



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



It's All Good

Don't subscribe to world's values, live by God's standards, writes columnist Patti Lamb, page 20.

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Concern rises over impact of expected tax cuts on programs for the poor

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Tax policy is not a simple matter. It almost never has been, and may not ever be.

Still, Congress is trying to simplify the tax code to deliver on President Donald J. Trump's campaign promise to cut taxes for the middle class.



Working under the "Unified Tax Reform Framework" introduced by congressional leaders on Sept. 27, efforts are underway

to reduce the number of tax brackets, resulting in a tax cut for most Americans, and to incorporate numerous other provisions that some observers say primarily benefit the country's top wage earners and largest corporations.

Some Catholic observers are concerned. They fear that large cuts in health care and other public services will follow as tax revenues fall under the tax reform plan expected to be unveiled on Nov. 1 by Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Their concerns are fueled by projections of lost tax revenues, and the reaction of conservative lawmakers who may try to lessen the impact on the federal debt by seeking cuts in spending on vital social services.

The Senate Finance Committee expects a \$1.5 trillion reduction in tax revenues under the framework by 2027. A more pessimistic outlook comes from the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, which estimated that the potential impact of proposals under the framework would reduce revenue by \$2.4 trillion over the same period.

Three guiding principles on tax policy are offered in the U.S. Catholic bishops' 1986 pastoral letter, "Economic Justice for All." Paragraph 202 outlines key provisions, saying tax policy should be "continually evaluated in terms of its impact on the poor."

See POOR, page 2

'God's got me here for a reason'



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, center, elevates the Eucharist during an Oct. 10 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Deacon Robert Beyke, left, assists at the Mass. Msgr. William F. Stumpf, right, concelebrates. Jeanne Chandler, second from left, cantor at the Mass, looks on. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Unexpected death leads Archbishop Thompson on journey of 'almost endless opportunities'

By Sean Gallagher

It was a turning point on his path to his vocation. An event that has made a difference in his life ever since.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson looks back on the unexpected death in the early 1980s of a cousin, only a year older than himself at the time, as the decisive moment that led him to become a seminarian.

A college sophomore at the time, Archbishop Thompson had thought

about the priesthood ever since his childhood. But it was this life-changing incident that spurred him into action.

"That triggered me to get off the fence," Archbishop Thompson recalled. "It was at that point that I thought, 'How long do I just sit around and wait? Life is short.' Up until that point, life was forever. It was a moment where I learned that life isn't as long as I think it is."

In a recent interview with *The Criterion*, Archbishop Thompson reflected on this turning point and the many other steps he has taken in his journey into life and ministry as a priest and now a bishop.

'An ocean of Catholicism'

The first steps that Archbishop Thompson took on his vocational journey were guided by his parents, Coleman and Joyce Thompson.

Their personalities and the way they lived out the faith complemented each other during Archbishop Thompson's childhood, helping him to grow in the faith from an early age.

"It was the combination of my parents that had a great influence on my vocation," he said.

His father, he said, showed him how to apply his faith in service more through his example than by his words,

See ARCHBISHOP, page 10

Nov. 11-12 is the annual United Catholic Appeal intention weekend in archdiocesan parishes

Criterion staff report

The weekend of Nov. 11-12 is the archdiocesan annual United Catholic Appeal (UCA) intention weekend in parishes across the archdiocese.

The goal for this year's appeal is \$6.5 million. The money will be distributed to various ministries and organizations throughout central and southern Indiana that provide help that no single parish or deanery could independently offer.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson notes that diocesan appeals are "about how we continue to reach out to the dignity of persons through our ministries and services.

"'All it takes is one good person to restore hope' to all those people who society so often pushes aside," he says, quoting this year's appeal theme—a line from Pope Francis' encyclical letter, "Laudato Si", on Care for Our Common Home."

Those people in central and southern Indiana are served in three ways through funds raised in the UCA: faith formation and

Catholic education; education of future priests and deacons and clergy care; and charity and outreach.

The UCA supports the formation of the 24 archdiocesan seminarians and future deacon candidates. It also aids more than 40 retired priests, and helps priests and deacons currently ministering in parishes across central and southern Indiana to continue to grow in their faith through retreats and sabbaticals.

Contributions to the UCA help make possible programs across central and southern Indiana for 3,250 young adult Catholics; 3,000 college students who want to stay connected to their faith; 30,000 people served in parish catechetical programs; and more than 8,300 youths in youth ministry.

A wide array of charitable and outreach ministries across central and southern Indiana also benefit from the UCA, including more than 210,000 people in need of food, clothing, shelter and support, as well as tuition assistance for students in need who attend the archdiocesan Notre Dame ACE Academies.

See UCA, page 2

UNITED CATHOLIC APPEAL
Christ Our Hope



People count money at a store in New York City in this 2015 file photo. As the U.S. bishops' domestic policy committee chairman, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., said in an Oct. 25 letter to lawmakers that the needs of poor Americans must remain foremost in any tax code revisions and urged that programs benefiting poor people not be cut to pay for any potential tax cuts.

(CNS photo/Andrew Kelly, Reuters)

POOR

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The document said the tax system should raise "adequate revenues" to pay for society's needs, be progressive in nature so that people with higher incomes pay higher tax rates, and exempt families living below the federal poverty line from paying income taxes.

Any shortfall that comes about because of tax reform worries Presentation Sister Richelle Friedman, director of public policy at the Coalition on Human Needs.

"It's very, very clear what we're doing here. We're doing tax cuts for very wealthy individuals and corporations, many of them which pay little or nothing to begin with.

In order to do that, we're looking at ways to cut programs to pay for tax cuts," Sister Richelle told Catholic News Service (CNS).

Cutting programs that primarily benefit poor people fails to adhere to moral principles on tax policy long-espoused in Catholic social teaching and the U.S. bishops, she said.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* maintains that "tax revenues and public spending take on crucial economic importance for every civil and political community. The goal to be sought is public financing that is itself capable of becoming an instrument of development and solidarity."

Sister Richelle expressed particular concern for changes in how low-income families will be able to take advantage of the child tax credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Both programs have proven helpful in boosting family incomes, lifting many out of poverty.

"The majority of people don't want

to see tax cuts. They want to see better services," she said.

Jesuit Father Fred Kammer, director of the Jesuit Social Research Institute at Loyola University New Orleans, told CNS that in the analyses he has seen, the framework under which Congress is drafting its plan falls short of Church principles.

"It's a payoff to wealthy donors [to Republican lawmakers]," he said bluntly.

The expected cuts for most taxpayers and corporations "add to the debt of future generations," he explained to CNS. "It's only going to provide more revenues to the wealthy and contribute more to the inequality in American society."

David Hebert, assistant professor of economics at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Mich., called for tax reform so that the tax code would be simplified, but cautioned that Congress should protect vital public programs.

"We can simplify the tax code without doing away with some of the important programs in the country," he said.

"What's ridiculous are taxes we use to steer people's behavior in particular ways," Hebert added. "The tax code is there to provide goods and services to the community. It is not [its role] to steer people toward doing one thing or another."

The major questions about tax reform revolve around who benefits most.

The Tax Policy Center analysis found that 50 percent of the total tax benefit will go to the top 1 percent of taxpayers, those with incomes of more than \$730,000 annually. Their after-tax income would increase an average of 8.5 percent. The bottom 95 percent of taxpayers would see average after-tax incomes increase

gave him a chance to live and the chance to be loved by an adopted family. His life defies the myth of the "unwanted" child.

40 Days for Life is an international campaign that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion.



Ryan Bomberger



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

November 3-10, 2017

November 6 — 8:45 a.m.

Leadership Team Weekly Calendar Meeting, Catholic Center

November 6 — 6 p.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House Annual Fundraiser Dinner, The Willows on Westfield, 6729 Westfield Blvd., Indianapolis

November 7 — 8:30 a.m.

Mass with St. Mary School students, St. Mary Church, 629 Clay St., North Vernon

November 7 — 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Clergy-PLC Fall Business Meeting, St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

November 7 — 2-3 p.m.

Priests Council Meeting, St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

November 8 — 6:30 a.m.

Mass w/Seminarians of Bishop Simon Bruté Seminary, 2500 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis

November 8 — 11 a.m.

Connersville Deanery-Priests' Meeting, St. Mary Parish, Rushville

November 8 — 3 p.m.

Archdiocesan Finance Council Meeting, Catholic Center

November 9 — 10 a.m.

Leadership Team Weekly Conference Meeting, Catholic Center

November 10-16

USCCB General Meeting, Baltimore

(Schedule subject to change.)

between 0.5 percent and 1.2 percent.

Taxpayers earning between \$150,000 and \$300,000 would see a slight tax increase on average because they would lose most of the deductions currently allowed, according to the center's study.

For businesses, tax liability would be significantly reduced under the framework. Tax cut proponents have argued that such cuts will help businesses become more competitive in the world market, giving them the opportunity to expand—and that means more jobs and higher wages for the country's workforce and, overall, higher tax revenues.

