Pope to release document on the family on April 8

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has set April 8 for the release of "Amoris Laetitia" ("The Joy of Love"),



Pope Francis

Pope Francis' reflection on the family and family life.

The document, subtitled "On Love in the Family," will be released at a Vatican news conference with Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, general secretary of the Synod of Bishops, Austrian

Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna and Giuseppina and Francesco Miano, a married couple who participated in both the 2014 and 2015 synods of bishops on the family.

"Amoris Laetitia" is what is known as a "postsynodal apostolic exhortation," a document addressed to the whole Church reflecting on themes of Church life and faith that have been discussed at a gathering of the Synod of Bishops.

According to a variety of reports, the document will be long—perhaps as many as 200 pages.

Speaking to reporters flying with him from Mexico to Rome in late February, Pope Francis said the document "will summarize all that the synod said," including about broken families, the importance of serious marriage preparation programs, raising and educating children, and "integrating" divorced and civilly remarried Catholics into active parish life even if they cannot receive Communion.

"The key word that the synod used—and I will refer back to it—is to 'integrate' wounded families, families with remarried spouses, and all this, into the life of the Church," the pope said on the plane on Feb. 17.

However, he said, "being integrated into the Church does not mean 'taking Communion.' I know remarried Catholics who go to Church once or twice a year" and say, "I want to receive Communion," as if

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Walking in the light of Christ



Faith, love and service guide teacher who receives archdiocese's top educator honor

By John Shaughnessy

Doug Bauman can't believe how amazingly memorable this past year has been for him.

He and his wife Julie savored being in Philadelphia in September when Pope Francis celebrated the closing Mass of the World Meeting of Families for nearly one million people.

Bauman is also part of a team of four teachers at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis that was one of just 10 schools from across the country chosen for a special three-year program at the University of Notre Dame—a program that focuses on helping teachers inspire student learning in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math.

And the father of three was recently selected as this year's recipient of the Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

Yet perhaps the most telling memory that Bauman shares from the past year comes from a moment at the beginning of one of his math classes.

During that time, a student volunteer leads the class in prayer and shares one of the Mass readings that day, followed by Bauman leading the students in a short reflection of how the message from the reading applies to their lives.

"The Scripture passage was the story about Zacchaeus, and how he climbed the sycamore tree in an effort to get a better view of Jesus," Bauman recalled. "We ended up

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Doug Bauman adds real-life applications to the math classes he teaches at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis, and he multiplies his influence on his students by sharing his faith and emphasizing service—qualities that led him to be selected as this year's recipient of the Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

'Such a flow of grace' pervades at 2016 Indiana Catholic Women's Conference

By Victoria Arthur and Natalie Hoefer

Divine Mercy and a miracle drew Jennifer Conley, her sister and her mother to downtown Indianapolis on March 19.

From their spots in the front row, the trio from Fishers, Ind., took in every moment of the 2016 Indiana Catholic Women's Conference. The previous year's conference, they believe, had yielded miraculous results for their family. Conley had proof positive in the cell phone image of her 4-month-old daughter, Mariella Faustina—named after the Blessed Mother and the patroness of Divine Mercy, St. Faustina Kowalska of Poland.

Conley and her husband, Nik, had been struggling with infertility for two years when a healing priest prayed over

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Jennifer Conley, left, and her sister, Jessica DeFrench, enjoy time together during the Indiana Catholic Women's Conference on March 19. Conley sees a miraculous connection between a healing service at last year's conference and the recent birth of her daughter, Mariella Faustina. The baby's first name, an Italian variation of Mary, also means "wished-for child," while her middle name is in honor of St. Faustina Kowalska, who introduced the world to the Divine Mercy image and devotion.

(Photo by Victoria Arthur)

BAUMAN

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talking about how we all have a little bit of Zacchaeus inside us. We all struggle to see Jesus from time to time. The question was raised, ‘What holds us back from getting a clear view of Jesus—busy schedules, social media, peer pressure?’

‘An amazing discussion ensued. Then one student asked, ‘If Zacchaeus used a sycamore tree to get a better view of Jesus, what are the sycamore trees in our lives—what allows us to get a better view of Jesus?’

The answers the students gave came quickly: friends, teachers, reading Scripture more frequently, having intentional prayer time at home, going to Mass more often, setting aside quiet time, and minimizing distractions.

‘In a span of three minutes, our math class had turned into an incredibly deep and rich discussion focused solely on strategies that improve my students’ relationships with Jesus and with each other,’ Bauman noted. ‘I absolutely love our five-minute, prayer-and-reflection time at the beginning of each class. Math is great, but prayer and reflection trump math any day of the week.’

Inspiration, influence and integrity

The various special moments from Bauman’s past year reflect the diverse qualities of his life.

He was a stay-at-home dad for five years, using some of that time to earn a master’s degree in pastoral theology. At St. Barnabas Parish, he and his wife of 14 years serve as sponsors for couples preparing for marriage. He also is a small group leader for youths preparing for confirmation, and he’s an extraordinary minister of holy Communion.

In his seventh- and eighth-grade math classes, he’s been known to dress as the superhero MathMan and as Bert from the *Mary Poppins* movie. And he enjoys hiking and biking with Julie and their daughters, Annie, 11, Lily, 9, and Betsy, 7.

‘He is noteworthy as a Catholic educator because of his inspiration, his influence and his integrity,’ said Debbie Perkins, principal of St. Barnabas School. ‘He sees it as his mission to guide young men and women to be moral, spiritual, ethical followers of Christ, and to teach them to be good mathematicians along the way.’

His students have tremendous success in Indiana’s math proficiency tests, and they

learn to apply their math concepts to real-life applications, she said.

‘I’ve seen him use his classroom for miniature golf as the students solve problems involving angles,’ Perkins noted. ‘They’ve used the non-linear exponential growth model formula to determine our city’s population in four different years, and they’ve calculated the slope in algebra by comparing the speed of a cheetah and the speed of a track star. It always feels like they are *playing* with math a bit in class.’

The learning is also demanding in his class.

After observing his teaching style, Perkins once told him, ‘The work you were asking the students to do required much rigor. It was very challenging, but you gave them the tools and instruction to make it attainable.’

Seventh-grade student Samantha Moylan shares that enthusiasm for Bauman.

‘He is an amazing teacher,’ she said. ‘He explains everything to everyone. And we learn a lot of things about religion, too. He tells us not to judge. He’s a very faith-filled person.’

Another side of his influence is shared by Father Benjamin Syberg, the associate pastor of St. Barnabas who was a former student of Bauman when he taught at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

‘When I was a high school freshman, a tornado struck the south side of Indianapolis, including Roncalli,’ Father Syberg recalled. ‘On that day, I was in Doug’s class. When it [hit], we could barely see outside the window. We spent hours in the hallway, and when we came back, water was all over our room. It was not a day for which you can prep. But he prayed with us, kept us calm and kept us hopeful.’

‘I will always view Doug as a man leading us through a storm, praying with scared and confused teenagers, knowing that he was more than a math teacher. He was a disciple.’

Bauman embraces that relationship with Christ and his students.

Walking in the light of Christ

‘Every day I walk into my classroom, I’m given an amazing opportunity and responsibility—to teach a group of middle-school students a little bit about the world of math and a whole lot about the incredible sacrificial love that God has for all of us,’ said Bauman, a 1995 graduate of Roncalli.

‘We as teachers and parents are definitely fighting an uphill battle trying to



Doug Bauman leads the way as St. Barnabas students Michael Feltz, middle, and Jackie Zhao carry canned goods in the school’s annual drive to help Indianapolis food pantries that serve the poor. Bauman considers the food drive his most rewarding experience as a teacher. (Submitted photo)

convince our students that society has it all wrong, and that the real and authentic truth and beauty in life rests in the words and actions of Jesus Christ.’

Bauman tries to convince his students through the way he treats them with respect and attention, through the example he sets by attending Mass with his family, through the stories and memories he shared from the Mass with Pope Francis in Philadelphia.

‘I presented each student with a rosary which was blessed by Pope Francis,’ he said. ‘Even though they were missing math instruction that day, they needed to hear the stories from Philadelphia. They needed to see and hear firsthand that our Catholic faith is alive and thriving. They needed to hear that we as Catholics are striving to put the family first, regardless of what society is telling us.’

All those lessons connect with the experience that Bauman considers his most rewarding moment as a teacher—working with his students on the school’s annual canned food drive to help local food pantries.

‘All of those cans are able to be donated because of the efforts and sacrifices of our students,’ he said. ‘They went out ‘canning’ in their neighborhoods. They gave up some of their money to purchase cans. They did extra chores around the house to earn ‘can money.’

‘When I step into the back of that truck and work side by side with my students loading thousands of canned goods, we get to see a very different and special side of each other. I get to see their humanness firsthand. And they get to see their math

teacher make an attempt to pack as many cans as possible into a very confined space. It’s during those moments that I’m reminded why we are here on Earth—to love God and to love one another.’

That lesson of ‘walking in the light of Christ’ is the one that Bauman hopes endures for his students.

‘Christ teaches us to love one another as he loved us. Enabling our students to experience that Christ-like love and service firsthand is the one teacher moment that will be forever instilled in my heart.’ †

Finalists for teaching honor come from throughout the archdiocese

While Doug Bauman of St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis was selected as this year’s recipient of the Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, four other teachers were named as finalists for the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

Finalists also included:

- **Emily Denton**—St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis
- **Brittany Geswein**—St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in St. Mary-of-the-Knobs
- **Dan McNally**—Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis
- **Jeanine Ritter**—St. Pius X School in Indianapolis †

Annunciation is feast of saying ‘yes’ to God, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—When people do not want to say ‘yes’ to God, they usually do not say ‘no,’ they just hide like Adam and Eve did after they sinned, Pope Francis said.

‘Today is the feast of ‘yes,’ the pope said during his early morning Mass on April 4, the transferred feast of the Annunciation. The Latin-rite Church usually celebrates the Angel Gabriel’s annunciation to Mary on March 25, but transfers the feast when it occurs during Holy Week.

A group of priests celebrating the 50th anniversary of their ordinations and a group of Vincentian Sisters who are called to renew their vows each year joined Pope Francis for the Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Even after the sin of Adam and Eve, the pope said, God

continually reached out to holy men and women—from Abraham to Moses to the prophets—asking them to cooperate in his plan of salvation.

‘Today the Gospel speaks to us of the end of that ‘yes’ chain and the beginning of another’ with Mary’s willingness to carry God’s son, he said. ‘With this ‘yes,’ God not only watches how humanity is proceeding, he not only walks with his people, but he becomes one of us and takes on our flesh.’

Jesus himself is God’s ‘yes,’ the pope said.

The feast of the Annunciation, he said, is a perfect occasion to think about one’s life, and whether or not ‘we always say ‘yes’ or often hide, with our heads down, like Adam and Eve,’ not exactly saying ‘no,’ but pretending not to know what God is asking. †

FAMILY

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Communion were a prize.’

‘It is a matter of integration ... the doors are all open. But one cannot just say: From now on ‘they can take Communion.’ This would also wound the spouses, the couple, because it won’t help them on the path to integration,’ the pope said. Receiving Communion eventually could be possible, he indicated, but integration is ‘a journey, it is a path.’ †



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Pope asks for new Catholic institutions of mercy, charity

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis asked Catholic dioceses around the world to set up a permanent memorial of the Holy Year of Mercy by establishing a hospital, home for the aged or school in an under-served area.

Celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday with an evening prayer vigil on April 2 and a morning Mass on April 3, the pope said the idea came to him during a meeting with a charitable organization, and he decided to mention it at the vigil with participants of the European gathering of the World Apostolic Congress of Mercy and followers of the Divine Mercy devotion.

“As a reminder, a ‘monument’ let’s say, to this Year of Mercy, how beautiful it would be if in every diocese there were a structural work of mercy: a hospital, a home for the aged or abandoned children, a school where there isn’t one, a home for recovering drug addicts—so many things could be done,” the pope said.

“Let’s think about it and speak with the bishops,” the pope told thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet of St. Faustina Kowalska, and also to remember St. John Paul II, who promoted the devotion and died on April 2, 2005.

Reciting the “*Regina Coeli*” prayer at the end of Mass the next day, Pope Francis said the Divine Mercy Sunday celebration was “like the heart of the Year of Mercy,” and he announced that Catholic parishes throughout Europe would be asked to take up a special collection on April 24 as a sign of closeness and solidarity with people suffering because of the war in Eastern Ukraine.

The war has caused thousands of deaths and forced more than 1 million people to flee their homes, he said. Pope Francis prayed that the collection, a sign of solidarity and closeness, “could help, without further delay, promote peace



An image of St. Faustina Kowalska is seen as nuns wait for the start of Pope Francis’ celebration of Mass on the feast of Divine Mercy in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on April 3. (CNS photos/Paul Haring)

and respect for the law in that harshly tried land.”

The more one receives mercy, Pope Francis said at the vigil on April 2, “the more we are called to share it with others; it cannot be kept hidden or kept only for ourselves.”

God’s mercy should drive people to love others, “recognizing the face of Jesus Christ above all in those who are most distant, weak, alone, confused and marginalized,” he said.

“It pains the heart” when people talk about refugees and say, “Let’s throw them out,” or speak about the poor and say, “Let them sleep on the street,” the pope said. “Is this of Jesus?”

Reflecting on the Gospel account of Thomas, who came to faith in the risen Lord when he was able to put his hands

in Jesus’ wounds, Pope Francis said, “a faith incapable of entering the wounds of the Lord is not faith. A faith unable to be merciful as a sign of the merciful wounds of the Lord, is not faith. It’s an idea, an ideology.”

“If we want truly want to believe and have faith,” he said, “we must draw near and touch those wounds, caress those wounds, but also lower our heads and let others touch our wounds.”

Celebrating the Divine Mercy Sunday Mass the next morning, Pope Francis said the Gospel story of God’s mercy “remains an open book” to which people can add good news by being heralds of the Gospel and engaging in works of mercy, “which are the hallmarks of the Christian life.”

Just as the disciples were afraid, but nevertheless set out as the risen Lord



Pope Francis uses incense as he celebrates Mass on the feast of Divine Mercy in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on April 3.

commanded, he said, many times Christians today experience “an interior struggle between a closed heart and the call of love to open doors closed by sin.”