As the tax plan was being developed, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, sent a letter on Oct. 25 to each member of Congress emphasizing key moral principles and Church teaching about tax policy.

He reminded lawmakers that the needs of poor Americans must remain foremost in any tax code revision, and urged that programs benefiting poor people not be cut to pay for any potential tax cuts.

The letter offered six principles for consideration and quoted the 1986 pastoral letter, the words of Pope Francis and St. John XXIII's 1961 social

encyclical, "*Mater et Magistra*."

In the end, Bishop Dewane wrote, lawmakers and the country overall must remember why taxes exist.

"National tax policy is complex and its effects far-reaching. As the country wrestles with how best to raise adequate revenues to serve the common good and provide increased financial stability, you are urged to recognize the critical obligation of creating a just framework aimed at the economic security of all people, especially the least of these," the bishop's letter said.

Father Kammer said efforts in the past to reduce taxes for corporations and people in the highest income brackets have been reversed. He recalled that the 1981 tax cuts under President Ronald Reagan's administration were reversed within five years after U.S. budget deficits soared and human services experienced deep roll backs. Rather than invest in expansion then, corporations bankrolled the extra revenues.

The same has traditionally held true for individuals, he added.

"When you give tax breaks to wealthy people, it doesn't affect their spending," the priest said. "They save it and invest it. When you give tax breaks to low- and middle-income people, they spend it and they spur economic growth." †

40 Days for Life closing ceremony set for Nov. 5

Criterion staff report

The Central Indiana (Indianapolis) 40 Days for Life's campaign will host its closing ceremony at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, at 5 p.m. on Nov. 5.

Ryan Bomberger, an Emmy Award winner and the founder of the Radiance Foundation, will be the keynote speaker. Bomberger was conceived in rape. His biological mother courageously

gave him a chance to live and the chance to be loved by an adopted family. His life defies the myth of the "unwanted" child.

40 Days for Life is an international campaign that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion.

The campaign runs twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. During the 40-day campaigns, individuals silently pray during one-hour time slots in front of abortion centers around the world.

For more information on Central Indiana (Indianapolis) 40 Days for Life's campaign, contact Debra Minott at 317-709-1502 or debra@goangels.org. †

UCA

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"On behalf of all of those who do not have a voice, I thank you for being their voice," says Archbishop Thompson.

(For more information on the United Catholic Appeal, visit archindy.org/UCA or call the Office of Stewardship and Development at 317-236-1415 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1415.) †



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Listening, sharing are highlights of V Encuentro event

By Natalie Hoefler

They gathered from throughout central and southern Indiana—more than 180 Latino, African and Anglo Catholics of various ages and a variety of languages. At times, the many tongues recalled the biblical story of the Tower of Babel.

But the overall effect was more like Pentecost, when each regardless of language heard the same message—one of need, one of hope, one of evangelization.

Such was the scene at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis on Sept. 30 as Catholics from around the archdiocese met for the V Encuentro—Spanish for “encounter”—process.

The daylong archdiocesan event was the capstone to a more than yearlong effort in response to a call by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to define best ministerial practices in regard to the Catholic Hispanic population in the United States.

“The day has gone fast!” said Leticia Pasillas of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour. “At first I thought it was going to be a long working day, but it’s gone by so quickly, just hearing in my group and the other people’s experience—it’s been great!”

A USCCB fact sheet describes the Encuentro effort—the fifth one since 1972—as “a four-year process ... that invites all Catholics in the United States to intense missionary activity, consultation, leadership development and identification of best ministerial practices in the spirit of the New Evangelization.”

The theme of V Encuentro is “Missionary Disciples, Witnesses of God’s Love.”

The process started at the parish level. Twelve parishes in the archdiocese formed groups that met for five sessions over the course of the last year, discussing pre-determined topics of the V Encuentro material.

The parish process culminated in the bilingual event on Sept. 30. During the day, participants discussed in small groups a document of comments compiled from participating parishes after the earlier five-session process.

Two “plenary sessions” were held during the event, when a representative from each table shared one idea, comment or suggestion from their group.

“They talked about the necessity for formation, needs and wants [and] being more disciples, not just in the family but outside,” said Juan Pablo Romero of



Catholics of different ethnicities from around central and southern Indiana discuss questions in small groups during the V Encuentro event at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis on Sept. 30. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis.

Other suggestions during the day were to include parents in the sessions for sacramental preparation of Latino children, to help evangelize and educate the adults.

“As part of the V Encuentro ... I came to know the importance of evangelizing other Catholics who sit in the pews with us every Sunday,” said Francisco Ruiz of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis during a reflection he gave during the day.

“According to *Dynamic Catholic*, ... there are 32 million Hispanic Catholics in the United States. Ten million have roots in their faith, but more than 20 million do not. We must continue to seek ways to introduce them to Catholicism, and then look for more ways to feed their faith.”

Franciscan Father Larry Janezic, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Indianapolis, also spoke of evangelization.

“An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first, and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast,” he said, quoting from paragraph 24 of Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“The Joy of the Gospel”).

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson served as the principal celebrant at a Mass for the participants.

“Together, as one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church, we are the Body of Christ,”

he noted in a homily spoken in Spanish. “As we bear his sufferings, so we shall bear his glory...the everlasting Encuentro.”

Oscar Castellanos, director of archdiocesan Office of Intercultural Ministry, who spearheaded the Encuentro process in central and southern Indiana, was pleased with the day.

“We encountered the Lord through each other, particularly through the small groups sharing,” he said. “We listened to each other’s challenges and disenchantments, particularly through the plenary sessions. ... At the end, we went home with the true desire to share the same message of hope with other people.”

The next step for the V Encuentro See ENCuentro, page 8



Magda Martinez, a 13-year-old member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, shares comments from one of the youth tables at the V Encuentro event at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis on Sept. 30.

See story in Spanish, page 8.

“All it takes is ONE GOOD PERSON to restore hope.”
—POPE FRANCIS

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SINCE 1883





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Editorial



Alaina Sincich, a member of St. John Neumann Parish in Sunbury, Ohio, prays during the closing Mass of the National Catholic Youth Conference on Nov. 21, 2015, at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Catholics of all ages are known to pray regularly for an increase of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Keep vocations in prayer, be mindful of your witness

If your parish is like most, there are prayers consistently offered for more vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

And if the Holy Spirit is at work, you may have witnessed firsthand a parishioner discerning and answering a call to such a vocation.

Though secularism continues to be an ever-growing challenge in our society, we witness people of faith persist in listening to God's call.

The Church in the United States is celebrating National Vocations Awareness Week on Nov. 5-11, and in this week's issue of *The Criterion* on pages 9-16, we have included a special supplement featuring stories where a priest, religious sisters and religious brothers, deacon and seminarian share their stories about serving God's people in their chosen ministry.

On page 1, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson also goes in-depth with reporter Sean Gallagher in reflecting on his life of faith. Though we touched on his vocation journey when he was named our shepherd in June, the archbishop sheds even more light on a life-changing experience that led him to answer God's call to serve the Church as a priest.

As in years past, National Vocations Awareness Week is sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, and is a special time for parishes in the United States to actively foster and pray for a culture of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life. It is also designed to help promote vocation awareness, and to encourage young people to ask the question: "To what vocation in life is God calling me?"

Parish and school communities across the nation are encouraged to include prayer and special activities that focus on vocation awareness. Thankfully, many parishes and schools in central and southern Indiana already do this.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, the chair of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, reminds us that each of us in the Church

has a key role to play in the witness of our vocation in ordinary circumstances: "As we go about our everyday life and most especially this week, we must keep vocations in our prayers, while, at the same time, being a mindful witness with our own vocation.

"We may never know how our lives may have an impact on someone else's story," continued Cardinal Tobin, who served as the shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for four years before being appointed to lead the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., last fall. "Simply living out our call as disciples of Jesus Christ fully and joyfully in the world bears witness to the love of Christ as he generously bestows on each of us our own personal call."

As Archbishop Thompson has said on more than one occasion since he was appointed to lead the Church in central and southern Indiana, each of us must heed Pope Francis's call to be missionary disciples.

Being a missionary disciple means leading others to Christ. We can do that for some people in our lives by encouraging them to consider a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life.

In his column on page 9 of the Vocations Supplement, Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan director of vocations, encourages people of faith—as they discern their vocation in life—to grow in their relationship with God by "wasting time" with him.

"Wasting time is at the heart of vocational discernment, because in order to hear the voice of God calling us to follow him, we have to spend time with him in a way that filters out the other voices and noises that compete for our attention," Father Augenstein said. "The first call—the first vocation—is always to be a disciple. Then, the more we waste time with God, we can hear the second call—the second vocation—to the priesthood, marriage, consecrated life, diaconate, or a sacred single life. It all starts and ends with prayer—wasting time with God. It's the best way we can spend our time."

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Shayna Tews

As you work toward humility, remember God's great gift to us

One thing I struggle greatly with is humility. And I think the Lord is testing me and encouraging me to grow in this



virtue, though I am failing time and time again. I get so bothered by words and statements, by my own situation in life. Essentially, we always want more, better, something else, the "grass is always greener." Satan

always promises what he cannot deliver.

It occurred to me at Mass recently—as I prepared and waited for the Eucharist—how in the world do I have a God and king who not only humbled himself in his earthly lifetime and through his death, but humbles himself at each and every Mass, is present to me at each and every Mass, and allows himself to be consumed by sinners like me? Wow!

Name another king who has ever or would ever lower himself in this way? Lower and humble himself to come to his lowly peasants with the giving of himself, over and over again.

Nope. I am coming up with no one else but our great and mighty God. It is his love for us that gives way for this humility. Humility and love go hand in hand.

So the next time I am struggling to humble myself or to be humbled by others—maybe it's something you also are finding difficult—I will remember who teaches us the ultimate humility. There is no humbling I will ever be asked to do that could in any way touch God's.

My challenge to myself and to you, the next time we feel humbled, is to smile and thank God for the lesson in virtue ... the lesson in love.

(Shayna Tews is a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil.) †

Letters to the Editor

Catechism addresses both sides of the immigration debate in right proportions

In his recent editorial in the Oct. 20th issue of *The Criterion*, editor emeritus John F. Fink seems to say that those of us who oppose unfettered illegal immigration are in danger of losing our souls because we are ignoring biblical morality and Christ's command to "welcome the stranger."

A few of our bishops have been using the same ambiguous formulation, so it may be time for them—and Mr. Fink—to say exactly what they mean. Are they really making the preposterous claim that Catholics must support an open-borders immigration policy in order to be saved?

Because we are dealing with a complex social problem with a moral component, our natural desire for justice can prompt us to embrace an extremist position.

At one extreme, conservative Catholics sometimes allow their passion for law and order to override their concern for those who have been mistreated. At the other extreme, liberal Catholics often allow their compassion for the needy to override their common sense and lead them to propose suicidal immigration policies.

Authentic Catholicism, which is not conservative or liberal, avoids the emotional extremes because it draws wisdom from the natural moral law.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, for example, addresses both sides of the immigration argument in exactly the right proportions. In paragraph 2241, we learn that [a] as a nation, we should help the immigrants to the extent that we are able, but [b] the immigrants must return the favor by following our laws and assimilating into our culture.

It follows that a nation has the moral right to regulate its borders, which means that it also has a conditional right to say *no* to the stranger—unless, of course, someone can explain how it is possible to regulate without saying *no*.

It also means that Catholics are not required to support an open-borders immigration policy, and that it is not a damnable heresy to say so.

Stephen L. Bussell
Indianapolis

'Celebrate Life Dinner' stories can provide wisdom and inspiration, reader says

The articles about the "Celebrate Life Dinner" in the Oct. 20 edition of *The Criterion* were really outstanding. It was inspiring to read about the people who received the awards for their participation in activities promoting respect for life.

It was especially heartening to read about keynote speaker Pam Stenzel's mission in life, and to read about what she speaks of on the subject of extramarital sex. She said a lot of things that I have never heard of other people saying that are very sensible and could certainly influence

people, especially young people who need guidance and good example.

I think these articles should be required reading for anyone—from a young person of appropriate age and maturity to parents and grandparents—including those who may not consider themselves "young people" any more, but aren't yet married or parents.

It seems that almost anyone could derive wisdom and inspiration from these articles.

Jane Pictor
Napoleon

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect. The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld. Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

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

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Sharing the journey, the call to love of neighbor

“We know firsthand that these are innocent victims, that they should be treated with respect and dignity, that they are the people the Bible calls us to love. By heeding Pope Francis’ call to share their journey, we can all come to understand that.” (Sean Callahan, president of Catholic Relief Services)

Pope Francis believes that it is vitally important for Christians throughout the world to “share the journey” of migrants and refugees forced to leave their homes to seek a better life elsewhere. To help make this profound spiritual accompaniment possible, the pope has initiated a two-year campaign in partnership with Caritas Internationalis, the Church’s worldwide charitable organization.

Dioceses throughout the United States, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, are participating in this “Share the Journey” campaign. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) are jointly sponsoring the campaign in the United States. Both CRS, working in more than 100 countries around the world, and CCUSA, the Catholic Church’s domestic agency,

are members of Caritas Internationalis.

Why is this two-year campaign so important? Pope Francis is convinced that the international crisis of migration and the displacement of individuals, families and entire communities of people are something we dare not reduce to matters of public policy, ideology or racial conflict. There is a deeply personal story behind every refugee’s struggle to find safety, freedom and a better way of life. Only by learning and sharing these stories can we come to grips with the full extent of what is happening to our sisters and brothers here at home and throughout the globe.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston and president of the USCCB, has said that this campaign is “both spiritual and practical.” This is an example of “the Catholic both/and” that is so important to our Catholic way of life. The “Share the Journey” campaign invites us to pray with and for migrants and refugees. It challenges us to become the soulmates of our displaced brothers and sisters, to share their journeys in a profoundly spiritual way.

But we are also challenged to act, to open our homes as well as our hearts, and to welcome apparent strangers who are, in truth, members of the one family of God.

Action on behalf of migrants and refugees can take many diverse forms. We can reach out personally, as Pope Francis has done, to provide food, shelter, clothing and medicine. We can support the work of Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services and Caritas Internationalis.

We can write to our government officials and insist that our national policies reflect principles of justice and mercy consistent with our American values. We can speak out using social media or other forms of communication to defend the rights and human dignity of individuals and families who have suffered from oppression in their homelands, and who are too often forgotten and neglected as they seek a better, more humane life for themselves and for their families.

Our motivation for reaching out to representatives of the 65 million people worldwide (the greatest number since World War II) is *charity*. It is the love of neighbor that Christ commands us to demonstrate even in the most difficult of circumstances.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37) shows us how to treat strangers who need our help. Because our Lord makes the Samaritan the good

neighbor, he cuts through his listeners’ local prejudices and makes clear our responsibility to share the journeys of all who are in need. We know that charity begins at home, but our Lord challenges us to look beyond what is familiar and comfortable and to walk with (spiritually and practically) even those who make us feel uncomfortable simply because their ways are foreign to us.

If we truly walk with migrants and refugees here in Indiana and throughout the world, we will feel their plight in a deeply personal way. We will resist every temptation to say that their problems are not our problems, or that their journeys are not ours.

Let’s search for genuine ways that we can participate in Pope Francis’ “Share the Journey” campaign. If we pray sincerely, “Lord, how can I walk with my migrant and refugee brothers and sisters? How can I share their journeys?” he will answer us. He will show us how to follow in his footsteps as he walks with those who have no place to call home.

Let’s ask the Holy Family, who experienced the displacement and hardships of all migrant families as they fled from the unjust tyrant Herod, to help us accompany them and all others who seek a better life. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Compartir el viaje: el llamado a amar al prójimo

“Sabemos sin lugar a dudas que estas son víctimas inocentes, que merecen ser tratadas con respeto y dignidad, que son las personas que la Biblia nos exhorta a que amemos. Al obedecer al llamado del papa Francisco de compartir su camino, llegamos a comprender esta verdad.” (Sean Callahan, presidente de Catholic Relief Services)

El papa Francisco considera que es de vital importancia para los cristianos de todo el mundo “compartir el viaje” de los inmigrantes y los refugiados que se ven obligados a abandonar sus hogares en busca de una mejor vida en otro lugar. Para lograr que este profundo acompañamiento espiritual sea una realidad, el papa Francisco ha emprendido una campaña de dos años de duración, en colaboración con Caritas Internationalis, la organización de caridad internacional de la Iglesia.

En esta campaña titulada «Compartir el viaje» participan diócesis de todo Estados Unidos, inclusive la Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis. La Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) y Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) patrocinan conjuntamente esta campaña en los Estados Unidos. Tanto CRS, cuya labor abarca más de 100 países, y CCUSA, el organismo nacional de la Iglesia católica,

forman parte de Caritas Internationalis.

¿Por qué es tan importante esta campaña de dos años? El papa Francisco está convencido de que la crisis migratoria internacional y el desplazamiento de personas, familias y comunidades enteras es algo que no se puede reducir a un asunto de política pública, de ideologías o conflictos raciales. Detrás de cada lucha para encontrar seguridad, alcanzar la libertad y una mejor forma de vida, se encuentra la historia profundamente personal de cada refugiado. Únicamente al conocer y compartir estas historias podemos llegar a captar la magnitud de lo que están viviendo nuestros hermanos y hermanas, tanto aquí en nuestro país, como en todo el planeta.

El cardenal Daniel N. DiNardo, arzobispo de Galveston-Houston y presidente de la USCCB, ha afirmado que esta campaña es “al mismo tiempo, espiritual y práctica.” Este es un ejemplo de los “católicos del tanto y el como” que resultan tan importantes para nuestra forma de vida católica. La campaña “Compartir el viaje” nos invita a rezar con y por los inmigrantes y refugiados. Nos desafía a convertirnos en las almas gemelas de nuestros hermanos desplazados, a compartir su camino de una forma profundamente espiritual y al mismo tiempo nos desafía a actuar, a abrir nuestros hogares y corazones, y a dar la bienvenida a aparentes extraños

que, en verdad, son miembros de la misma familia de Dios.