“Christ, who for love entered through doors barred by sin, death and the powers of hell, wants to enter into each one of us to break open the locked doors of our hearts,” the pope said. Where people are wounded, fearful and uncertain, Christians are called to reach out with Jesus’ peace, mercy and healing power.

“In Christ, we are born to be instruments of reconciliation, to bring the Father’s forgiveness to everyone, to reveal his loving face through concrete gestures of mercy,” Pope Francis said. “Truly, God’s mercy is forever; it never ends, it never runs out, it never gives up when faced with closed doors, and it never tires.” †

Pro-life advocates oppose new FDA guidelines for RU-486 use

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pro-life advocates expressed dismay with new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines that effectively expand how pregnant women can use RU-486, a drug that induces abortion.

The new rules, announced on March 30, allow a woman to use RU-486—known generically as mifepristone and by its brand name Mifeprex—later into pregnancy and with fewer visits to a doctor.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee, called the FDA’s decision irresponsible. “The unofficial, off-label



Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan

use of RU-486 is now the new normal, paving the way for the destruction of even more innocent lives, and putting women and girls at risk for all the life-changing effects of abortion,” he said in an April 1 statement. “Far from wanting abortion to be ‘rare,’ abortion advocates are celebrating this expanded use as opening an ever-widening door to abortion,” he said. “They are equally celebrating the FDA’s neglect of women’s health. Women have died from this drug, and many who used it after eight weeks of pregnancy ended up returning

for surgical abortions. This anguish, too, will now be visited on more women.”

“People need to know this is a very, very serious expansion of the use of RU-486,” Deirdre McQuade, spokeswoman for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat for Pro Life Activities, told Catholic News Service (CNS) on March 31.

“Clearly the loosening of the FDA guidelines puts more women, girls and unborn children at risk,” McQuade said, while expressing concern that women and girls will be faced with the possibility of delivering a “recognizably human child” at home with no one in attendance.

“Women panic. They don’t know what to do. Who’s there for them to care for them?” she said.

McQuade also expressed concern that the new guidelines allow non-physicians to dispense or prescribe the drug. “This raises a huge question. Do we want nurses, physician’s assistants, non-MDs overseeing the prescription of a drug that has very serious consequences for women?”

Dr. Grazie Pozo Christie, an advisory board member with the Catholic Association, in a March 31 statement called the extension of time that RU-486 can be used “substantial.” She said women “will feel the deplorable effects of this change” when they will return home “to endure a painful and shocking process by themselves and, of course, their babies.”

Christie, a radiologist who said

she performs fetal ultrasound daily, explained that a 10-week-old fetus is “a well-developed and recognizably human creature. Head, hands, feet and vigorous movement are evident even to the untrained eye.”

“Also at issue is the psychological and physical impact on a woman, sent home to experience the very painful cramps of a chemical abortion of a fetus that size,” she added. “Besides the considerable blood loss and pain, there is every chance of a woman recognizing a fully formed fetus amongst the expelled ‘products of conception.’”

Randall K. O’ Bannon, director of education and research at National Right to Life, said in a statement on March 30 that the new guidelines do not make chemical abortion safer.

“In the end, it is obvious that the FDA’s new protocol serves only the interest of the abortion industry by expanding their base of potential customers, increasing their profit margin and reducing the level of staff and amount of resources they have to devote to the patient,” O’ Bannon said.

He added that while the announcement was welcomed by some, documents detailing the impact on women’s safety has been released.

“Certainly, none of the modifications is of any benefit to the unborn child,” O’ Bannon said.

The new FDA guidelines for RU-486 brings the regimen for taking the drug in line with what has become standard medical practice:

- Extending the period when a woman can take the drug to 70 days of pregnancy from 49 days.
- Lowering the dosage to 200 milligrams from 600 milligrams.
- Reducing the number of visits to a doctor by a woman to two from three.

RU-486 is used with another drug called misoprostol, a prostaglandin, to induce a chemical abortion by blocking the hormone progesterone needed to sustain a pregnancy. The FDA said it changed the guidelines governing RU-486 “based on data and information submitted

by the drug manufacturer.”

Some abortion opponents said the announcement was politically motivated in the midst of presidential and congressional elections as Republican and Democrat candidates seek support from women.

The FDA said in the announcement that its decision was based on medical science.

“After reviewing the supplemental application, the agency determined that Mifeprex is safe and effective when used to terminate a pregnancy in accordance with the revised labeling,” the agency said.

Dr. Mark S. DeFrancesco, president of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), welcomed the new regimen in a statement, saying it “reflects the current available scientific evidence and best practices, and includes many of the recommendations that ACOG had presented to the agency. Extending approved use of mifepristone through 70 days of gestation is proven to be safe and effective, and will give women more time to make the decision that is right for them.”

The new guidelines run contrary to laws in some states that require doctors to follow more stringent FDA regulations regarding RU-486 use that were adopted in 2000. Supporters of legal abortion in North Dakota, Ohio, Texas and elsewhere have challenged the laws in court.

In response to a court order putting a law similar to those in Texas and Ohio on hold, Arizona legislators recently sent a bill to Gov. Doug Ducey requiring abortion-inducing medications to be administered according to FDA protocol that was in effect as of Dec. 31.

In his statement, Cardinal Dolan offered the Catholic Church’s assistance to “any woman who finds herself pregnant” and needs help. He invited women to “come to Catholic agencies for nonjudgmental, caring assistance. Catholic Charities, pregnancy help centers, and many parishes stand at the ready to assist those in need.” †

“People need to know this is a very, very serious expansion of the use of RU-486. Clearly the loosening of the FDA guidelines puts more women, girls and unborn children at risk.”

—Deirdre McQuade, spokeswoman for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat for Pro Life Activities



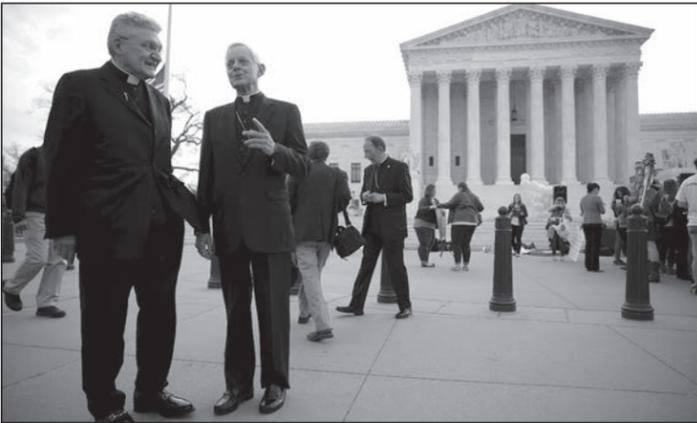
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Editorial



Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh and Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington chat near the U.S. Supreme Court on March 23 in Washington. The high court heard oral arguments in the *Zubik v. Burwell* contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization mandate case. (CNS photo/Joshua Roberts, Reuters)

The Church thrives in troubled times

Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington is quoted as saying, “The Church thrives in troubled times. This was true in the past, and it will be true in the future. The difference is that the times we live in now are *our troubled times*. We are the disciples of Jesus Christ who must bear witness to him in the challenging circumstances of today.”

The cardinal’s insight is a powerful one. The Apostles, martyrs and saints of the past two millennia can serve as a great inspiration for us, and we believe they actively assist us with their intercessory prayer. But we are the ones who have to stand in their place today. We are the ones who must stand for what we believe over and against the principalities and powers of the 21st century. Our responsibility is to follow the example of yesterday’s saints so that we can pass on a vibrant, faith-filled Church to our descendants.

What are the challenges we face today, and how can we help the Church to thrive (not merely survive) during these troubled times?

Certainly threats against the sanctity of human life (abortion, euthanasia, genocide, capital punishment and more) are at the top of the list. Terrorism, poverty, hunger, homelessness, the plight of refugees, epidemics, incurable diseases and mental illnesses are all-too prominent on our list of troubles. Add to these the effects of secularism and the moral decay we witness all around us, and it would be easy to be discouraged. How are people of faith supposed to deal with the difficulties and challenges that characterize these troubled times?

Pope Francis tells us that we are missionary disciples called to move beyond our “comfort zones” and to go out to the peripheries—the margins of human society—to give witness to the joy we have found in the love and mercy of Jesus Christ. Rather than sit around and complain about how awful the world is, we are challenged to do something about it.

But what can we do about the culture of death, or terrorism or the rise of secularism? We can do what Christians have always done. We can pray, we can proclaim the Good News, and we can feed the hungry, clothe the naked, minister to the sick, shelter the homeless and visit prisoners. These are

the apostolic works employed by saints and martyrs in every age, and they are the equally valid strategies at our disposal as 21st-century missionary disciples called to grow the Church (help it thrive), and prepare for Christ’s return in glory at the end of time.

If we are worried about the current state of the world (or about the Church’s ability to withstand the pressures increasingly applied by external, secular forces), we should increase the frequency and fervor of our prayer. We should attend Mass more often and participate in the sacraments more regularly. How often do we pray for peace? For the protection of human life? For the poor and homeless? For refugees and all victims of terror? How often do we confess our sins—what we have done, and what we have failed to do?

Pope Francis urges us to be more actively engaged in the life of the Church—not reluctantly or with sour faces, but with hearts filled with joy. This is no time for passive or part-time Christianity. Our troubled times call for missionary disciples who are serious about what they believe, and who are willing to stand up and be counted as women and men of faith.

Only we can sustain the Church’s mission in the face of the unique challenges of our time. Only we can affirm the culture of life over and against all the forces of death and destruction. Only we can defend religious liberty, and refuse to allow the genocide against Christians and other religious peoples throughout the world. Only we can feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and minister to all who are in need.

Only we can be Jesus Christ to our sisters and brothers here in Indiana and throughout the world. Only we can help the Church thrive in these troubled times because of our prayer, our evangelization and our service to others.

We are right to be worried about the state of the world today, but our response should not be to wring our hands. It should be to raise our hands in prayer, to preach the Gospel with our words and actions, and to extend a helping hand to all who are in need.

If we are successful, the Church will thrive in our day and be a great blessing to generations to come! May the risen Lord give us the grace to be his faithful disciples—now and always!

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Jeanne Akers

Although she is not Catholic, retiring parish secretary says she has learned so much good about the faith and its people

December of 2003. A life-changing date for me as I began my new adventure as parish secretary at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Terre Haute.

Providence Sister Mary Beth Klingel and Jerry Moorman, both pastoral associates at the parish, interviewed and hired me on their belief I would be the best person to represent the parish office. I remember informing them at the interview that I was not Catholic and did not play bingo, but regardless, they smiled and hired me.

In my time at this parish, I have learned that Catholics are tolerant, faithful and extremely patient, especially when they are training a secretary who is Baptist. But train me they did, and then some.

I have seen transitions in leadership, watched children grow older and grow in their faith, and cried with my newfound friends as others passed before us.

I have laughed, celebrated marriages, baptisms, birthdays and seasons, and have an open invitation to some of the biggest celebrations within the Filipino and Spanish communities. Best of all, I became an honorary member of this parish. Father Rick Ginther, the parish’s current pastor, calls me a Cat-Bap.

I have learned compassion, social

justice and patience (after all, I do work for Fr. Rick, a.k.a. “The Blur”). I have honed and sharpened my multi-tasking abilities. I have also learned technology—and that I can’t crochet worth a hill of beans.

I have heard stories of families, histories and tunes carried through the years. I took phone calls from visitors passing through our town, telling me how they enjoyed the Mass, the music and the dancing priest—which was the late Msgr. Joseph Kern. I learned personalities, needs, desires and fears. My porches and yard are full of adopted leftover flowers from Advent and Lent. One more planter, and there will be a mutiny within my family ... with me learning to walk the proverbial plank.

But here’s the most important thing I take with me as I leave as the parish secretary: I take a little bit of the spirit and joy of the Catholic faith with me on my daily walk. I have truly become Cat-Bap. And I thank everyone in the Indianapolis Archdiocese for having me.

Peace be with you all.

(Jeanne Akers is retiring as secretary at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Terre Haute.) †

Letter to the Editor

Former *Criterion* editor’s quiet leadership gave newspaper strength and consistency

I am sorry that *The Criterion* did not see fit to remember more thoroughly the death of Beatrice Ackelmire of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis recently.

Bea served as associate editor of *The Criterion* in the early 1970s, as well as having a formidable newspaper career at both *The Indianapolis News* and *The Indianapolis Star*.

She was my boss when I was assigned to *The Criterion* in 1972, and she was for me a no-nonsense yet dignified and talented journalist of the kind that no longer exists in the publishing world.

In her own quiet leadership, Bea gave the newspaper its strength and consistency following the retirement of Msgr. Ray Bosler.

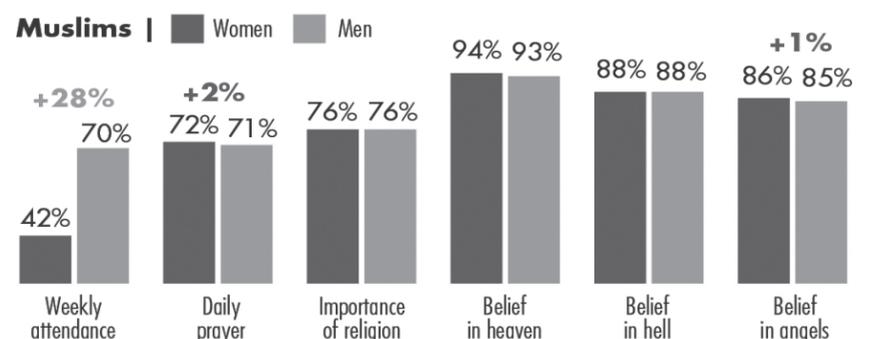
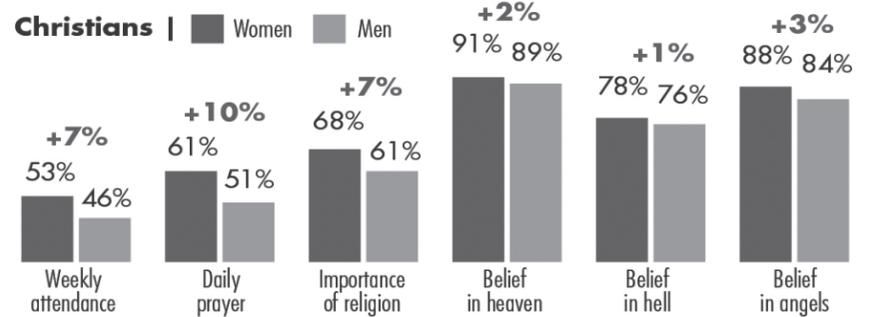
Along with Fred Fries, the newspaper’s managing editor, Bea sought to encourage a lively spirit to the religious press during a period of change in the Church.

I am sorry our paths crossed very infrequently after she herself left *The Criterion*.

Fr. Thomas C. Widner, S.J.
Brebeuf Jesuit Community
Indianapolis

Who’s more religious?

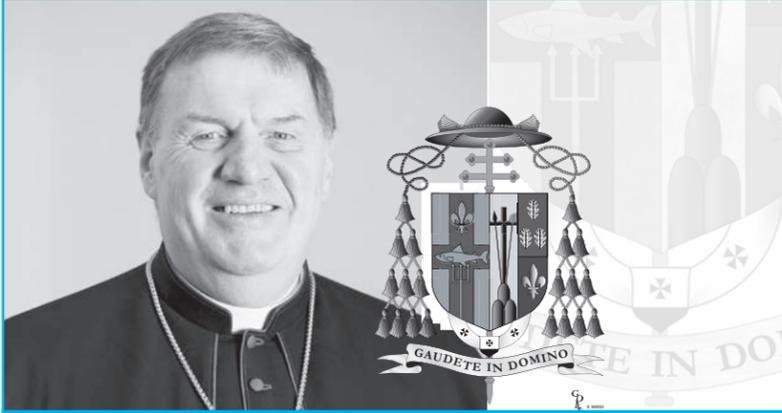
Among Christians, women are more religious than men on all measures; gender gaps among Muslims are less consistent



Note: Values of difference are calculated based on unrounded numbers.
 Source: Pew Research Center surveys, 2008-2015

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO JOSEPH W. TOBIN



REJOICE IN THE LORD

ALÉGRENSE EN EL SEÑOR

Easter joy and the laughter of redemption

Last week, I offered some reflections on the wonderful experience we call Easter joy. In that column, I observed that Easter joy flows from the experience of God's mercy, from the forgiveness of our sins, and the absolution we have received from the Father whose face is mercy. Easter joy is our response to the grace of God—freely given and totally unmerited—simply because God loves us and wants us to be happy with him forever.

I also noted that Easter joy is the experience of heartfelt gratitude which overshadows all anxiety and fear. It allows us to breathe easily and let go of burdens that weigh us down. Christians can rejoice because the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus have set us free. We can be at peace because nothing—not even death—can separate us from God's love and mercy.

Joy has been a major theme of the pontificate of Pope Francis. (His namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, was the supreme example of a man whose whole life gave witness to Gospel joy!) This year, especially, our Holy Father

is inviting us to make the connection between God's abundant mercy and the joy we experience as the beneficiaries of God's love and forgiveness.

Joy is also prominent in the writings of Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. In *Behold the Pierced One*, published in 1986, he writes about "the healing power of laughter" as it is revealed in the biblical story of Abraham and his son Isaac. "As he climbs the mountain, Isaac sees that there is no animal for the sacrifice. He asks his father about this and is told that God will provide [Gn 22:8]. Not until the very moment when Abraham lifts up his knife to slay Isaac do we grasp what this means. A ram is caught in the thicket and takes the place of Isaac as a sacrifice."

How does this bittersweet story of Isaac's last-minute rescue by the lamb caught in the thicket show us "the healing power of laughter"?

Then-Cardinal Ratzinger reminds us that the very name *Isaac* contains the Hebrew root for the word *laughter*, and is an allusion to "the sad, unbelieving laughter of Abraham and Sarah, who would not believe they could still have

a son. But once the promise comes true, it turns into joyful laughter; crabbed loneliness is dissolved in the joy of fulfillment" (cf. Gn 17:17; 18:12; 21:6).

Jewish tradition refers the laughter not only to Isaac's parents, but to the boy himself. "Did he not have cause to laugh when the sad and gruesome drama ... suddenly brought liberty and redemption? This was a moment in which it was shown that the history of the world is not a tragedy, the inescapable tragedy of opposing forces, but divine comedy." Isaac, the young man who thought his life was cruelly finished, was able to experience joy and to laugh.

The cardinal concludes his reflection by observing that you and I *are* Isaac; we are the children of Abraham and Sarah. "We climb up the mountain of time," he says, "bearing with us the instruments of our own death." Every step we take brings us closer to the moment when we will breathe our last. Does our life have meaning, or are we the victims of inescapable tragedy? Is our life a gift that inspires gratitude and joy, or are we the victims of a random and cruel fate?

If we are the heirs of Abraham and Sarah and, like Isaac, can see with the eyes of faith, the Lamb caught in the thicket (which foreshadows Christ on the cross) is revealed to us. "In this Lamb, we actually do glimpse heaven," the cardinal says, "and we see God's gentleness, which is neither indifference nor weakness but power of the highest order."

He continues, "Since we see the Lamb, we can laugh and give thanks. ... Jesus is Isaac, who, risen from the dead, comes down from the mountain with the laughter of joy in his face. All the words of the Risen One manifest this joy—this laughter of redemption: if you see what I see and have seen, if you catch a glimpse of the whole picture, you will laugh" (cf. Jn 16:20)!

Let's laugh together in the spirit of Easter joy whenever life seems cruel and depressing. Yes, the problems we are facing may seem overwhelming now, but we are Easter people. We have seen the gentleness of God, and we have caught a glimpse of the joy of heaven. And so we can laugh and be grateful. Christ is risen! Alleluia! †

La alegría pascual y la risa redentora

La semana pasada ofrecí algunas reflexiones sobre la maravillosa experiencia que llamamos alegría pascual. En esa columna señalé que la misericordia divina es la fuente de la que emana la alegría pascual: del perdón de nuestros pecados y de la absolución que hemos recibido del Padre cuyo rostro es la misericordia. La alegría pascual es nuestra respuesta a la gracia de Dios que nos ha entregado libremente y sin mérito alguno de parte nuestra, sencillamente porque Dios nos ama y desea que seamos felices junto a Él para siempre.

También comenté que la alegría pascual es la experiencia de auténtica gratitud que eclipsa toda ansiedad y temor, y nos permite respirar fácilmente y soltar las cargas que nos doblan. Los cristianos podemos llenarnos de júbilo porque la pasión, la muerte y la resurrección de Jesús nos han liberado. Podemos estar en paz porque nada, ni siquiera la muerte, podrá separarnos del amor y la misericordia de Dios.

La alegría ha sido uno de los principales temas del pontificado del papa Francisco (su tocayo, San Francisco de Asís, fue el ejemplo supremo de un hombre cuya vida entera fue un testimonio de la alegría del Evangelio). Este año en especial, nuestro Santo

Padre nos invita a establecer la conexión entre la abundante misericordia de Dios y la alegría que vivimos como beneficiarios que somos del amor y el perdón de Dios.

La alegría también se destaca en los escritos de José Ratzinger, el ahora papa emérito Benedicto XVI. En su libro *Behold the Pierced One*, publicado en 1986, escribe acerca del poder curador de la risa, tal como se manifiesta en el relato bíblico de Abrahán y su hijo Isaac. "Cuando llegan al monte, Isaac ve que no hay ningún animal para sacrificar y le pregunta sobre esto a su padre y este le dice que ya Dios proveerá (Gn 22:8). Y no es sino hasta el mismo instante en el que Abrahán levanta su cuchillo para degollar a Isaac que captamos el significado de estas palabras, cuando aparece un carnero trabado por los cuernos en un zarzal y que habrá de tomar el lugar de Isaac para el sacrificio."

¿De qué forma el paradójico relato del cordero enzarzado que salva a Isaac en el último minuto nos ilustra "el poder curador de la risa"?

El entonces cardenal Ratzinger nos recuerda que el propio nombre de Isaac contiene la raíz hebrea de la palabra *risa*, y que alude a "la risa

incrédula y triste de Abrahán y Sara quienes no creían que pudieran tener un hijo. Pero cuando la promesa se torna realidad, se convierte en una risa alegre, la soledad anquilosada se disuelve en la alegría de la realización" (cf. Gn 17:17; 18:12; 21:6).

La tradición judía menciona la risa no solamente en los padres de Isaac sino la suya propia. "¿Acaso no tenía motivos para reírse cuando una situación triste y dramática repentinamente se convirtió en un relato de libertad y redención? En ese momento quedó demostrado que la historia del mundo no era una tragedia, la inexorable tragedia de fuerzas opuestas, sino una divina comedia." Isaac, el joven que creyó que su vida había terminado cruelmente, fue capaz de sentir alegría y de reír.

El cardenal concluye esta reflexión señalando que usted y yo *somos* Isaac, somos los hijos de Abrahán y Sara. "Ascendemos por la montaña del tiempo—escribe—cargando a cuestas los instrumentos de nuestra propia muerte." Cada paso que damos nos acerca al momento en que expiraremos. ¿Nuestra vida tiene sentido o somos víctimas de una tragedia inexorable? ¿Nuestra vida es un obsequio que inspira gratitud y alegría o somos víctimas de un destino

azaroso y cruel?

Si somos los herederos de Abrahán y Sara y, al igual que Isaac, podemos ver a través de los ojos de la fe, se nos revelará el carnero enzarzado que es un presagio de Cristo en la cruz. El cardenal nos dice que, "en este carnero, vemos en realidad un atisbo del cielo y apreciamos la bondad de Dios que no es ni indiferente ni débil sino un poder excelso."

Y continúa: "Porque podemos ver al carnero, podemos reírnos y dar gracias. [...] Jesús es Isaac quien, al levantarse de entre los muertos baja del monte con el rostro iluminado por la risa. Todas las palabras del Resucitado manifiestan esta alegría, esta risa redentora: si vieran lo que yo veo y he visto, si pudieran tan solo tener un atisbo de todo el panorama, se reírían" (cf. Jn 16:20)!

Riámonos juntos en el espíritu de la alegría pascual siempre que la vida parezca cruel y deprimente. Sí, quizás los problemas que enfrentamos nos parezcan abrumadores ahora, pero somos un pueblo de Pascua. Hemos visto la bondad de Dios y hemos visto un atisbo de la alegría del cielo. Y de esta forma podemos reír y estar agradecidos. ¡Cristo ha resucitado! ¡Aleluia! †

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.

April 11
Marian University, the Exchange in Mother Theresa Hackelmeier Library, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Faith and Idea Series: "Jobs, not Jails,"** IndyCAN Community Organizer Rev. Juard Barnes facilitating, 7 p.m., free. Information: 317-955-6136 or troberts@marian.edu.

April 12
Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Shop Inn-spiced,** gift shop sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581.

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild,** Mass at 11 a.m. in the chapel, followed by lunch at the Hermitage. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

April 12-May 17
Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Divorce and Beyond,** six consecutive Tuesday evenings, 7-9 p.m., \$30 includes book. Registration:

317-236-1586, 800-382-9836, ext. 1586, or e-mail dvanvelse@archindy.org.

April 14
Marian University, Ruth Lilly Student Center Community Room, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Faith and Idea Series: "Spirituality and Mental Health,"** Father Michael Hoyt, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Parish, presenting, 7 p.m., free. Information: 317-955-6136 or troberts@marian.edu.

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Cenacle (house on parish grounds), Indianapolis. **Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide support group,** 7 p.m. Information: 317-851-8344.

April 14-May 19
St. Patrick Parish, 1907 Poplar St., Terre Haute. **Catholics Returning Home,** six informational and non-coercive sessions held on Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m., free. Information: Donna Westrup, 812-232-8518 or donna.westrup@saintpat.org.

April 15
Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic**

Business Exchange, "My Faith and Virtuous Servant Leadership at St. Vincent," Jonathan Nalli, CEO of St. Vincent and Senior Vice President of Ascension Health, presenter, Mass, breakfast and program, 7-9 a.m., \$15 members, \$21 non-members. Reservations and information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

April 16
St. Bartholomew School, 1235 Jackson St., Columbus. **No Tie Affair fundraiser,** samples from local restaurants and breweries, live and silent auctions, games, raffles, cash bar, live music by the Tiptonians, 7-11 p.m., tickets are \$60 after April 1. Tickets and information: online at stbirish.maestroweb.com or e-mail stbirish@maestroweb.com. Information only: 812-379-9353.

Hayes Arboretum Nature Center, 801 Elks Road, Richmond. **Seton Catholic Schools "Flying Cardinal 5K Run/Walk,"** 9 a.m., \$20 per person or \$60 per family, official chip timing available, benefits Seton Catholic

School's Home & School group and Athletic Boosters. Information: 765-962-5010 or RTB8923@yahoo.com.

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Bethany Room, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **The Catholic Perspective on the End of Life,** led by Jason T. Eberl, Ph.D., Semler Endowed Chair for Medical Ethics and Professor of Philosophy at Marian University, 10-11:30 a.m., free. Information: 317-253-1461.

Helpers of God's Precious Infants, Indianapolis. Mass and Divine Mercy Chaplet at 8:30 a.m. at St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., followed by prayer at a local abortion center, and continued prayer at the church for those who wish to remain.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, White Violet Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **18th Annual Earth Day Celebration,** free-will donation. Information: 812-535-2932 or provctr@spsmw.org.

April 17
St. Susanna School,

1212 E. Main St., Plainfield. **Creighton FertilityCare System Training,** also known as Natural Family Planning (NFP), to help couples achieve, avoid or postpone pregnancy; couples struggling with infertility; and women to understand reproductive health; free, 2 p.m. Registration: Maria Morgan, 570-259-2801, mariamorganfcp@gmail.com.

April 19
Marian University Evans Center for Health Sciences Building, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **"Mercy and Medicine,"** discussion to raise awareness for those in the medical field on how we can work to foster a culture of life, free, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: Debbie Miller, 317-490-1267, or www.healinghiddenhurts.org.