Actuar en nombre de los inmigrantes y los refugiados puede adoptar diversas formas. Podemos acercarnos personalmente, como lo ha hecho el papa Francisco, para ofrecer alimento, vivienda, vestido y medicinas. Podemos apoyar la labor de Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services y de Caritas Internationalis.

Podemos escribir a los funcionarios gubernamentales e insistir en que nuestra política nacional sea reflejo de la justicia y la misericordia, en concordancia con nuestros valores como estadounidenses. Podemos expresar nuestras opiniones en las redes sociales o en otros medios de comunicación para defender los derechos y la dignidad humana de las personas y las familias que han sido objeto de opresión en su tierra natal y que, a menudo, caen en el olvido y el abandono en su búsqueda de una vida mejor y más humana para ellos y sus familias.

Nuestra motivación para llegar a los representantes de los 65 millones de personas en todo el mundo (la cifra más alta desde la II Guerra Mundial) es la *caridad*; es el amor al prójimo que Cristo nos ordena que mostremos, incluso en las circunstancias más difíciles.

La parábola del Buen samaritano (Lc 10:25-37) ilustra cómo debemos tratar a los extranjeros que necesitan nuestra ayuda. Al presentar al samaritano

como el buen vecino, el Señor elimina los prejuicios locales de sus interlocutores y deja en claro la responsabilidad de compartir el viaje de los necesitados. Sabemos que la caridad empieza por casa, pero el Señor nos desafía a ir más allá de lo que nos resulta familiar y cómodo, y a caminar (espiritualmente y en la práctica) incluso con quienes nos resultan incómodos, sencillamente porque sus costumbres son extrañas para nosotros.

Si en verdad caminamos con los inmigrantes y los refugiados en Indiana y en todo el mundo, experimentaremos su grave situación de un modo muy personal. Resistiremos la tentación de decir que sus problemas no nos incumben o que sus caminos son distintos de los nuestros.

Busquemos formas genuinas para participar en la campaña “Compartir el viaje” del papa Francisco. Si rezamos con sinceridad, diciendo “Señor, ¿cómo puedo caminar junto a mis hermanos inmigrantes y refugiados? ¿Cómo puedo compartir su camino?” Él nos responderá. Nos demostrará cómo seguir sus pasos puesto que Él camina con quienes no tienen dónde reposar su cabeza.

Pidámosle a la Sagrada Familia, que vivió el desplazamiento y las penurias que atraviesan todas las familias inmigrantes, cuando huían de la injusticia del tirano Herodes, que nos ayude a acompañar a todos los que buscan una mejor vida. †

Events Calendar

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

November 6

St. Jude Parish, Hospitality Room, 5353 McFarland Ave., Indianapolis. **Bereavement Support Group**, eight Mondays through Jan. 8. (no session Dec. 25 or Jan. 1), 7-9 p.m. Information: Patti Collins, 317-507-3190.

November 7

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, seniors get 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

November 8

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood, Indianapolis. **Divorce and Beyond: Holiday Support Group**, six Wednesdays through Dec. 20 (no session Nov. 29), 7-9 p.m., all faiths welcome, \$30 includes materials, scholarships available. Information and registration: 317-236-1586, www.archindy.org/plfl/ministries-divorce.html.

November 9

Benedict Inn Retreat &

Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Nature Nights**, Benedictine Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick and Angela Jarboe presenting, 7-8:30 p.m., donations accepted. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

St. Matthew the Apostle Catholic School, 4100 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Open House for Prospective Families**, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-251-3997, ext. 3913, rsobolewski@saintmatt.org.

November 10

St. Rose of Lima Church, 114 Lancelot Dr., Franklin. **Sermon on the Mount**, live performance featuring nationally acclaimed actor Frank Runyeon, 7 p.m., dramatic presentation for all ages, freewill offering. Information: 317-738-3929, epaige@stroselions.net.

November 10-12

Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council #437, McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Scrooge! The Musical**, presented by the Agape Performing Arts Company, a ministry of Our Lady of the Greenwood

Parish, Nov. 10 7:30 p.m., Nov. 11 7:30 p.m., Nov. 12 3:30 p.m., \$4-15 per person. Information and tickets: www.agapeshows.org.

November 11

Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. **Women's Club Christmas Bazaar**, baskets, food, prizes, raffle, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., free. Information: 317-745-4284.

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., Indianapolis. **"Leaving a Legacy—Are Your Plans in Order?"** presented by the Catholic Community Foundation, Inc., information on pre-planning a funeral and planned giving, 9 a.m. check-in, 9:30-11:30 a.m. presentation, light refreshments, free, reservations requested. Questions and registration: call the parish office 317-259-4373 or ccf@archindy.org.

Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, 5000 Nowland Ave., Indianapolis. **Club 53 Annual School Fundraiser**, dinner, silent and live auction, beer and wine, \$5,000 raffle, \$50 per person by Oct. 31, \$65 after Oct. 31,

6:30-11:30 p.m. Information: bmurphy@scecina.org, 317-352-3225.

St. Rose of Lima Church, 114 Lancelot Dr., Franklin. **"Hollywood vs. Faith: The 3 Other Beatitudes,"** live performance featuring actor Frank Runyeon, 7 p.m., humorous presentation for all ages, freewill offering. Information: 317-738-3929, epaige@stroselions.net.

Huber's Orchard and Winery, 19816 Huber Road, Borden. **St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities Reverse Raffle**, doors open 5:30 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., raffle 7 p.m., \$25, \$50 and \$100 tickets. Reservations and ticket sales: 812-949-7305. Information: www.stecharities.org.

St. Paul the Apostle Parish, 202 E. Washington St., Greencastle. **Ladies Guild Christmas Bazaar**, decorations, crafts, cheese balls, baked goods, quilt raffle, chili lunch available, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 765-653-5678.

November 12

St. Malachy Parish, School Cafeteria, 9833 E. County

Road 750 N., Brownsburg. **"Leaving a Legacy—Are Your Plans in Order?"** presented by the Catholic Community Foundation, Inc., information on planning a funeral Mass and planned giving, 8:30 a.m. check-in, 8:45-9:45 a.m. presentation, coffee and donuts, free, reservations requested. Optional 7:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Mass. Questions and registration: call the parish office 317-852-3195, ext. 7108 or ccf@archindy.org.

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass in French**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-627-7729 or acfadi2014@gmail.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Class of '63 monthly gathering**, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-6396.

November 14

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, 11 a.m. Mass for deceased members of the Guild, 12:30 p.m. meeting.

Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, theme "Praying for Peace in the World and in Our Hearts," 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

November 15

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, School Cafeteria, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **"Leaving a Legacy—Are Your Plans in Order?"** presented by the Catholic Community Foundation, Inc., basics of estate planning and options for supporting ministries, 6:45 p.m. check-in, 7-8:15 p.m. presentation, free, reservations requested. Questions and registration: call the parish office 317-784-9078 or ccf@archindy.org.

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.

November 21

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection**, \$32 includes room for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and use of common areas, additional \$37 extends stay to include the night before or night after day of silence and includes light dinner. Information and registration: 317-545-7681, ext. 107 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

November 30

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Biblical Scenes: The Artwork of Sieger Koder**, week three, Benedictine Sister

Angela Jarboe and Patty Moore presenting, 7-9 p.m., \$25. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

December 1-2

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Pre-Cana Preparation Conference**, \$255 with overnight accommodations (two rooms), \$185 for commuters, includes meals, snacks and materials. Information, registration: www.archindy.org/plfl/marriage-precana.html.

December 4

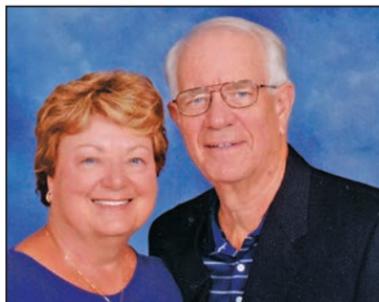
Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center,

1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Advent (an "FBI" program: Faith Building Institutions)**, in partnership with Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Ken Ogorek presenting, join the sisters for evening prayer followed by dinner, presentation and discussion, 5-9 p.m., \$35. Information and registration: 317-545-7681, ext. 107 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

December 9

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Advent Reflection: Listening**, Benedictine Sister Anoinette Purcell presenting, 9-11:30 a.m., \$35. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org. †

VIPs



Richard and Patty (Richardson) Eck, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 28.

The couple was married at St. Roch Church in Indianapolis on Oct. 28, 1967.

They have four children: Julie Johnson, Dan, Kevin and Randy Eck.

The couple also has six grandchildren. †

'Grieving Your Losses' day retreat set for Nov. 18 at Oldenburg Franciscan Center

A day retreat called "Grieving Your Losses" will take place at the Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., in Oldenburg, from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Nov. 18.

When one experiences significant loss in their lives, the process of grieving and the feelings that arise need to be understood. This retreat will provide a safe environment for participants to explore these issues, and

learn about the relationship between grief and spirituality.

The holidays add another dimension to this grief process. Some helpful suggestions for dealing with the holidays will be provided.

The cost is \$45, which includes lunch. Pay an additional \$20 to receive a CEU.

For more information or to register, e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com or call 812-933-8437. †

Teresa Kang enters postulancy with Sisters of Providence at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

Teresa Kang, a native of Taiwan, entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, as a postulant on Sept. 24.

During her time of postulancy, Kang will learn about the Sisters of Providence, their community practices, traditions and



Teresa Kang

ministries. She will meet with Providence Sister Marsha Speth, director of postulants, once a week for instructions and individual conferences.

After a year as a postulant, Kang will be eligible to enter into the first year of the novitiate, when she will receive the title of sister. †

Marriage ministry to host event at Our Lady of the Greenwood on Nov. 11

The Celebrate Marriage Ministry will host its annual Celebrate Fun evening at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood from 6:30-9 p.m. on Nov. 11.

The theme of this year's event is Basic Training: "Remember When?" Couples of all ages are invited and encouraged to dress as a team for an evening of friendly competition with

other married couples.

Celebrate Marriage Ministry offers couples opportunities for Christ-centered marriage enrichment through large and small group and individual couple events.

The event is free. Bring a side or dish to share. A beer and wine cash bar available.

For more information, call Tom and Marcy Renken at 317-489-1557 or www.celebratemarriageministry.com. †

Memorial Mass for the Unborn scheduled for Nov. 13 at St. Joan of Arc Church

The Mid-North Catholic Community Mass for the Unborn will be held at St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Nov. 13.

All who have lost a child,

grandchild, sibling, family member or friend through miscarriage, stillbirth, ectopic pregnancy, abortion or early childhood loss are invited.

Contact Joe Sheehan at jsheehan@sjoa.org for information. †

St. Louis de Montfort to host free Thanksgiving Day dinner on Nov. 23

St. Louis de Montfort Parish, 11441 Hague Road, in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese is hosting a free Thanksgiving Day dinner in Craig Willy Hall on the parish campus from

11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Nov. 23.

The menu includes turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, vegetables, rolls and dessert. All are welcome.

To learn more, call 317-517-4256. †

Conference speakers equip men for spiritual battle

By Sean Gallagher

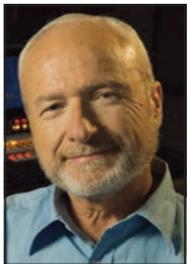
Catholic men from across the state prayed together, participated in a eucharistic procession on the streets of Indianapolis and learned how they have been equipped to enter into spiritual battle and share the Good News during the annual Indiana Catholic Men's Conference on Sept. 30.

The conference, attended by nearly 400 people, took place at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis and was organized by the Marian Center of Indianapolis.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson greeted the participants and prayed that the conference "truly be one of fruitfulness, of encounter, of accompaniment, of dialogue, one that helps us to continue to cultivate those virtues so necessary in our society today, transforming hearts, minds, the world itself by the witness to the Good News of the Gospel."

He also encouraged the participants to be "like St. Joseph, to make a difference in your family and other families, keeping Christ at the center."

Speaker Brian Patrick explored how Catholic men can follow the example of St. Joseph.



Brian Patrick

"We are called to be spiritual leaders," said Patrick, host of EWTN's flagship radio show, "Morning Glory." "We are called to be the fathers of our families. ... We are called to be like St. Joseph, to have our minds and our hearts open to the will

of God. We are called to be courageous men of action when we hear that simple, quiet voice."

In the middle of the day, the conference featured Mass at nearby St. John the Evangelist Church.

Father Michael Keucher, who served as the conference's master of ceremonies, was the principal celebrant and homilist at the liturgy. He encouraged the worshippers to read Scripture daily.

"You spend part of your day, every day, with Scripture, and you will be a better man, a better husband, a better father, and a little bit closer to heaven every day," said Father Keucher, administrator of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville.

A eucharistic procession on the streets next to the church followed.

Kevin Chaffe, a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville and a conference participant, was glad to be in the procession that was witnessed by many pedestrians.

"It's great that we show Jesus to other people," he said. "We got a lot of quizzical looks today. I hope some people



Msgr. Charles Pope

asked some questions and learned a little bit about the Catholic faith."

Craig Schebler, 23, a member of St. John Parish, was impressed by the procession.

"We don't have to just hide our faith," he said. "We can show it and be proud of it as a large group of guys who stand out in the crowd."

Kory Schebler, another young adult member of St. John Parish, was glad to see so many other Catholic men at the conference.

"You don't see a Catholic culture anymore if you're not really looking for it," Schebler said. "So, seeing that there are this many guys who are willing to give up a Saturday to grow deeper in their faith and learn how to be better Christian men encourages me to continue on the path."

During the afternoon, Msgr. Charles Pope, a priest of the Washington



Father Michael Keucher holds a monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament during an outdoor eucharistic procession that was part of the Sept. 30 Indiana Catholic Men's Conference in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Archdiocese and a regular columnist and blogger for national Catholic publications, described the struggles Catholics face in contemporary culture, but noted that the battle is ultimately a spiritual one.

"What is the war now that's going on all around us?" Msgr. Pope asked. "It's not about clubs, swords or tanks. It's about ideas. It's about the truth versus a lie. It's about light versus darkness. It's about God's vision versus Satan's. That's what the war's about."

At the same time, he encouraged his listeners to be confident in the battle.

"We're on the winning team, brothers," Msgr. Pope said. "We have the victory. The victory is ours. Jesus has already won the victory. And we are simply asked to apply that victory to our lives and the lives of others."

Deacon Larry Oney of the New Orleans Archdiocese then shared with the participants how the Catholic faith—and especially the gifts of the Holy Spirit—have empowered them to fight boldly in that battle.



Deacon Larry Oney

It can even, he said, be as simple as a father making the sign of the cross on his children at the start of their day.

"When you make the sign of the cross on your son, in particular, as a man and father, you're making a declaration to the Enemy," Deacon Oney said. "You're invoking the power of God and the protection of God around him."

Another powerful weapon to use against the devil, he said, is simply to praise God.

"Praise is a weapon," Deacon Oney said. "It tears down strongholds. You've got a problem? Begin to praise God. ... The devil doesn't want you to know these things. Praise scatters the enemies of God."

Msgr. Pope concluded the conference by exhorting participants to be witnesses to their faith in their daily lives.

"If we're going to have authority and be witnesses, we can't just know about what we're talking about, we have to know what we're talking about," he said. "You can't just know about the Lord, you have to get to know him personally in your life, to see and know by your own experience what he's doing in your life and to be able to testify to it."

He encouraged the participants to be



Deacon Larry Oney, left, and Father Michael Keucher elevate the Eucharist during a Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during the conference. Father Eric Augenstein, right, was a concelebrant at the liturgy.



Participants in the Indiana Catholic Men's Conference raise their hands in prayer during the Sept. 30 conference in the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

able to tell others how they have come to know Christ and how the Lord has worked in their lives, telling them to have "a three-minute elevator version and a longer one, too."

"My brothers, we have an awesome, beautiful, wonderful moral vision that

we're proclaiming," Msgr. Pope said. "This is the life that Jesus Christ died to give us, a life free of greed, free of sensuality and sexual confusion, free of anger, wrath and bitterness, free of all that stuff and more, a life that has a heart that's on fire for love of God." †

Escuchar y compartir son los aspectos más destacados del evento V Encuentro

Por Natalie Hoefler

Fue una reunión conformada por más de 180 católicos de origen latino, africano y anglosajón, de diversas edades y diversas lenguas maternas, procedentes de todo el centro y el sur de Indiana. En algunos momentos, la variedad de lenguas habladas recordaba el relato bíblico de la Torre de Babel.

Pero el efecto general se asemejó más a Pentecostés, en el que cada quien, independientemente del idioma que hablara, escuchó el mismo mensaje: de necesidad, de esperanza y de evangelización.

Esa fue la escena que se vivió en la Parroquia de San Andrés Apóstol de Indianápolis el 30 de septiembre, cuando católicos provenientes de toda la arquidiócesis se reunieron para celebrar el proceso denominado V Encuentro.

El evento arquidiocesano de un día de duración fue el sillar de coronamiento de un esfuerzo de más de un año, en respuesta al llamado de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB) a definir las prácticas ministeriales más adecuadas con respecto a la población católica hispana en los Estados Unidos.

“¡El día se pasó muy rápido!” dijo Leticia Pasillas de la Parroquia San Ambrosio en Seymour. “Al principio pensé que iba a ser una larga jornada de trabajo, pero se pasó muy rápido, tan solo escuchando las experiencias de mi grupo y de los demás participantes. ¡Fue fantástico!”