April 20
St. Matthew the Apostle Church, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Celebrating the Year of Mercy" Mass and presentation for the deaf,** Mass at 5 p.m. in American Sign Language by Father Mike Depcik of Detroit, followed by dinner and

presentation, \$15. Registration: archindy.org/deaf. Information: Erin Jeffries, 800-382-9836, ext. 1448, 317-236-1448 or ejeffries@archindy.org.

Marian University, West Dining Hall, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Faith and Idea Series: "Discussion Series on 'Laudato Si' Part 6,"** director of the Center for Organizational Ethics Karen Spear and Semler Endowed Chair for Medical Ethics Jason Eberl facilitating, noon, free, bring or buy lunch. Information: 317-955-6136 or troberts@marian.edu.

Marian University, Michael A. Evans Center, Lecture Hall 1, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Faith and Idea Series: "Mercy and Franciscan Charism,"** Franciscan Sister Barbara Leon Hard presenting, 3 p.m., free. Information: 317-955-6136 or troberts@marian.edu.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly mass,** 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc. †

Retreats and Programs

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

April 22-24
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Tobit Marriage Preparation Weekend,** \$295 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Peace the Benedictine Way,"** Benedictine Brother Maurus Zoeller, presenter, \$235 single, \$395 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Life and Death Matters,** presented by Bishop Fabian

Bruskewitz, Drs. Christine Zainer and Paul Byrne, and Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate Father Elias Mills, registration deadline April 13, call for cost details. Information: 812-825-4642, ext. 200, or marianoasis@bluemarble.net.

April 23
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Hall Community Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Grieving Gracefully...into a Future Full of Hope,** Providence Sister Connie Kramer, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., registration deadline April 18. Information: 812-535-2932 or provctr@spsmw.org. †

Franciscan Father Kurt Hartrich, former St. Roch Parish member, celebrates golden anniversary as priest on May 15

Franciscan Father Kurt Hartrich, who grew up in St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for his golden anniversary of priesthood at St. Roch Church, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., at 1:30 p.m. on May 15, with a reception to follow in the parish hall.



Fr. Kurt Hartrich, O.F.M.

Father Kurt was ordained in Teutopolis, Ill., on Jan. 9, 1966. He taught at the former St. Joseph High School Seminary in Oak Brook, Ill., from 1966-77. He then became director of formation for the Province's theological students at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago from 1977-84.

He served the next years in ministry as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Memphis, Tenn. (1984-88) and St. Anthony of Padua Parish in St. Louis, Mo. (1988-91). He then served as provincial minister of the Province of the Sacred Heart in Saint Louis (1991-99).

His final two appointments were as pastor of St. Francis Solanus Parish in Quincy, Ill. (2001-09) and at St. Peter's in the Loop Parish in Chicago (2009-present). In addition, he has served the Franciscan Order as a General Visitor of four other Franciscan entities.

Father Kurt's family and friends are welcome to celebrate with him as he gives thanks to God for the many blessings he has received in his years as a friar and priest. †



'Man of the Year'

The Center for Leadership Development (CLD), a community-based leadership development program for minorities in business and industry in central Indiana, honored Holy Cross Brother Roy Smith, a 1961 graduate of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, with its 2016 Accomplished Achievement Award on March 24. The award is presented annually to CLD's "Man of the Year," an Indiana citizen who has distinguished himself through a lifetime of unparalleled achievement and service to others. CLD chose Brother Roy for the award for his lifelong commitment in service to the Catholic Church internationally and throughout the Midwest. Brother Roy currently is Director of Development for the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross, and a member of the Cathedral High School board of directors. As stated in the CLD awards program from a quote by Brother Roy from an article in the National Black Congress publication: "The Lord calls us to be who we are. I was created as a black male and that is the gift, the vehicle, if you will, the Lord asks me to exhibit a part of the face of God. A portion of the way for me to share my gifts has been as a Holy Cross Brother." Brother Roy is also a graduate of Holy Angels School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

Golf outing on May 9 will support 'A Promise to Keep' program

The Office of Catholic Schools and Office of Youth Ministry will host the seventh annual Golf Fore Faith outing at Crooked Stick Golf Club, 1964 Burning Tree Lane, in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, on May 9. Proceeds help support the "A Promise to Keep" program, which promotes teen chastity.

Players will compete for prizes and awards on selected holes. As part of the "Hole-in-one" contest, players will compete for \$10,000 in cash on all four par 3 holes.

Levels for foursomes, with the first three levels including marketing and promotional benefits, are as follows: \$10,000, which allows for three foursomes; \$5,000, which allows for two foursomes; \$2,500, which allows for one foursome; and \$2,000 for individual foursomes.

Contact Margaret Hendricks, event chairperson, at 317-441-8956 or mhendricks@archindy.org. Information and registration are also available on line at www.archindy.org/golfforefaith. †

Post-abortion healing prayer and study group to meet starting on April 11

Project Rachel, an archdiocesan ministry offering healing from the hurts of abortion, is offering an eight-session prayer and study group for those seeking healing from abortion.

The sessions will be held on Mondays from 7-9 p.m. beginning on April 11.

For confidentiality purposes, the location will be disclosed upon registration.

For more information or to register, call 317-452-0054, or e-mail projectrachel@archindy.org. †

'Food Fast' brings Clarksville youths 'in tune with others' suffering'

By Natalie Hoefler

After the teens of the youth group at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville spent several hours stocking shelves at Bonnie's Food Pantry, the charity's director offered the hungry teenagers ice cream.

Their answer was simple—difficult, but simple: "No thank you. We're fasting."

The 19 youths were holding true to the experience they had embarked upon the night before—the high school-aged group's sixth annual Food Fast. The experience consists of 24 hours of fasting and service. It is designed to help "our youth to gain a deeper understanding of the Catholic traditions of fasting" and service, said Stacy Gillenwater, the parish's youth ministry coordinator.

"They also walk away from the experience with a better appreciation for the many meals they routinely receive in their lives," she added.

The experience started on Feb. 19 with evening Mass, followed by a candlelight service in the gym at St. Anthony of Padua School.

"The format is the same every year, but the content varies," Gillenwater explained. "This year, our focus was on mercy. [After the candlelight service], we talked about the corporal and spiritual works of mercy."

Gillenwater led the high school youths in games to help them identify and discuss different works of mercy.

"We talked about statistics, like one in every five kids go without enough food [in America]. Some of the kids built a shanty town out of cardboard and slept in that" to empathize with the homeless, she said.

Before the youths slept, they watched and discussed the movie *God is Not Dead*.

Eighteen-year-old Abbi Hamm, a senior at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville who helped plan the event, said some good discussion followed the showing of the film.

"There are two preachers in the movie," she said. "One comes from Africa and the other one works in the [American] town where the film takes place. The town pastor says [to the African one] something like, 'You're in the trenches for God every day.' And the African preacher says, 'God has you right where he wants you.'"

"We reflected that we don't have to go on a mission trip—we can do stuff here in our parish and town that is winning hearts for God. It might not seem like we converted someone today by cleaning out a van or stocking a shelf, but that's God's work, too. It's where he wants us here and now.

"That set the tone for the next day when we did work in the community," Abbi noted.

The next morning, Gillenwater started the day with group prayer—but of course, no breakfast.

"I like food a lot," admitted 14-year-old Alex Cox, a freshman at Trinity High School in Louisville, Ky. "So that was really hard. You wake up and realize you're not having breakfast, and you know you're not having lunch. But there are so many people who go through that on a daily basis. It was really neat to experience that, to be in tune with



Members of the youth group at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville pose by the cans they collected by going door to door in a neighborhood—one of many service projects during Food Fast, their annual 24-hour fasting and service event, on Feb. 20.

'I love ending our fast with what fills us the most—Jesus. I love that we don't go out to dinner. I reflected this year that there are people that don't have food—their whole life is a fast. What fills us is Christ, and that's what we're trying to gain from the Food Fast.'

—Abbi Hamm, a senior at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville

others' suffering."

The first stop for the service portion of the experience was Bonnie's Food Pantry in Jeffersonville.

Fifteen-year-old Katie Baker, a sophomore at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School, was impressed with the woman who operated the food pantry.

"Her personality and the way she was, you could tell she had her heart and soul in it," said Katie. "You could tell she loved what she did. That left a big impact on me. I hope to be as giving and loving as she is."

After more than two hours of reorganizing and stocking shelves, the group headed to a neighborhood, going door to door asking for canned goods. They collected more than 200 cans, and delivered them to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at their parish.

The beautiful weather on Feb. 20 made the next act of service more pleasant as the youths cleaned the grounds of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany.

Helping around the charity's grounds was the service



Hannah Hanlon, left, and Katie Baker, both members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville, bag leaves on the grounds of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany on Feb. 20 during Food Fast, a 24-hour fasting and service event for the youth group at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville. (Submitted photos by Stacy Gillenwater)

highlight for Alex.

"It was a really special way to give back to the community," he said. "We helped at a food pantry, and that's good. But [food pantries] get a lot of attention. St. Elizabeth doesn't get the same focus, but they need just as much help."

For the last act of service for the day, the youths returned to the parish to put together toiletry kits to be distributed to the homeless by "Jesus Cares at Exit 0" ministry.

After journaling about their experience, the youths met for 5 p.m. Mass to break their fast.

"I love ending our fast with what fills us the most—Jesus," said Abbi. "I love that we don't go out to dinner."

"I reflected this year that there are people that don't have food—their whole life is a fast. What fills us is Christ, and that's what we're trying to gain from the Food Fast." †

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Tuesday, May 24th, 2016

- All American buffet lunch
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- Auction
- 18 holes of golf
- Cocktails
- Dinner provided by Sullivan's Steak House
- Beverages
- Prizes

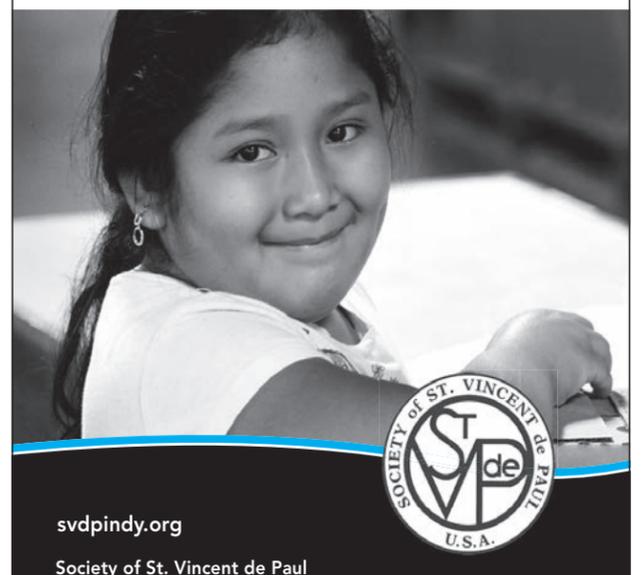
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Society of St. Vincent de Paul

WOMEN

continued from page 1

her at the 2015 conference. Immediately following the event, during a spring break trip to Key West, Fla., the Conleys made several visits to a perpetual adoration chapel, where the Divine Mercy chaplet is prayed daily at 3 p.m. Soon after, on Divine Mercy Sunday, they learned they were expecting.

“It was life-changing for me last year,” said Conley, 31, a member of St. John Vianney Parish in Fishers in the Lafayette Diocese. “We continued to pray and to believe, and here’s my beautiful baby.”

The Holy Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis sparked the theme of this year’s conference, “Mercy for All.” More than 560 women from across Indiana and at least two other states converged at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown hotel for the daylong event organized by the Marian Center of Indianapolis and sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Highlights included dynamic speakers, uplifting music by acclaimed Catholic singer/songwriter Annie Karto, and a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin. There also were opportunities for eucharistic adoration, Benediction, the sacrament of reconciliation, the rosary and a healing service.

In his homily, Archbishop Tobin focused on a key aspect of the Divine Mercy story—trust—by using the example of St. Joseph, whose feast day coincided with the conference. The archbishop recalled the dreams of St. Joseph, including the angel’s reassurance that he could take Mary as his spouse and, later, the warning that the Holy Family must flee to Egypt. These dreams, he emphasized, required Joseph to place his total trust in God even without a full understanding of the road ahead.

“Joseph didn’t have an easy life, but he had a wonderful life,” Archbishop Tobin said. “Joseph’s heart was open. He held onto the angel’s word: ‘Do not be afraid.’ Let us pray for an open and trusting heart.”

That sentiment resonated with Conley as well as her mother, Judy DeFrench, and sister, Jessica DeFrench. While all three were filled with gratitude for Conley’s new baby, they were also praying for a miracle for 17-year-old Jessica. The high school senior has been battling a blood clotting disorder and breast tumors for the past several years.

Just as Conley had taken part in the healing service at the conclusion of last year’s conference, this time it was Jessica’s turn. The service was again conducted by Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount, back by popular demand. Conference participants waited from around 6 p.m. on March 19 to about 2 a.m. on March 20 to meet individually with the Georgia-based priest.

“I absolutely believe that Jennifer had an amazing miracle,” said Jessica, who, like her mother and sister, is a member of St. John Vianney Parish. “It’s too much for it to be a coincidence—to have that blessing [of learning she had a child on the way] on Divine Mercy Sunday.”

She said that meeting with Father Blount made her feel as if she were “in the midst of a saint.” Calling her first-ever Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference “very motivational,” Jessica added that she felt renewed in her faith by the end of the day.

“An event like that makes me want to be a better Catholic,” she said.

In addition to conducting the healing service, Father Blount served as one of the four speakers at the conference. Following are excerpts from each talk.

Excerpts from Emily Jaminet’s and Michelle Faehnle’s talk on their website and book *Divine Mercy for Moms*

“Our book is more than just a book. We believe that we’ve started a ministry that helps moms and women see God’s hand in their life. ...

“What is Divine Mercy? The mercy of God. The simplest explanation is that God loves you. He loves you so much, and

nothing—and I mean nothing—that you say or do can change that fact. All we have to do is recognize that God’s mercy is greater than our sins. We need to call on him and trust, receive that mercy, and then let it flow through us to others. So mercy is a beautiful gift. And it’s always available to us. ...

“In 1925, [Helen Kowalska] joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw. It was there that she took the name Sister Maria Faustina of the Most Blessed Sacrament. She received a vision of Jesus [that is now venerated as] the image of Divine Mercy. Jesus appeared to St. Faustina and asked to have this image painted, and he promised many graces to those who look upon it. Notice the important words across the bottom of the image: ‘Jesus, I trust in you.’ In 1935, [St. Faustina] had the Divine Mercy image placed in Vilnius, Lithuania, on the first Divine Mercy Sunday. ...

“What a beautiful image. My children like to take my phone and take selfies. We say that Jesus gave us a selfie! He gave us a way in which we can visualize mercy.

“[St. Faustina’s] true gift to us is that she wrote everything down in a diary—over 600 pages of beautiful revelations that Jesus gave to her. ...

“When we were both in college, we had the opportunity to study abroad in Austria and to travel on the weekends. One of the first countries we traveled to was Poland. There they have the image of Divine Mercy, and also the tomb of St. Faustina. So we were both able to pray before her relics and pray the chaplet of Divine Mercy with the sisters there. We were about 19 years old, and we were both questioning our faith life, because we both had grown up in strong Catholic homes, but we hadn’t owned that relationship with Jesus.

“I read those words on the bottom of that image while I was there—‘Jesus, I trust in you,’ and I said them like I meant them, and it was the first step in my deepening conversion. ...

“We know from the Gospels that Jesus died on the cross at about the three o’clock hour. This is a great time to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet, which is a beautiful prayer on rosary beads. It can easily be said in about seven minutes. We know as moms and as women that three o’clock can be a tough time. [But it’s] a great time to hit your restart button, to pause and pray and focus on Jesus. I’ve found that even if I just unite my sacrifices [with Christ] during that day and say, ‘Jesus, I trust in you,’ my day will go far better than I ever hoped. ...

“At the end of the day, when I’m getting ready to turn off my light, I count my blessings. [When you see] everything God is giving you, you’re going to find joy. Because that’s what this is about—finding joy in your ability to be a woman of God.”

(For more information or to order the book, log on to www.divinemericyformoms.com. To order the book by phone, call 888-412-2775.)

Excerpts from Anthony Mullen’s two talks on the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary movement

The Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary movement stems from the messages received from Christ and the Blessed Mother to a Hungarian woman named Elizabeth Kindelmann, who lived from 1913-1985. The messages were recorded in a diary, which received the imprimatur of Cardinal Peter Erdo of Hungary in 2009, at which time the movement also received the cardinal’s blessing.

“Our Lord [and Lady] spoke to Elizabeth Kindelmann from 1961-66, and then intermittently from 1967-81. She kept a diary, fully vetted by the Church for many, many years before it was finally approved [in 2009]. ...

“Here’s what our Lord told Elizabeth Kindelmann: ‘I can compare this torrential flood of grace to the first Pentecost. It will submerge the Earth by the power of the Holy Spirit. ... There is coming a torrential flow of the flame of love of my most holy Mother. ... Trust, inflamed by faith, will finally take root in souls, and the face of the Earth will be renewed. For never has

What women are saying about the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference

“I heard of the Flame of Love movement just recently, so I was excited to learn more about it. And I came for Father [James] Blount!”

—Guadalupe Gonzalez, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis

“This is my first time. The conference is wonderful! They’re good speakers, and it’s a real treat for us to get to see the archbishop [Joseph W. Tobin]. There are 20-some of us here from St. Nicholas [Parish]. I was invited to come, and it sounded like a good time to be with my friends and learn more about the Blessed Mother.”

—Joanna Kinker, a member of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County

“It is my first time here. I love it! One of my friends told me about adding to the rosary [as speaker Anthony Mullen discussed]. ... I do recommend women to come [to the conference]. Any time you come together with other people for Jesus, you learn different things.”

—Zenaida Avila, a member of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis

“I’m 82, and I’ve gone almost every year [to the conference]. It’s always wonderful. I remember one thing a sister said in apologetics class my senior year of high school. Sister Patricia Marie of the Sisters of Notre Dame said, ‘The world will be as the women of the world are.’ If ever that’s a true statement, I realize it now.”

—Peggy Geis, a member of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis

“This [conference] is not just for wives and mothers; it’s great for the nuns, too! I love hearing women sharing their experiences and ideas. I’m a teacher’s aide at St. Luke, and I really want to do something special in this [Holy] Year of Mercy to spread the message of Christ and his Divine Mercy to the children.”

—Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart Sister Christabel Mary of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis

“I am walking away from this day on fire for my Catholic faith, with a zip in my step and my spiritual cup overflowing. This was my first time attending the conference, and I plan to be back next year!”

—Karin Bell, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg †

such a flow of grace been given since the Word became flesh.’ ...

“Cardinal Peter Erdo said, on approval of this grace: ‘In a given moment in history, there appears in the Church something beautiful, a new possibility for the entire Church. I believe this to be true of the Flame of Love Movement of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.’ ...

“The Lord said to [Kindelmann], ‘I would suffer death on the cross again for each person, even suffering 1,000 times more, since there is no hope for a damned soul. Prevent this. With your burning desire, save souls. ... Oh, how can I wake you up? Open your eyes and see this deadly danger of Satan claiming victims all around you, which threaten even your own soul.’ ...

“Mary said, ‘My love, which is spreading, will overcome this satanic hatred that now contaminates the world. ... This is my greatest miracle, which I am accomplishing for all.’

“Our Lady and our Lord asked Elizabeth for a very special prayer to spread the effects of grace from the flame over all of humanity. She asked us that we add it at the end of the Hail Mary: ‘... Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, spread the effect of grace of thy flame of love over all humanity, now and at the hour of our death.’ This has been fully blessed and

approved by the Church. ...

“There are a number of exercises that God asks in addition to praying this [added-on-to] rosary. He asks us to honor his wounds by making the sign of the cross five times. ... Wear the brown scapular or miraculous medal. Go to Mass on the first Saturday of every month.

“Make the consecration to Mary. 33 Days to Morning Glory [by Marians of the Immaculate Conception Father Michael Gaitley] is one of the best ways to make the consecration. If you have made the consecration, I urge you to renew it. If you haven’t, I urge you to make it. It will change your life—especially if you live it and renew it every day. It’s simply living the Catholic life as we were meant to live it. ... It provides the grace to let us perfectly and radically imitate Jesus Christ, to set out to be a saint, to imitate Christ through the grace of Mary. ...

“Say the rosary every day—no exceptions—because the rosary is a weapon. ...

“No longer shop on Sunday. No longer eat out on Sunday. No longer watch sports on Sunday because we’re paying people to break the Sabbath.

“[Per Kindelmann’s diary], our Lord asks that you fast from breakfast and lunch on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Just eat



Women from St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County pray the rosary during the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference on March 19. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount leads prayers during adoration at the 2016 Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference, organized by Marian Center of Indianapolis on March 19 at the Downtown Marriott in Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

bread and water. ...

“On May 13, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI said, ‘Our Blessed Mother came to Fatima offering to implant in the heart of all those who trust in her the love of God burning in her heart.’ That is the flame of love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He then goes on to say, ‘May the seven years which separate us from the 100th anniversary of the Fatima apparition hasten the fulfillment of the prophecy of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the glory of the most holy trinity.’ ...

“Our Lord said to St. Faustina, and he said something very similar to Elizabeth Kindelmann: ‘How painful it is that souls so seldom unite themselves to me in holy Communion. I wait for souls, and they’re indifferent toward me. I love them tenderly and sincerely, and they distrust me. I want to lavish my graces upon them in holy Communion, and they do not accept them. They treat me as a dead object in holy Communion, whereas my heart is so full of love and mercy.’

“The incredible love Mary had for her Son, she now wants to place in our hearts.

“Take up this grace. Read two pages of the [abbreviated diary, *The Flame of Love*] a day. Start with two people in a prayer group using the prayer cenacle sheet from www.FlameOfLove.us. Then start sharing

with your friends and family. Start by just fasting one meal a week—Monday at breakfast, have bread and water. You will become one of Mary’s little souls, and your reward will be so great in heaven you can’t imagine.”

(For more information on the Flame of Love movement, its Church approval, Elizabeth Kindelmann and the messages she received as recorded in her diary, log on to www.flameoflove.us, or call 718-309-6126.)

Excerpts from the talk of Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount

“Joy is not a nicety—joy is a necessity. In these days, the way Satan is working now, he’s leaving despair and depression everywhere. In our day, that fruit of the Holy Spirit we call joy is more necessary than any other time in this world. ...

“When you praise the Lord, you’re happy. It brings you joy. We must become children of praise. ... Find a reason to praise the Lord, because he is all around us. “But how can you praise the Lord when you have anger in your heart? ... People will ask me, ‘How do I know if I’ve really forgiven [someone]?’

“To forgive people even of the most



Longtime friends Emily Jaminet, left, and Michelle Faehnle, authors of *Divine Mercy for Moms* and developers of the Divine Mercy for Moms website, share their story during the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference on March 19. (Photo by Victoria Arthur)



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin delivers a homily during Mass for more than 560 women at the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference on March 19 in Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Anthony Mullen speaks on the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary movement during the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference in Indianapolis on March 19. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount offers a reflection during adoration at the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount prays over some women after the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference in Indianapolis on March 19. (Submitted photo by Cathy Flood)

serious things, the first step is to forgive with an act of the will. This is a decision, regardless of feelings or emotion. So you would say for instance, ‘I forgive you—say their name here—in the name of Jesus Christ, now and forever.’ ...

“Next, you must ask Jesus not just to bless them, but to bless them even more than he blesses you! You must wish joy for that person for the rest of this life and in the next. Ask God to give them what they need to be genuinely happy and fulfilled. Ask God to bless them richly in the name of Jesus Christ. ...

“The third step of forgiveness is to give thanksgiving to God for healing your wounds. For our forgiveness and healing to be deeper and more complete, we must realize that the hurt happened in God’s providence, and has truly been used by him for your complete healing.

“Finally, we must offer praise to our

Lord himself. Nothing and no one could have hurt me if God had not permitted it for my good. He is the all-loving, divine physician who, for my good and eternal salvation, even at the risk of losing my favor, allowed me to be hurt—as he allowed his Son to be hurt—that the destructive tendencies toward sin and pride and darkness within me might be challenged and crushed, that I might reach up to him in my suffering and my littleness and begin to experience a life of light, hope and blessedness of joy.

“By praising him, we return the wounds to God, the source of all that is good in our lives. This completes our forgiveness and brings us into perfect acceptance of God’s holy will. We must say, ‘I praise you, Lord, and I glorify you for your heavenly plan that is saving me and leading me to perfect joy.’ ...

(Victoria Arthur is a freelance writer and member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.) †

To see a gallery of photos from the Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference and a copy of this story, log onto www.CriterionOnline.com.

Social engagement: Pope breaks record on Instagram

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With a simple tap, Pope Francis joined Instagram and quickly set a record for gaining 1 million followers.

The launch of the “Franciscus” account on March 19, the feast of St. Joseph and the third anniversary of the formal inauguration of his papacy, was preceded by huge media coverage. But still, he hit the million-follower mark in just 12 hours, making his “our fastest growing account on Instagram to date,” said Stephanie Noon, an Instagram spokeswoman. The pope broke the record held for almost a year by former soccer star David Beckham, who took twice as long to gather 1 million followers.

Joining Instagram, Pope Francis jumped into a community that tends to be younger and more complimentary than people on Twitter, although with similarly impressive “engagement rates.”

“Twiplomacy,” an annual study conducted by the communications firm Burson Marsteller, found Pope Francis—through his @Pontifex accounts in nine languages—to be the most influential world leader on Twitter three years running. U.S. President Barack Obama has more followers, but Pope Francis’ average “retweet” and “favorite” rate is more than eight times higher than Obama’s.

Pope Francis’ Instagram account is showing a similar pattern. The 17 photographs and two video clips posted by early morning on March 31 had an overall average of 212,200 “likes” and 6,299 comments each.

The photos on the Franciscus account are taken by photographers at *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican

newspaper. They are posted by staff at the Secretariat for Communications.

Msgr. Dario Viganò, prefect of the secretariat, told Vatican Radio, “The idea is to recount the story of a pontificate through images to let everyone who wants to accompany or wants to know the papacy of Pope Francis enter into his gestures of tenderness and mercy.”

While the @Pontifex twitter account is “institutional”—it was launched by now-retired Pope Benedict XVI in 2012—the Vatican’s choice of the more personal “Franciscus” as the account name was dictated by reality of the platform, Msgr. Viganò said.

The photo-sharing site uses images as an “iconic sign,” he said, and so “immediately evokes the face, the smile and the posture of the pope. Every pope has his own facial expressions and his personal way of looking at people, caressing them and blessing them.”

“Instagram is mostly about pictures, which makes it a very effective way to spread Francis’ message of tenderness,” said Greg Burke, deputy director of the Vatican press office. “If people are looking at their phones 150 times a day, it’s good they see something a little more profound than pictures of food.”

After settling down for a few days, the comment rate on the pope’s account spiked on March 29 after the Vatican posted a video clip with the hashtags tenderness, mercy and Catholic.

The video opened with the pope blessing the obviously pregnant belly of a woman, and included scenes of a little boy taking the pope’s zucchetto, and Pope Francis and



Pope Francis joined the photo-sharing site Instagram on March 19 using the account “Franciscus.” As of April 1, the pope has more than 2 million followers. This is a screen capture of his first post. (CNS photo)

retired Pope Benedict XVI greeting each other. The more than 6,300 comments it attracted remarked particularly on the beauty of the gestures and expressed enthusiasm for Pope Francis.

(Follow Pope Francis on Instagram at: www.instagram.com/franciscus.) †

What was in the news on April 8, 1966? Mass revisions, a new bishop for Evansville and challenges on a new view of the Eucharist

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 April 8, 1966, issue of *The Criterion*:

• **Two revisions of Mass texts are proposed**

“WASHINGTON—Two new translations of parts of the Ordinary of the Mass have been released by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy in a trial balloon aimed at obtaining international criticism and suggestions. The texts are unofficial, and are ‘not for use in actual liturgical celebrations.’ They have been published simultaneously in London and New York in booklet form, with blank pages at the end inviting comments and suggestions.”