La hoja informativa de la USCCB describe la labor del Encuentro—el quinto que se celebra desde 1972—como “un proceso de cuatro años de duración [...] que invita a todos los católicos de los Estados Unidos a una intensa actividad misionera, de consulta, de desarrollo de liderazgo e identificación de las prácticas ministeriales más adecuadas en el espíritu de la nueva evangelización.”

El tema del V Encuentro es “Discípulos misioneros, testigos del amor de Dios.”

El proceso se inició en el ámbito parroquial. Doce parroquias de la arquidiócesis formaron grupos que se reunieron durante cinco sesiones en el transcurso del año pasado, para hablar sobre temas predeterminados en los materiales del V Encuentro.

El proceso parroquial culminó en el evento bilingüe celebrado el 30 de septiembre, en el cual los participantes debatieron en grupos pequeños un documento de comentarios compilados en las parroquias participantes, después del

proceso de cinco sesiones que se llevó a cabo previamente.

Durante el evento se realizaron dos “sesiones plenarias” en las que un representante de cada mesa compartía una idea, comentario o sugerencia de su grupo.

“Hablaron acerca de la necesidad de formación, las carencias y los deseos, y ser más bien discípulos, no solamente en el ámbito familiar, sino más allá,” comentó Juan Pablo Romero de la Parroquia San Patricio en Indianápolis.

Otra de las sugerencias que se recibieron ese día fue incluir a los padres en las sesiones de preparación sacramental de los niños latinos para contribuir a evangelizar e instruir a los adultos.

“Como parte del V Encuentro [...] me di cuenta de la importancia de evangelizar a otros católicos, a quienes se sientan en nuestro mismo banco cada domingo,” expresó Francisco Ruiz de la Parroquia Santa María en Indianápolis, durante una reflexión que ofreció ese día.

“De acuerdo con la organización *Dynamic Catholic* [...] en los Estados Unidos hay 32 millones de católicos hispanos. De ellos, 10 millones tienen sus raíces en la fe, pero más de 20 millones no. Debemos seguir buscando formas para iniciarlos en el catolicismo y luego buscar otras maneras para alimentar su fe.”

El padre franciscano Larry Janezik, pastor de la Parroquia Sagrado Corazón en Indianápolis, también habló acerca de la evangelización.

“La comunidad evangelizadora experimenta que el Señor tomó la iniciativa, la ha primereado en el amor; y, por eso, ella sabe adelantarse, tomar la iniciativa sin miedo, salir al encuentro, buscar a los lejanos y llegar a los cruces de los caminos para invitar a los excluidos,” dijo, citando el párrafo 24 de la exhortación apostólica “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“La alegría del Evangelio”) del papa Francisco.

El arzobispo Thompson actuó como el celebrante principal de la misa para los participantes.

“Juntos, como una iglesia santa, Católica y apostólica, somos el Cuerpo de Cristo,” expresó en su homilía en español. “Al igual que acogemos su sufrimiento, también acogemos su gloria ... el Encuentro eterno.”

El director de la Oficina para el ministerio intercultural, Óscar Castellanos, quien encabezó el proceso del Encuentro en el centro y el sur de Indiana, se sintió muy complacido con esta jornada.

“Encontramos al Señor a través de cada uno de nosotros, especialmente



El padre franciscano Larry Janezik (izquierda), los diáconos Jeffrey Dufresne y Emilio Ferrer-Soto, el arzobispo Charles C. Thompson y el padre Thomas Schliessmann rezan el Padre Nuestro junto con la congregación durante la misa en la Iglesia de San Andrés Apóstol, el 30 de septiembre, como parte del evento arquidiocesano V Encuentro. (Foto por Natalie Hoefler)

al compartir en los pequeños grupos,” comentó. “Escuchamos los desafíos y los desencantos que ha sufrido cada uno, especialmente en las sesiones plenarias. [...] Al final, regresamos a nuestros hogares con un verdadero deseo de compartir ese mismo mensaje de esperanza con los demás.”

El siguiente paso del proceso del V Encuentro es resumir los comentarios de la jornada de trabajo y redactar un documento arquidiocesano con ellos.

En 2018, 25 representantes de la arquidiócesis se reunirán con representantes de 14 diócesis de Illinois, Indiana y Wisconsin para celebrar un evento similar al que se llevó a cabo en Indianápolis.

Cada una de las catorce reuniones regionales de la USCCB presentará un documento de resumen que se compilará y se debatirá en una reunión nacional en 2018. El documento final que se derive de esta reunión se presentará a la USCCB.

“El proceso refina la información hacia las instancias superiores, de modo que la información reunida en el ámbito parroquial se presenta a los obispos,” explica Castellanos.

“El objetivo principal es que para finales de 2020 haya un plan nacional procedente del ámbito nacional que nosotros recibiremos y distribuiremos a las parroquias.”

Pasillas espera con ansias leer el documento final.

“A medida que la comunidad hispana sigue creciendo, es importante contar con una guía que nos ayude a comprender las necesidades y cómo podemos responder mejor para servir y fortalecer a nuestra

comunidad eclesial,” declaró.

El documento que redacten los obispos podría convertirse en un plan pastoral nacional para la evangelización hispana, como ocurrió en el III Encuentro en 1985, recordó Castellanos. O quizás podría ser un documento en el que se indiquen las prácticas más adecuadas.

A Romero le gustaría que el proceso del Encuentro se llevara a cabo más a menudo.

“En mi opinión, no deberíamos esperar tanto,” expresó. “Me doy cuenta de que a la gente le gusta que la escuchen. Hablamos, enseñamos, pero no pasamos suficiente tiempo escuchando las necesidades.”

Otro objetivo del proceso fue identificar a líderes dentro de la comunidad católica hispana.

“Esto de por sí ya ha hecho una diferencia en nuestra parroquia,” dijo Bárbara Pierse de la Parroquia Santísima Trinidad en Edinburg. “Hemos tenido gente de México que habla español y que ha vivido en nuestra comunidad desde hace 17 años. Y apenas en el transcurso del año pasado están empezando a decir: ‘Sí podemos lograrlo. Sí tenemos voz.’”

La expectativa de Romero con respecto al desenlace final del V Encuentro es más ambiciosa.

“Espero que la gente en verdad participe activamente en la Iglesia,” expresó. “Si en verdad somos el cuerpo de Cristo, tenemos que usar las extremidades: si yo soy el pie, tengo que caminar. Si soy el brazo, tengo que alcanzar a los pobres. No podemos darnos el lujo de no hacer nada.” †

ENCUENTRO

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process is for the comments from the working day to be summarized and drafted into an archdiocesan document.

Twenty-five representatives from the archdiocese will meet with the representatives of 14 other dioceses of Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin in 2018 for a regional event similar to the one in Indianápolis.

Each of the fourteen USCCB regional meetings will produce a summary document to be compiled and discussed

in a 2018 national meeting. From that meeting, a final document will be presented to the USCCB.

“The process refines the information up and up and up, so information at the parish level is presented to the bishops,” explains Castellanos.

“The main goal at the end by 2020 is there will be a national plan from the national level. It will come to us, and we can distribute it to the parishes.”

Pasillas is looking forward to seeing the final document.

“As the Hispanic community continues to grow, it is important to have a guide to help us understand the needs and how we

can better respond to serve and strengthen our Church community,” she said.

The document the bishops produce could be a national pastoral plan for Hispanic evangelization, as was the case with III Encuentro in 1985, said Castellanos. Or it could be a document suggesting best practices.

Romero would like to see the Encuentro process happen more often.

“We shouldn’t wait so long, in my opinion,” he said. “I’m learning that people like to be heard. We talk, we teach, but we don’t spend enough time listening to needs.”

Another goal of the process was to identify leaders within the Hispanic

Catholic community.

“For our parish, it has made a difference already,” said Barbara Pierse of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburg. “We’ve had people from Mexico who speak Spanish living in our community for 17 years. And just in the last year, they’re saying, ‘Yes, we can do this. We have a voice.’”

Romero’s hopes for the final outcome of V Encuentro are broader.

“I’m hoping for people to really be engaged with the Church,” he said. “If we truly are the body of Christ, we have to use the limbs—if I am the foot, I need to walk. If I am the arm, I need to reach out to the poor. We can’t afford to not do anything.” †

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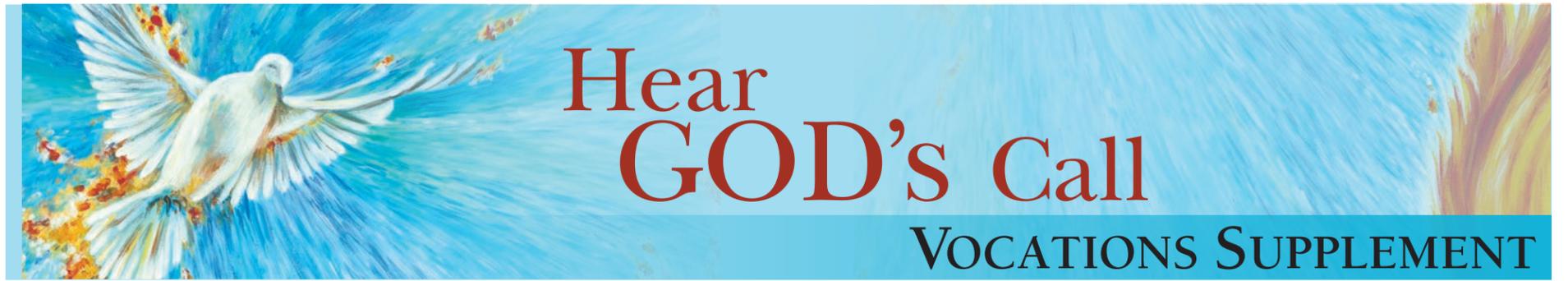
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Hear GOD's Call

VOCATIONS SUPPLEMENT

Oldenburg Franciscan uses gifts to lead people around the world closer to God

By Sean Gallagher

Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard had just earned a doctorate in Christian spirituality in the early 1990s from the prestigious Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif. A relatively comfortable life teaching in universities could have easily been hers.

But when she was invited to travel around the world to teach Scripture to a fledgling community of Franciscan sisters in Papua New Guinea, Sister Barbara jumped at the chance.

"Not everyone out in Berkeley understood that," Sister Barbara recalled. "Some people saw it as me throwing away my education. In my tradition, that wouldn't be called throwing away my education. That would be called sharing it with people who are in need."

The tradition that Sister Barbara had embraced was that of the religious community she had joined in 1967, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg.

A principal guiding star of their common life is the example of St. Francis of Assisi and his first followers.

Some 800 years ago, they broke new ground in religious life in the Church. Unlike the monks who came before them who were known for living within cloistered monasteries, Franciscans were on the go, traveling from town to town to preach the Gospel.

So Sister Barbara embraced the chance to join missionaries from the order in the southwestern Pacific Ocean island nation.

"I didn't see doing work in an area of great isolation as making it less worthwhile or less important," she said.

She did find it a bit challenging at first. Because English was not the native language of the Franciscan sisters from Papua New Guinea, Sister Barbara soon learned that she couldn't talk "in those wonderful 10-syllable words you learned in Berkeley."

In fact, Papua New Guinea soon became a classroom for Sister Barbara,

helping her learn an approach to ministry that has guided her ever since.

It all began with a question politely put to her by a native Franciscan sister at the end of a class session on Scripture.

"I remember ... to this day one of the sisters saying to me, 'Can you tell me what difference knowing those things makes in your life?'" Sister Barbara recalled. "I had just spent years in doctoral studies. That was the kind of question I was really interested in, but you never heard them in that academic setting. I said to myself, 'I am going to love it here.'"

Unfortunately, her time in Papua New Guinea was cut short. Health problems forced Sister Barbara to return to the United States less than a year into her time as a missionary.

But she has continued to follow the lead of the early Franciscans, living out of a suitcase, teaching Scripture in parish workshops and leading retreats from coast to coast and beyond.

"I find myself attracted to invitations to places where I get the impression it's difficult to find people," she said.

Sister Barbara describes this aspect of the Franciscan charism as going "where there is a need and to use the gifts you have."

In traveling from place to place, the early Franciscans often reached out to people on the margins of society.

Sister Barbara did this in her missionary work, but also in ministry to Native Americans in New Mexico who are lay associates of the Oldenburg Franciscans.

Like her experiences in other parts of the world, Sister Barbara soon found that she benefited as much from those she was serving in New Mexico as they benefited from her.

She recalled a conversation with a woman who worked as a shepherd about a Gospel passage describing Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and how he called each of his sheep by name.

"She smiled and said, 'It's true, you know, calling them by name. I have a name for each one of my sheep,'" Sister



Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, right, teaches a class on Scripture to members of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary in Papua New Guinea during her time as a missionary in the southwestern Pacific island nation in 1993-94. A member of the Oldenburg Franciscans, Sister Barbara continues to teach Scripture and lead retreats from coast to coast and beyond. (Submitted photo)

Barbara recalled. "Then she paused and said, 'I also have a song for each one. If a sheep wanders off, I'll start singing that one's song until it comes back.'"

Sister Barbara paused and said, "It works both ways. Any time that I'm in any place, something there enriches my perception of Scripture."

Closer to Oldenburg, Sister Barbara teaches in the Spiritual Direction Internship Program, a ministry of the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. The program, which takes place at the monastery's Benedict Inn & Retreat Center, helps participants hone skills at guiding people in growing in their relationship with God.

"I think this is going to become even more of a need as parishes keep growing in size," Sister Barbara said. "There's such a need to have time to sit down with people and help them explore their questions and spiritual growth. Priests can't possibly do all that as parishes get bigger and bigger."

"There's really a need for more laity in that area, as well as priests and religious. That's why I thoroughly enjoy being a part of the training program for spiritual directors."

Living in Franklin County close to her community's motherhouse in Oldenburg also allows Sister Barbara to learn from her fellow sisters.

"It's a huge blessing for me to have as

much time as I do with our retired sisters and those in the infirmary," she said. "Just to sit with them and hear their stories and their perspectives on life and prayer—I don't think that they always realize that that's probably more of a gift to me than it is for them when I'm there."

Sister Barbara encourages women considering religious life today to visit communities and "find out if you feel at home with the spirit of the group."

But she knows that discerning today is different than it was when she entered the Oldenburg Franciscans 50 years ago with 22 other young women.

"People entering the vast majority of communities today are not going to be doing it in classes, like we used to do," Sister Barbara said. "You have to have a greater sense of your own self, courage and personhood to be able to move into a group and hopefully find yourself welcomed and able to share and be received there. It takes so much more courage than it used to."

As Sister Barbara's experience over the past 50 years has shown, having the courage to respond to God's call can send a person around the world to share the Gospel and to be drawn closer to God by those a person is called to serve.

(Learn more about the Oldenburg Franciscans at oldenburgfranciscans.org.) †

Waste time with God to be open to hear his call in your life

Wasting time is at the heart of vocational discernment.

Often, when speaking to families, Pope Francis has advised parents that they should waste time with their children—set aside projects and programs, practices and phones in order to simply spend time with the people we love.

No agenda. No goals. No deadlines. No technology. Play with your children. Go for a long walk together. Share stories and hopes and dreams. Sit and watch the sunset. Wasting time with people who are important to us builds bonds and strengthens our ties. It also shows what is really important in our lives. Is it people? Or is it things?

When it comes to living as disciples

of Jesus Christ, we can apply the same advice to that most important of all relationships—our relationship with God. There is no better way to grow in relationship with God than to waste time with him, in prayer, in eucharistic adoration, in serving those in whom we see the image of God.

So often we come to prayer with an agenda, things we need to say to God or questions for which we want answers. Or we set a time limit to our prayer. Or we allow ourselves to be distracted by the countless things on our to-do lists or the incessant buzzing of text messages on our phones.

But the best prayer sets all of those things aside, and simply wastes time in the presence of our Lord. No agenda. No goals. No deadlines. No technology. Just me and God, wasting time together, growing in love, opening our hearts to receive God's grace.

And in that wasting of time with God,

our hearts start to be opened to hear God's call, to know God's voice, to have the strength to follow him. Our restless hearts find meaning and purpose in the God who made us.

Our distracted and unfocused gaze becomes centered on the face of Christ. Our wandering in the wasteland is given new direction toward fullness and life. And God reveals to us his plan, his agenda, his goals, his purpose for each of us—what we call our vocation.

Wasting time is at the heart of vocational discernment, because in order to hear the voice of God calling us to follow him, we have to spend time with him in a way that filters out the other voices and noises that compete for our attention.

The first call—the first vocation—is always to be a disciple. Then, the more we waste time with God, we can hear the second call—the second vocation—to the priesthood, marriage, consecrated

life, diaconate or a sacred single life. It all starts and ends with prayer—wasting time with God. It's the best way we can spend our time.

In the following articles in this annual Vocations Supplement, you'll read the stories of men and women who have discovered their vocation through wasting time with God, and, through it all, come to an abiding joy-filled relationship with him that marks their ministry to his people.

Please enjoy these stories and allow yourself to waste time with God for your own good and the good of vocational discernment of the faithful across central and southern Indiana and beyond. †

(Father Eric Augenstein is vocations director for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He may be contacted at augenstein@archindy.org.)



ARCHBISHOP

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such as when he would work on the cars of his friends and loved ones.

“He would never take money when he did someone’s brakes,” Archbishop Thompson remembered. “He would say, ‘You do something for someone else.’ My dad taught me about doing for others and doing not to be paid.

“I think about how we teach kids in confirmation to do service hours. I was being taught service hours before I knew what was going on.”

His mother helped him learn about the faith, serving for a period as a volunteer catechist in their parish.

“My mom knew the faith,” Archbishop Thompson said. “She was about forming the mind and knowing the teachings of the Church. Dad was one who showed how you emotionally live it. But they did it together.”

They also did it with lots of other people—a large extended family who shared his faith in a rural central Kentucky community that was also largely Catholic.