• **Bishop Leibold named to Evansville**

“EVANSVILLE, Ind.—The Most Rev. Paul F. Leibold, Apostolic Administrator of the Evansville diocese since the retirement of Bishop Henry J. Grimmelman in October, 1965, has been appointed Ordinary of the diocese. Bishop Leibold has continued to serve as auxiliary bishop and vicar general of the Cincinnati archdiocese while performing the duties of apostolic administrator.”

• **New theology of Eucharist backed by Dutch theologian**

• **Challenges views on Holy Eucharist**

“WASHINGTON—Father Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., has taken strong exception to the views on the Eucharist expressed by Father Luchesius Smits, O.F.M. Cap., in an interview for the U.S. Catholic press. The Dutch theologian was interviewed by the NCWC News Service on his views of the nature of the change of the bread and wine that takes place in the Mass. He is

a proponent of an existentialist theology of the Eucharist. Father Connell, former dean of the school of sacred theology at the Catholic University of America, held that Father Smits’ opinions regarding the nature of the change of bread and wine are ‘transfiguration.’ ‘In other words,’ said Father Connell in a statement, ‘if he is quoted correctly, he believes that the bread and wine remain, as “an extension of Christ and a gift from Him.” He says: “I keep all of the Eucharistic bread in transubstantiation. ... For me, bread and wine remain, yet in a way are profoundly changed. In transubstantiation, nothing of the bread’s nature needs to be destroyed...”’ Father Connell said that if Father Smits made these statements, he should have explained ‘how they can be harmonized with the solemn proclamations of the Council of Trent [which it is heresy to deny] that the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist contains truly, really and substantially the body, blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and that none of the substance of bread and wine remain, but only the appearances of bread and wine.’”

- Mixed reactions seen to classroom ‘limit’
- Reveal proposal to unite seven denominations
- Text of Church in Modern World schema
- Best in rural areas: Brothers’ vocations drop off around world, survey shows
- U.S., Rumania set science exchange
- Conference backs strike at Delano
- Mission letter: Never dull moment, nun writes
- Written in fourth century: Triumphant ‘Exultet’ heralds Resurrection
- Radio award won by Catholic Hour
- Interfaith talks set in Germany



Read all of these stories from our April 8, 1966, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com. †

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Catholics can show mercy to those who doubt the faith

By Mike Nelson

An old joke:
Person One: "I'm never going to get a good job."
Person Two: "Don't be so negative."
Person One: "OK. I'm positive that I'm never going to get a good job."

Counseling the doubtful as a spiritual work of mercy requires something a bit more substantial than what the second person offered.

To say, "Cheer up," "Count your blessings" or "Look on the bright side" to someone who is undergoing a crisis of faith—which is how doubt may be defined in some cases—doesn't address the heart of the problems that many people around the world, many of them in the Church, experience every day.

And the cause of such doubt can be understandable: problems in the family, in the workplace, with the government, in social life and, yes, sometimes with some members or leaders of the Church.

Many have experienced over the history of the Church how some of its members can cause seeds of doubt to take root in the lives of the faithful. Salient scandals involving Church members have led many to question the Church as an institution and sometimes to leave altogether.

Then there are other, more mundane, situations that cause doubt in an institution. New leaders who come in to a parish or ministry and "clean house" with barely a hello to those who have been "cleaned out." New leaders who are barely given a "hello" by the parish or school staffs they inherit before they are criticized (or worse) for suggesting operational changes.

Ministry leaders who engage in turf wars over who has control over a particular function. Endless gossip within a parish, a school, a diocesan office over who's doing what and why, and what may or may not happen next, and what was wrong with the way things were, and why won't someone do something about it?

Those are times when we say to ourselves "What would Jesus do?" but also "Where is Jesus, period?" We experience doubt, just like many of the most venerated and beloved figures in Scripture, including but not limited to St. Thomas.

Yet the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* suggests that those who doubt can be "sinning against faith" (#2088), voluntarily or involuntarily.

"If deliberately cultivated," says the catechism, "doubt can lead to spiritual blindness" (#2088).

Thus, "our duty toward God is to believe in him and to bear witness to him" (#2087).

Easier said than done, of course, but done it must be. The first commandment says, "You shall worship the Lord your God." And this requires us "to nourish and protect our faith with prudence and vigilance," says the catechism, "and to reject everything that is opposed to it" (#2088).



Parishioners pray the rosary in the courtyard of Sacred Heart Parish in the Segundo Barrio of El Paso, Texas, on Feb. 14. Counseling the doubtful as a spiritual work of mercy can be understood in several ways, depending on how we interpret the words "counsel" and "doubtful." (CNS photo/Gustavo Amador, EPA)

That's another, admittedly harder-edged way of saying, "Walk with your brother and sister in their times of doubt." We are called, as Catholic disciples, to counsel the doubtful, and the doubt-filled, just as they are called to counsel us.

But how?

Most of us are not spiritual directors or psychologists. All of us, though, have a God-given capacity to offer comfort to other fellow human beings. That doesn't mean that we're going to solve their problems or fix their brokenness.

But by talking with them, praying with them, even simply sitting with them, we can help them find a path toward healing and help them understand that they are not alone. And let's emphasize "we."

The six words that brought me into the Church, that sustain me in times of doubt, are these: "We are the body of Christ." We are a community of believers united in the Lord.

St. Paul says that there are many parts, yet one body (1 Cor 12:20). This refers not simply to spiritual gifts and God-given talents, but to our call to serve one another, especially in times of need.

"If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it," St. Paul writes. "If one part is honored, all the parts share its joy"

(1 Cor 12:26).

The Apostles were informed by their Master before they began their ministry of evangelization that they would encounter doubt. "Do not be afraid," Jesus told them. "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me" (Mt 10:40).

St. Peter learned what it means to doubt when he tried walking on water. He was doing just fine, but when he decided that what he was doing was impossible, he began to sink.

Jesus, of course, rescued Peter, just as he rescues us, if we let him, when we sink into doubt. But in our world today, Jesus ordinarily works through his body on Earth, his Church, his community of believers who walk with one another, especially with those who struggle to stay afloat.

I, for one, believe the sea of life is for swimming, not for sinking, and I believe in helping everyone stay afloat.

(Mike Nelson is a freelance writer and former editor of *The Tidings*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.) †

The Bible gives examples of how people who doubt may be helped

By Daniel S. Mulhall

To "counsel the doubtful" as a spiritual work of mercy can be understood in several ways, depending on how we interpret the words "counsel" and "doubtful."

It can mean that we offer insight or wisdom to someone who has questions or doubts. It can also mean



Faithful light candles in honor of the Virgin of Suyapa in Suyapa's Basilica in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on Feb. 2. Many have experienced over the history of the Church how some of its members can cause seeds of doubt to take root in the lives of the faithful. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

that we offer clarity where confusion reigns, or candor when someone's attitudes, values and behaviors are questionable.

The Bible offers numerous verses that illustrate some of the ways these words can be understood. One meaning of "counsel the doubtful" is to offer advice to people who are unclear as to what they should do.

The Book of Proverbs is filled with insightful sayings that provide guidance on how people should live and make smart decisions. In addition, there are sayings that point out the value of listening to good advice.

One verse in Proverbs says it this way: "For lack of guidance a people falls; security lies in many counselors" (Prv 11:14). But not everyone is receptive to the counsel of others as another verse in Proverbs recognizes: "The way of fools is right in their own eyes, but those who listen to advice are the wise" (Prv 12:15).

While the passages from Proverbs emphasize the importance of offering and accepting sage advice, another form of counsel is found in 2 Samuel 12 in the familiar story of David and Bathsheba.

David, the king of Israel, lusts for Bathsheba, and so arranges to have her husband killed in battle. When the prophet Nathan learns of this, he confronts David with the sinfulness of his actions. David, forced to recognize the truth, repents and makes amends.

A different type of example of counseling can be found in the story of Jesus and Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-21).

This time the objective is to help someone struggling to understand some aspect of the Christian faith.

In this passage, Jesus helps Nicodemus, a faithful man and a leader of the Jewish community, to understand the teaching of being born again. Jesus' counsel is offered in such a way that it leads Nicodemus to a rich understanding of the teaching.

St. Paul wrote his letters as a form of counsel to the early followers of Jesus. They help people to understand. A perfect example of this is when Paul counsels on the efficacy of baptism:

"What then shall we say? Shall we persist in sin that grace may abound? Of course not! How can we who died to sin yet live in it? Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"

"We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life" (Rom 6:1-4).

As you can see, there are a variety of ways in which Jesus' followers may provide counsel to those who have doubts or are doubtful. The real question is: Do we care enough about our neighbor to offer assistance in time of doubt?

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a catechist. He lives in Laurel, Maryland.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Renaissance Church: Some saints of the 16th century

(Tenth in a series of columns)

Whether coincidental or providential, the 16th century,



during which the Protestant Reformation split Christianity, also produced some of the Church's greatest saints.

Thomas More and John Fisher were martyred by King Henry VIII

when they refused to acknowledge him as head of the Church in England.

Charles Borromeo is credited with keeping the Council of Trent in session, and later was known for his holiness while serving as archbishop of Milan. Pope Pius V implemented the decisions and the sweeping reforms of the Council of Trent, began seminaries for the training of future priests, and published a new catechism.

Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Francis Xavier, one of the original members of the society, was a great missionary in India and East Asia. Francis Borgia became a general of the society, and led it during the development of its

foreign missions. (He was the great grandson of Pope Alexander VI, the only canonized saint who was a direct descendant of a pope.)

Robert Bellarmine, another Jesuit, devoted himself to the study of Church history, Scripture and doctrine. He prepared two catechisms and was declared a Doctor of the Church. Aloysius Gonzaga, still another Jesuit, had Robert Bellarmine as his spiritual advisor. He died when he was only 23, and is a patron of youth.

The Jesuit Peter Canisius is called "the second apostle of Germany" (the first was St. Boniface). A great preacher, he established colleges and seminaries and is another Doctor of the Church.

Philip Neri was the founder of the Oratory, where people lived together in community but were not a religious order. His advice was sought by many prominent figures, including participants in the Council of Trent.

In Spain, Teresa of Jesus (or Teresa of Avila), the first woman to be declared a Doctor of the Church, reformed the Carmelite Order despite severe opposition. Her partner in the reform was John of the Cross, another Doctor of the Church. Both are known for their mysticism and contemplative

writings. John of God, who was from Portugal, founded the Order of Charity for the Service of the Sick.

Benedict the Moor, the son of Ethiopian slaves, entered the Franciscan Order of Recollects and became superior of the monastery of Santa Maria in Palermo, Sicily.

Jerome Emiliani and Cajetan, both from Venice, although Cajetan moved to Naples, founded hospitals and orphanages.

In Japan, Paul Miki and 25 companions were crucified for their faith.

In the "New World," there were three saints in Peru. Turibius of Mogrovejo built roads, schools, chapels, hospitals and convents, was known as a champion of the rights of the natives against the Spanish masters, and baptized 500,000 natives. Rose of Lima cared for orphans, the elderly and the sick, but is known mainly for her severe penances.

Martin de Porres, the illegitimate son of a black woman of Panama and a Spanish grandee of Lima, was instrumental in founding an orphanage and took care of slaves brought from Africa. He was known for being able to be in two places at the same time and for cures. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

There is a God, and deep inside we all recognize that

There is a God, and God is not dead. I know this because someone a lot more powerful than anyone I know or could imagine has bailed me out so many times in life. The old philosophical proof of God's existence, that God must be the power greater than any other, real or imagined, sounds about right to me.



Think about it. Beginning with nature, who else but God would or could come up with such stuff? For instance, when we view a glorious sunset in any season of the year, we see colors and arrangements beyond anything a human artist could come up with. And the godlike part of it is that it is there solely for our enjoyment, just in case we're looking up. Now, scientists will present all kinds of practical reasons why this happens, but who dreamed up the idea in the first place? Or who made us able to appreciate the beauty of it?

Critics may claim that tornadoes and tsunamis and earthquakes are part of nature, too, and where is a God in these events? Well, there's scientific reason behind them, too, as in purging or rearranging the planet so that it can continue to exist. God planned it that way. Inclement weather can stir up our arthritis, too, but it also provides cozy nesting opportunities in the middle of our busy lives. Just one of God's little perks that accompany hard science.

Now, if all this sounds ickily sentimental that's because sometimes it just is. Think of babies playing peek-a-boo or puppies cavorting together next to their mom. They are so cute! But whatever the case, it has to be God has planned it all this way.

Besides nature and darling babies, God has provided us with spouses and/or friends who enrich our lives every day. Often they're people we've met by chance (we think), or because of our studies or work or organizations to which we belong. They share the same values and senses of humor, perhaps, or just offer supportive presences. In any case, they are given to us purely for our delight.

It seems that this kind of situation which we consider a random event happens so consistently that we begin to see a pattern. If we try to do the right thing and make decisions based on what we discern as God's will, we often experience joy and success. To me, that is proof of God's existence and God's prime influence in our lives. We believe in God because, when we do, life makes sense.

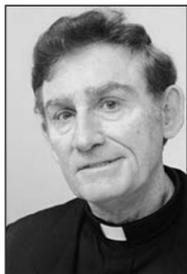
Barbara Ehrenreich, who has written many fine books about social problems and other subjects, has come out with a new one titled *Living with a Wild God: A Nonbeliever's Search for the Truth About Everything*. As an atheist raised by atheistic parents, she never considered the idea of God being the arbiter of our welfare. But now the "hound of heaven," as we say, has brought her to a new kind of respect for faith.

It seems to me she is following the natural human longing which, sooner or later, we all experience. With original sin, we apparently lost the ability to see God up close and personal. But we still know that God is here, waiting for us. †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

The call for heightened prudence in our turbulent time

I keep hearing many of my friends say that they are planning to move to Canada, given the present political malaise in our country. No doubt, many of us are bombarded this year with negative comments, attacks from one candidate to another, attacks among groups that support one candidate or cause over another. How might we navigate a sound course through such growing discontent?



One way to do this is to accept that we live in an age calling for heightened prudence, an age prompting us to avoid throwing overboard our intellectual powers and our ability to wisely cope in rough waters.

In an age of instant commentaries and a plethora of analysts and

predictors, it's easy to allow them to steer our course. Prudence, however, dictates we not sit on the sidelines, but be players on the field. This translates into seeking reliable resources and consulting with knowledgeable persons to enable us to obtain intelligent control over the moment.

The docility called for prompts us to do our homework and not leave it in the hands of others. Not only should we be involved physically and mentally, but we should also work at making sound judgments.

Sound judgment is difficult to create because of a media explosion that bombards us continuously with overwhelming issues to consider. Making good judgments in these complex situations is always difficult, and yet, achieving good judgments is our best means for avoiding capsizing in rough times.

How do we best cultivate good judgment? Mornings in my parish on Capitol Hill in Washington

often are filled by large numbers of people from the government and the Supreme Court of the United States. Many come to church for the quiet atmosphere of God's temple, whose massive doors symbolize shutting out the outside world and entering into a contemplative atmosphere.

St. Paul points out that Christ implores us to "go into your room." This silence is where our deepest thoughts and affections are contained; it is the doorway through which we enter into our very center. Equally important, it is where sound judgment is best developed.

I believe today's hectic times call us to cultivate greater docility and sounder judgments: the heart of prudence and our best navigational instruments for steering through turbulence.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

Comfort the shipwrecked: Titanic priest a model of mercy

Father Thomas Byles was 42 when he boarded the Titanic with his second-class ticket and



portable altar stone. He had made arrangements with Captain Edward Smith to secure space on the ocean liner to celebrate Mass. Even on vacation a priest is never off duty, he knew, but the Catholic convert would have it no other way.

He saw his faith as "a wonderfully great gift," he once wrote to his brother, William, "a truly marvelous and altogether supernatural support..."

It was William who had prompted Father Byles' cross-Atlantic trip, asking his oldest brother to come to New York to marry him.

The British priest had served a decade of priestly ministry, and was well loved by his small rural parish, St. Helen's, where folks helped pay for his Titanic ticket. It cost 13 pounds.

He boarded on Wednesday, April 10, 1912—three days after Easter Sunday—sized up the ship, then wrote to his parish housekeeper while the Titanic was anchored at Cherbourg, France: "Everything so far has gone very well, except that I have somehow managed to lose my umbrella." He wondered when he would next be able to celebrate Mass, and promised to write again as soon as he arrived in New York.

Clad in his Roman collar, the priest with the gentle, scholarly look—glasses, a strong nose and firm jawline—became a familiar sight throughout the week. Father Byles spent most of Saturday, travel day four, hearing confessions. On the fifth day, he celebrated Mass in the second-class lounge and again in the designated third-class space. It was Divine Mercy Sunday. He preached about the prospect of "spiritual shipwreck," urging the Catholics to seek a spiritual lifeboat in the form of prayer and the sacraments.

At 11:40 that night, Father Byles was on the deck clutching his breviary and praying Night Prayer when the Titanic struck the iceberg.

He packed a lifetime of priestly ministry into the next three hours, performing the most intense mix of corporal and spiritual works of mercy he had ever done—a model for all in this Holy Year of Mercy.

Once he recognized the gravity of the situation, he headed down to the steerage to help third-class women and children onto the deck and into the lifeboats. "Be calm, my good people," he was heard saying.

Father Byles met the haunting sights, sounds and smells with an otherworldly peace. "A few around us became very excited," Ellen Mocklare, a young Irish woman, later told reporters, "and then it was that the priest again raised his hand and instantly they were calm once more. The passengers were immediately impressed by the absolute self-control of the priest."

Survivors said Father Byles was offered a lifeboat twice but refused it, determined to minister to passengers in their hour of greatest need, even though it would cost him his life. He heard confessions, gave absolution, offered blessings and led prayers, including the Hail Mary, whose back-and-forth recitation provided a steady measure amid chaos. The words "Holy Mary" rang out loud and clear.

As 2:20 a.m. neared, more than 100 people were trapped on the stern, raising perilously high, Father Byles among them. They knelt before him in an act of contrition, and he granted them general absolution.

As Ellen Mocklare was carried away on a lifeboat, she could hear the priest's voice and murmured responses to his prayers. "They then became fainter and fainter, until I could only hear the strains of 'Nearer, My God, To Thee' and the screams of the people left behind."

"There let the way appear, steps unto heaven," the old hymn goes. "All that thou sendest me, in mercy given. Angels to beckon me nearer, my God, to Thee."

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and the editor of SisterStory.org.) †

Third Sunday of Easter/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 10, 2016

- Acts of Apostles 5:27-32, 40b-41
- Revelation 5:11-14
- John 21:1-19

Again this weekend, the Church presents as its first reading for liturgy in Eastertime a passage from the Acts of the Apostles.



The mere construction of Acts is a lesson. Actually, it is a continuation of St. Luke's Gospel. Its underlying lesson is that the salvation achieved by the Lord Jesus did not end with the Ascension.

The presence of Jesus in the world did not end with the Ascension. The Risen Lord, ascended into heaven before the very eyes of the Apostles, absent the dead Judas, lives and acts through the Church, a community of visible structure, with specific functions.

This reading reports a conflict between the Sanhedrin, led by the high priest, and the Apostles. The Sanhedrin was the official ruling council of Judaism at the time of Jesus. Its agenda was primarily religious, but its authority touched virtually every aspect of life. Again, and important to note, Peter is the spokesman for all the Apostles. He was their leader.

Ordered to stop preaching about Jesus, the Apostles boldly refused to stop. No earthly power could deflect them in fulfilling their commission from the Lord. As was the case in earlier weekends, Peter offers here a capsulized story of the life and mission of Christ.

The Book of Revelation is the source of the second reading. Probably no other book of the New Testament, and few in the Old Testament, perennially leaves readers wondering as does Revelation.

(Revelation is not the more ancient, nor literarily precise, title for this book. The older and better title is Apocalypse. Most English-speaking biblical scholars today use the name of Revelation.)

Revelation is clear. Again and again, it refers to Jesus as the sinless lamb of God, the title used by John the Baptist for the

Lord. It is an overpowering reference to the fact that Christians stand with one foot on Earth, the other foot in heaven, for they stand in and with Christ, Son of God and son of Mary, a woman. Jesus lived and died and rose.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is a resurrection narrative, wondrous and consoling. Jesus, risen from death, appears to the Apostles as, without luck, they are fishing on the Sea of Galilee. At dawn, recalling the time of the resurrection, Jesus comes into their midst. He tells them exactly where to cast their nets. They obey, and a huge catch comes. The Beloved Disciple recognizes Jesus, but Peter is central to the story. He rushes to Jesus.

Then, at a meal, Jesus asks Peter if Peter really loves Jesus. It is a question put to Peter three times, with three affirmative responses. In ancient Jewish symbolism, three represented what was complete, final and absolute. To each answer, Jesus commissions Peter to love the Good Shepherd's flock. His commission is exact, final and unqualified. It sent Peter to continue the Lord's work.

Reflection

It would be difficult indeed to find three readings from the New Testament that individually are so beautiful and so expressive, and that together teach such a marvelous lesson.

Setting the stage is the reading from Revelation. Disciples live with one foot on Earth but the other foot in heaven, and nowhere else is this reality better seen than in the Eucharist.

The very combination of Acts with Luke's Gospel reminds us that the salvation accomplished by Christ still lives. It was with the early Christians in the Apostles. It is with us still in the Apostle's successors and in the Church.

The trial before the Sanhedrin reminds us that after Peter's denying Christ on Good Friday, the Lord forgave Peter uncompromisingly. Peter then became the great spokesman for the Apostles.

God's mercy brings strength and courage. In it is hope and a sense of direction. God's mercy awaits us. †

My Journey to God

Christ's Words on Mercy to St. Faustina, as taken from her diary

Compiled by Natalie Hoefler

"As often as you want to make Me happy, speak to the world about My great ... mercy."
 "[E]ncourage souls ... to trust in My infinite mercy.
 Oh, how I love those souls who have confidence in Me."
 "By deed, by word, by prayer—in these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and is ... proof of love for Me."
 "The flames of mercy are burning Me. I desire to pour them upon souls. Oh, what pain they cause Me when they do not accept them!"
 "... [I]n Holy Communion, My hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul. But souls do not even pay any attention to Me. ... As a dead object they treat Me."
 "Call upon My mercy on behalf of sinners; I desire their salvation.
 When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart ... I will give the grace of conversion:
 'O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I TRUST IN YOU.'"

(Natalie Hoefler is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and is a reporter for The Criterion.)

Daily Readings

Monday, April 11

St. Stanislaus, bishop and martyr
 Acts 6:8-15
 Psalm 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30
 John 6:22-29

Tuesday, April 12

Acts 7:51-8:1a
 Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab
 John 6:30-35

Wednesday, April 13

St. Martin I, pope and martyr
 Acts 8:1b-8
 Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-7a
 John 6:35-40

Thursday, April 14

Acts 8:26-40
 Psalm 66:8-9, 16-17, 20
 John 6:44-51

Friday, April 15

Acts 9:1-20
 Psalm 117:1bc, 2
 John 6:52-59

Saturday, April 16

Acts 9:31-42
 Psalm 116:12-17
 John 6:60-69

Sunday, April 17

Fourth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 13:14, 43-52
 Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5
 Revelation 7:9, 14b-17
 John 10:27-30

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost to help them evangelize

QI have often wondered about the difference between the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit immediately after the Resurrection "on the evening of that first day of the week" (Jn 20:19-23), and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Is it two different accounts of the same event, or did they receive the Holy Spirit in two different ways on two different occasions? (Louisiana)



AIn general, Scripture scholars read this as two different events, with the gift of the Holy Spirit being offered for two different purposes. In the first incident (Jn 20), the Spirit comes to the Apostles gathered on the night of the first Easter Sunday; the Spirit confers on them the power to forgive sins.

In the second account (Acts 2), the Spirit descends forcefully on the whole community of believers, empowering them to preach the Gospel boldly, even though Jesus will no longer be physically present with them. (Note that this Pentecost event, following the Ascension, enables the disciples to be understood in many languages, and that Pentecost is commonly regarded as the "birthday of the Church.")

This interpretation seems to square best with John 7:37-39, which suggests that the Spirit will not be given in its fullness until Jesus has been glorified, and with Luke, where Jesus, immediately before the Ascension, instructs the disciples to "stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Lk 24:49).

QRecently there was a tragic death. A woman died and left three children in their 20s. The priest in the small town where the woman lived and where her children had grown up didn't seem sympathetic to me.

The family wanted to have the visitation in the church, which he allowed but made the funeral home remove the casket overnight. He decided to allow flowers in the church during the wake, but would not permit them during the funeral Mass because it was during Lent. I am concerned by this seeming lack of compassion for the family. I want to hear your thoughts. (City of origin withheld)

ALet's take your concerns one at a time. As to having the visitation in church, viewing hours are normally held in a funeral home. Churches are primarily places of worship, and some parishes simply cannot honor every request to accommodate a wake for several hours during an afternoon and evening.

In our parish, on a couple of occasions, we have had to turn down requests to host a wake due to events that were previously scheduled: Stations of the Cross, an evening Mass, a school concert.

With regard to removing the casket overnight, I can understand that, too. Funeral directors regularly do so in our church because we have a daily parish Mass in the early morning, which young school children often attend.

But on the part about flowers, I agree with you.

Technically, the priest you refer to is correct; the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, which lays out the Church's norms for the celebration of the Eucharist, says that "during Lent it is forbidden for the altar to be decorated with flowers" (#305).

The only exceptions, it specifically notes, are Laetare Sunday, solemnities and feasts. But the Church's "Order of Christian Funerals" says, "Fresh flowers, used in moderation, can enhance the setting of the funeral rites" (#38). So I say (and have done this) why not make a pastoral accommodation, especially for a grieving family? Flowers do speak of new life, which is what the funeral liturgy strives to convey.

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

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202 or e-mail to nhoefler@archindy.org. †

Rest in peace

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

AMRHEIN, Charles W., 86, St. Gabriel, Connerville, March 28. Husband of Ruth Amrhein. Father of Randy Amrhein. Brother of George and Jimmy Amrhein.

BARR, Georgina (Rowland), 76, St. Agnes, Nashville, Feb. 23. Wife of Ned Barr.

CRACIUNOIU, Irene A., 90, St. Agnes, Nashville, March 20. Mother of Niki Glover, Paula Roberts and Thomas Craciunoiu. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of two.

DOLES, Martha E., 80, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 29. Mother of Bonnie Crider, Jennifer England, Scott, Douglas, Kirk and Robb Doles. Sister of Marlene Brown, Doris Kirschner and Robert Scheidler. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of nine.

ELSTROD, John C., 88, Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, March 3. Husband of Virginia Elstrod. Father of Gloria Adams, Mary Branigin, Jackie Fox,

Beth Gater, Theresa Prather and John P. Elstrod. Brother of Paul Elstrod. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 18.

FOSTER, Lorraine, 87, St. Maurice, Napoleon, March 20. Mother of Diane Heuning, Peggy Sizemore, Laurie, Rita, Dennis, Doug, James, John, Larry, Terry and Timothy Foster. Grandmother of 23. Great-grandmother of 47. Great-great-grandmother of five.

GALBO, Marion P., 94, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, March 18. Husband of Mary Margaret Galbo. Father of Janie Landon, Mary Margaret Evans, James and Joseph Galbo. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of seven.

GUTIERREZ, Emilia, 69, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Jan. 30. Wife of Eligio.

HENRY, Angela K. (Parks), 79, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, March 27. Mother of Tracey Hearth, Julie Magill, Tina Reynolds and Randy Parks. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 15.

HORNSBY, Muriel, 85, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis, March 15. Mother of Pamela Blakely, Konnie Schlechte and Robert Hornsby. Sister of Dorothy. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of eight.

KOHOUT, James F., 80, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, March 17. Husband of Mary Kohout. Father of Christine Hauck, Andrew, A.T. and



Easter flowers

Easter flowers are seen as Pope Francis walks to greet people at his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 30. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

John Kohout. Brother of Anne Kohout-Chase and John Kohout. Grandfather of six.

MAHONEY, Joseph P., 26, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, March 18. Son of Joseph and Diane Mahoney. Brother of Gregory and Lucas Johns. Uncle of several.

MOOSBRUGGER, Glendys, 76, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 19. Mother of Frank Moosbrugger. Sister of Dana Stahly and Robert Wagner. Grandmother of one.

OLIGER, Marie E., 97, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 8. Mother of Susan Powers and Peter Oliger. Sister of Marjorie Mahan, Mildred Moeller,

Roger and Vincent Welage. Grandmother of six.

PROST, Beverly, 69, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, March 7. Wife of Donald Prost. Mother of Sharon Barnhart, Susan Voriel, Jeannette, Julie Ann, Donald, Matthew and Michael Prost. Sister of Bonita, James and Richard Wilkening. Grandmother of eight. (Correction)

RAFTERY, Victoria L., 61, St. Roch, Indianapolis, March 18. Wife of Patrick Raftery. Mother of Christina Rice, Amanda and Jonathon Witt. Daughter of Rita Leggins. Sister of Sherri Altman, Suzey Hovenstein, Ann Knight, Jenny White, Brian, Joe and Wayne Leggins. Grandmother of two.

RHEIN, Eulalia I., 95, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, March 6. Mother of Susie Swanson, Charley and Tom Rhein. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 19.

RICKE, Michael W., 54, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 18. Son of Gilbert and Linda Ricke. Brother of Kim Kastner, Anita Moeller and Sandy Welage.

SCHERRER, Paul A., 77, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, March 22. Husband of Gay Scherrer. Father of Stephanie, Christopher and Paul G. Scherrer. Grandfather of seven.

SCHONFELD, Frank L., 79, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Feb. 12. Husband of Roseann Schonfeld. Father of Brian, Frank and Jeffrey Schonfeld. Grandfather of eight.

SKIRVIN, Royland L., 56, Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, March 18. Husband of Melissa Skirvin. Father of Lorilee, Valerie and Ryand Skirvin. Brother of Billy and Richard Skirvin. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of one.

TROSSMAN, Agnes R., 78, All Saints, Dearborn County, March 19. Sister of Jo Ann Buschur, Rita Duggins, Rose Martini, Lucille, Violet and Floyd Trossman.

TUGGLE, Jack H., 27, St. Pius V, Troy, March 20. Son of Bob and Molly Tuggle. Brother of Claire Tuggle. Grandson of Louise Hay and Robert Tuggle.

VONDERHEIDE, Elmer E., 89, St. Michael, Brookville, March 9. Husband of Betty Vonderheide. Father of Deborah King, Mary Buckler, Allen, David, Elmer M., Irwin, Kerry and Randall Vonderheide. Brother of Harold Vonderheide. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of 22.

WADDICK, Barbara J., 81, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis,

March 25. Wife of James Waddick. Mother of Kathleen Feeley, Mary Anne, James and Michael Waddick. Sister of Robert Lynch. Grandmother of seven.

WARNICK, Linda M., 63, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, March 12. Wife of Bob Warnick. Mother of Derek, Kevin and Rob Warnick. Sister of Elissa Basile, Claudia Diamond and Carissa Gans. Grandmother of four.

WILLIAMS-ORTH, Nancy A., 79, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, March 20. Wife of Paul Orth. Mother of Jennifer Hoover, Valerie Pesenko and Julie Pointer. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of six.

WINDMILLER, William K., 69, St. Roch, Indianapolis, March 18. Husband of Nita Windmiller. Father of Kristin Scifres and Todd Windmiller. Son of Betty Windmiller. Brother of Judy Smith and Tim Windmiller. Grandfather of five.

WISSEL, Nathan J., 55, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, March 25. Son of Elvera Wissel. Brother of Monica Hooten, Sheila Kieffer, Alyssa and Matthew Wissel. Uncle of several.

God is greater than our sins, pope says at general audience

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The power of God's forgiveness "is greater than our sins," Pope Francis said.

Christians have "the certainty that he will never abandon us," the pope said at his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square on March 30.

"If you fall into sin, stand up! When a child falls, what does he do? He raises his hand to his mother or father to help him up," the pope said. "Raise your hand, and God will help you; this is the dignity of God's forgiveness."

With tens of thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square, the pope reflected on Psalm 51, King David's hymn of repentance after committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her husband, Uriah the Hittite. The psalm often is called the "Miserere" from the Latin opening of David's plea, "Have mercy on me, O God."

Those who pray the psalm, Pope Francis said, are called to be like David who, despite the gravity of his sins, was genuinely repentant and confident in God's mercy.

"In this prayer, humankind's true need is manifested: The only thing we really need in our lives is to be forgiven, freed from evil and its deadly consequences," the pope said.

While everyone has experiences of sin and hopelessness, the pope encouraged Christians to never forget that "God is greater than our sin."

"God is greater than all the sins that we can commit, and his love is an ocean in which we immerse ourselves without fear of being overwhelmed," he said. "God's forgiveness means giving us the assurance that he will never abandon us."

In recognizing their sins, the pope said, Christians not only seek forgiveness, but also celebrate God's justice and holiness. God does not simply wipe away sins like a dry cleaner taking out a stain, but completely destroys it "right from the root without leaving any trace."

The pope told the people in the square that through the grace of God's forgiveness "we become new creatures" with a "new heart, a new spirit and a new life." As forgiven sinners, he added, Christians are called to share this gift with those in need of God's mercy.

"It is beautiful to be forgiven, but in order to be forgiven, one must first forgive," the pope said.

"May the Lord grant us, through the intercession of Mary, the mother of mercy, to be witnesses of his forgiveness, which purifies the heart and transforms life." †

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Adopting triplets changes life for couple; babies baptized on Easter

DUBUQUE, Iowa (CNS)—As Cari Campbell scrolled through the content of her Facebook newsfeed one day last August, the post of a friend living in Oregon caught her attention.

Campbell could not have foreseen at the time how quickly that social media post would turn her world upside down, or the way in which God was about to bless her and her husband's lives, threefold.

The post would lead Campbell and husband Kevin to adopt triplets and have them baptized at Easter morning Mass on March 27 at Resurrection Church in Dubuque.

The infants—Sebastien, Sidney and Sophe-Elizabeth—were among thousands welcomed into the Catholic Church this Easter.

"When I reached out to the parish this past fall to ask about baptism, the parish had suggested the idea of baptizing them on Easter if it all fell into place. We thought that sounded like a neat idea," Campbell told *The Witness*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. "And I was baptized at the Easter Vigil myself when I was 16 or 17 years old, so it just made it extra special."

The Facebook post that forever changed the course of her and her husband's lives was about an adoption.

A 35-year-old attorney from Dubuque, Campbell decided to send her friend—a woman whom she knew from law school—a private message after she saw that friend post something on Facebook about an emergency adoption situation.

Campbell's curiosity was piqued; she wondered what might be going on. She learned that her friend's mother was the pastor in a prayer group at a Christian clinic in Oregon. A woman there was pregnant with triplets, but was planning on having an abortion if she couldn't find someone to adopt all three of the children together.

The pregnant woman had contacted an agency and had found several people who

wanted to adopt one of the babies, but not anyone who would adopt all three.

"So my husband and I put our names in as people who would be willing to adopt them," Campbell said of her and her husband, a 42-year-old engineer at John Deere. "We just wanted to put the process on hold. We thought someone else would step forward to take the children. But then the birth mom called us the night before she was scheduled to terminate the pregnancy and said to us, 'If you'll take them, I won't do it.'"

That night, the Campbells agreed to adopt the three children, but they had just accepted an enormous responsibility, and it would take a little time before they were sure they were really up to the challenge.

"About a week later, Kevin and I had a heart-to-heart conversation and discussed whether this was something we could really do," recalled Campbell. "After talking it all out, we couldn't think of a good reason not to, so we decided to go for it."

So the Campbells, who had three cats and a dog, but no children, began to buy baby supplies and to prepare for the prospect of becoming the parents of three small infants. The couple also continued to be in touch with the birth mother, who sent them ultrasound photos and kept them up to date with how the pregnancy was progressing.

When she was 30 weeks along, the birth mother sent a text to Campbell saying that she was going into emergency delivery. The triplets were born on Jan. 7. They were premature and quite tiny, weighing just over 3 pounds apiece, but were otherwise completely healthy.

Campbell was able to make it out to the West Coast to see the two little boys, Sebastien and Sidney, and their sister, Sophe-Elizabeth, a couple of days after they were born. It was the first of two trips she would make there before they were discharged from the hospital, and she and her husband were able to take them home in mid-February.



Sebastien, Sophe-Elizabeth and Sidney, the adopted triplets of Kevin and Cari Campbell, are pictured in the neonatal intensive care at a hospital in Oregon. The children were baptized Easter morning at Resurrection Church in Dubuque, Iowa. (CNS photo/Campbell family)

Since they were so small and couldn't fly on a plane and couldn't sit in a car seat for more than an hour and half at a time, the couple decided to bring them back to Iowa by Amtrak train. "It took us 48 hours to get home. We rented a room in the back. They were the hit of the train," Campbell told *The Witness*.

She said the parish has been very supportive as she and her husband have gone through the adoption process.

"We went through a time for about a week and half in January when we faced some legal drama, and we weren't sure if the adoption was going to go through or not. It was a really trying time," she recalled. "We really leaned on our faith and the prayer group at our parish to get through it. They were wonderful."

The Campbells now have full legal guardianship of the triplets; the final adoption decree should be issued in a few weeks. As the couple settles into their new

roles as Mom and Dad, Campbell said things haven't been as overwhelming as they thought they might be.

"They are great kiddos, and my husband and I are pretty calm by nature," she said. "We've learned to feed and change the three of them almost in an assembly line. We prepared for the worst, but it's been really good so far."

"We haven't had any freak out moments" she said, but then added with a laugh, "but they're also immobile yet. Wait until they get moving."

Campbell said no one is more surprised than she and her husband as things have unfolded, but they also could not be more grateful.

"None of this was our plan, it just happened," she reflected. "They found us—that's what my husband and I like to say about the three of them. It all just fell into our laps, but that just make us feel all the more that it was really meant to be." †

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Court's order in ACA case could be way to avoid tie decision

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Immediately after the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Zubik v. Burwell* on March 23 challenging the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization requirement, the second-guessing began about how the court will rule.

The 108-page transcript of the arguments was gleaned for hardly obscure clues, and court watchers predicted a split decision of 4-4 from the eight-member court.

And then less than a week later, that prediction became cloudy.

On March 29, the court issued an unusual order seeking additional briefs from the plaintiffs and the federal government about how and if contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization insurance coverage could be obtained by employees through their insurance companies without directly involving religious employers who object to this coverage.

The two-page order was given a positive spin by both sides, and also seen by many as a clear indication that the court was taking extra steps to avoid an evenly split decision that would uphold the lower courts' rulings and mean the mandate for religious groups would be interpreted differently in different parts of the country.

The case argued before the court involves the Little Sisters of the Poor, Priests for Life, the Pennsylvania dioceses of Pittsburgh and Erie, the Archdiocese of Washington and other religious groups challenging the ACA mandate that most religious and other employers must cover contraceptives, sterilization and abortifacients through employer-provided health insurance.

These groups, who do not fit the narrow exemption to the mandate given to churches, argue that providing contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage even indirectly

through a third party, as the Obama administration allows through what it calls an accommodation, still violates their religious beliefs.

In oral arguments, the discussion centered on health exchanges, grandfathered clauses and exemptions, and ways to provide seamless health care coverage. But the allotted time seemed to have left unanswered questions about other possibilities, which the court's subsequent order is now seeking.

Mark Rienzi, lead attorney for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which represented the Little Sisters of the Poor, called the court's order "an excellent development."

He said it shows the court "understood the sisters' concern that the government's current scheme forces them to violate their religion." In a March 29 statement, he also said the attorneys "look forward to offering alternatives that protect the Little Sisters' religious liberty while allowing the government to meet its stated goals."

Priests for Life also reacted confidently, saying: "We see this as a positive development."

"The court appears to be looking for a least restrictive alternative that would not burden our religious beliefs, which will ultimately mean that the government did not satisfy its burden under [the] Religious Freedom Restoration Act," the group said.

On the other side, some groups that filed amicus briefs on behalf of the Justice Department, which is representing the Obama administration, also viewed the court's action in a positive light.

Brigitte Amiri, senior staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union, described the court's order as a twist she hadn't expected, but she also said the request for more information could be interpreted as a recognition that "taking

contraception out of health plans is harmful."

Vivian Hamilton, a law professor at William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg, Va., told Catholic News Service (CNS) that although she would be careful about "reading too much into the justices' request for more information," it did seem to suggest that they are "considering whether an accommodation might be crafted that would both permit the government to meet its compelling interest in ensuring that women have the ability to obtain contraceptive health coverage yet also respect religious employers' objection to participating—even indirectly—in the provision of such coverage."

Another interpretation, from legal analyst Lyle Denniston, who writes for www.scotusblog.com, a blog on the Supreme Court, said the specific wording of the court's order makes it seem that the justices have accepted, even if tentatively, the views of both sides.

If lawyers representing religious employers and the government do not come up with satisfactory answers to the order, Denniston said the justices will have to make their decision based on the oral arguments.

And if that's the case, the decision could very well hinge on the word "hijack," which was used seven times in the 94 minutes of oral arguments to refer to the plaintiffs' arguments the government was "hijacking" insurance plans to make religious groups provide contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage against their will.

"The petitioner has used the phrase 'hijacking,' and it seems to me that that's an accurate description of what the government wants to do," Chief Justice John Roberts told U.S. Solicitor General Donald Verrilli Jr.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, whose vote



Sister Loraine Marie Maguire, mother provincial of the Denver-based Little Sisters of the Poor, speaks to the media outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington on March 23 after attending oral arguments in the *Zubik v. Burwell* contraceptive mandate case. (CNS photo/Joshua Roberts, Reuters)

everyone is looking at in this case, also picked up on the hijacking theme. When Verrilli explained that it was necessary to include contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage in employer health plans instead of in a separate plan, Kennedy said: "That's why it's necessary to hijack the plans."

Kennedy sided with the majority in the 2014 Hobby Lobby ruling when it said family-owned companies run on religious principles could object to the contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage requirement in the ACA for religious reasons.

In the March 23 argument, Kennedy questioned whether it would be difficult for the government to arrange alternative access to contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage that would not force religious groups to be complicit.

"If it's so easy to provide, if it's so free, why can't they just get it through another plan?" he asked.

For now, it's back to the drawing board for both sides to come up with more answers. †

thank you!

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Pope Francis

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