“There was a culture of Catholicism, of living the Catholic faith, that was I was engaged in,” Archbishop Thompson recalled. “It’s like a fish. A fish doesn’t know it’s in the ocean. You know? I was in an ocean of Catholicism, and didn’t know what I was in. It was just my world.”

Priests in such a Catholic ocean were intriguing to Archbishop Thompson. As a child, he also saw them “somewhat on pedestals,” and as “guys that were a breed all of their own.”

Becoming a seminarian

His views on the priesthood started to change when he was about 12 and another cousin of his became a seminarian. He is Father Dale Cieslik, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville.

“That really triggered in me that it’s not somebody else that can do this,” Archbishop Thompson said. “Anybody can do this.”

Around the same time that his cousin became a seminarian, Archbishop Thompson and his family moved to Louisville. He soon became a student at a high school that was marked by violence.

“When all the violence and crazy stuff was going on, I recall thinking to myself, ‘How does my life speak to this violence, to this mistreatment of each other? How can my life speak to that?’” Archbishop



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, left, speaks with Terry Barnes, second from right, before a July 30 Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany. Looking on are Father Eric Johnson, second from left, and Bao Huynh, right. Barnes and Hynh are both members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish. Father Johnson serves as its pastor. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Thompson recalled. “It was a time from that social justice perspective where I thought about the priesthood.”

A few years later, after his cousin a year older than him had died, Archbishop Thompson finally focused his thoughts on God’s call in his life. He talked about this with his cousin Father Cieslik, who was a transitional deacon at the time.

After graduating from Bellarmine in 1983, he became a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Louisville, receiving his priestly formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Looking back on his four years at the southern Indiana seminary, Archbishop Thompson remembers learning so much about the faith that he had never known.

But his experience of priestly formation was much more than taking classes. He’s grateful for the way in which his time as a seminarian deepened his “appreciation of prayer as the center of our lives, of listening to the word of God, reflecting on it and applying it to our lives, being shaped and molded by the liturgy.”

‘God’s got me here for a reason’

Archbishop Thompson was ordained a priest for the Louisville Archdiocese

on May 30, 1987.

Entering into parish ministry, he soon learned that the formation he received in seminary continued after ordination. He had to make adjustments in his life.

For example, instead of living with a whole community of men in priestly formation around his own age, he now lived with one other priest who was much older than him. Later, he lived on his own.

“One of the things that you have to get used to is living alone, the solitude,” Archbishop Thompson said.

He also had to change his time for personal prayer. In the seminary, he would do that in the evening. In parishes, that time was filled with many meetings each night.

“That took a little struggle for me to give that up,” Archbishop Thompson said. “I had to switch it around, and mornings became my time for prayer. All of my entire priesthood since, morning has usually been my best time for prayer. I get up early to make sure I get that prayer in and sometimes exercise in.”

And while prayer in the seminary naturally was focused much on himself and discerning God’s call in his life, prayer in parishes took on a wider scope.

“You’re not just praying for yourself,” Archbishop Thompson reflected. “You’re

praying for all of these things that you’re carrying with you, the people and the issues, the hopes and dreams that you’re carrying with you. They’re in that prayer with you.”

Over the course of his 30 years of ordained life and ministry, Archbishop Thompson has been called to serve in a wide variety of contexts: parishes, high schools, canon law and diocesan administration.

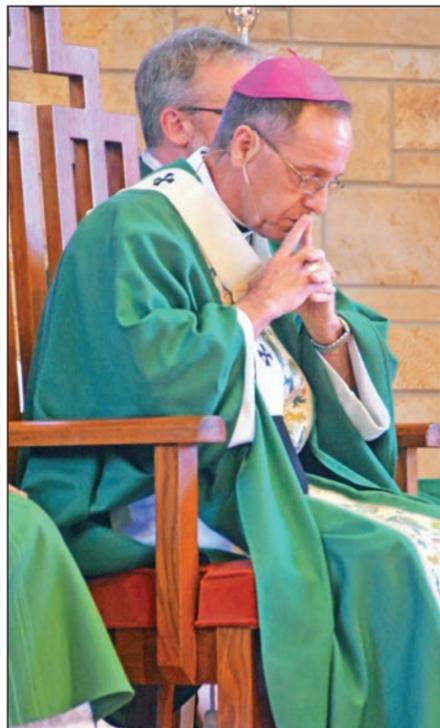
“One of the things that’s fascinating about being a priest is that I don’t know of another way of life ... in which you have such a diverse array of ways to live out your vocation,” he said. “There are almost endless opportunities of different ways you can be a priest.”

Those different ways that he’s lived out have helped him grow in ways he never would have expected.

“Each one of the particular roles I’ve had—as vicar judicial, vicar general or bishop or high school chaplain or pastor—brought forth gifts that, had I not been in that position, I would have never known was within me to do,” Archbishop Thompson said. “I would have never dreamed I had the capability to be an archbishop.

“And I’m not convinced yet. But I trust that God’s got me here for a reason.” †

Archbishop offers advice on discerning, promoting vocations



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson prays during a July 30 Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany. In an interview with *The Criterion*, Archbishop Thompson emphasized the importance of prayer in discerning a vocation. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

By Sean Gallagher

Discerning and promoting priestly and religious vocations is something in which all the faithful should be involved, said Archbishop Charles C. Thompson in a recent interview with *The Criterion*.

He also had encouragement for people considering God’s call, advice for their friends and loved ones and thoughts on the how contemporary culture presents challenges and opportunities to the Church in regard to vocations.

He spoke of the “essential need for prayer” in discerning a vocation.

“How do we have a relationship with God?” he asked. “That prayer has to be both personal and communal if we’re really going to have an appreciation for the notion of vocation in general and my own particular vocation.”

Archbishop Thompson also noted the close relationship between a vocation, baptism and the Eucharist.

“It’s through baptism that we are called,” he said. “And it’s the Eucharist that sustains that call. If we’re severing our identity from either one of those, it has a great effect on vocations.”

He recalled how sharing supper with his family daily helped him ultimately appreciate the Eucharist more.

“There was storytelling, dialogue and sharing of the meal—very much eucharistic, like the Mass,” Archbishop Thompson said. “Today, how many families ever sit down for a meal together?”

“We’re so fragmented today. There are so many things vying for our attention.”

Included among them are social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

On the one hand, Archbishop Thompson is concerned about how digital devices and various forms of social media contribute to this fragmentation.

“We can be in a group and everybody’s on their phone and really not with each other in the same room,” he said.

At the same time, he is active in social media in order to encourage faith and discernment in young people.

“That’s the sole reason I’m on there,” Archbishop Thompson said. “I use all three to get out and plant seeds. There’s no one form of media that can get to all people. You really have to do them all. You can’t leave any of them out. Social media is one tool among the tools that we use.”

In addition to prayer and the sacraments, Archbishop Thompson suggested being open to the many ways God speaks to people about their vocation.

“Pay attention to what other people are

saying to you,” he said. “So often, people will recognize qualities and gifts in us that we don’t see in ourselves. A lot of time, listening to those people will give us some direction in how God’s calling us.

“God speaks to us through silence, through music, through other persons, through the Bible. There are so many ways that God speaks to us.”

Archbishop Thompson also encouraged parents of people discerning God’s call to be present to their children, but also to give them the space they need to consider their vocation fully.

“Pope Francis talks about the need for accompaniment, where we meet people where they’re at,” he said. “This is a wonderful place where parents can practice that. Walk with your son or daughter who’s discerning a vocation.

“It’s OK to share your concerns. Be honest. But at the same time, don’t project your anxiety or agenda onto your child.”

In the end, all of the faithful need to do their part in promoting vocations, Archbishop Thompson said.

“Nobody gets ordained or professes the religious life without having had a lot of people being a part of that process,” he said. “All of us need to recognize how we’re to participate in the process of calling.” †

For Sisters of St. Benedict, prayer is 'our main work'

By Natalie Hoefler

"*Ora et labora.*" It means "prayer and work," and it is the motto by which Benedictine monastic communities live.

The works of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove can be seen throughout the Indianapolis area: in the St. Paul Hermitage home for the aged that they operate next to their monastery; in high schools where they teach; in parishes where they serve, and elsewhere.

But the motto is "prayer and work," not "work and prayer."

So what of the prayer life of these monastic sisters? How does prayer play a role in the daily life of those religious who live in community?

The *Criterion* spoke with two of the sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery to learn about the importance of both communal and individual prayer within their order, and how their community models both forms of prayer for others.

'We try to pray as one'

Communal prayer "is of utmost importance," says Benedictine Sister Marie Therese Racine. As the liturgist for the community, she coordinates all liturgical worship at the monastery, including Masses, the twice-daily communal Liturgy of the Hours, special events and rituals. She also plays the organ and leads the monastery's *schola cantorum* (ecclesial choir), hand bell choir and other musical groups.

"Our main work as Benedictines is to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, to pray together for the Church and the world," she continues. "Our community prayer is what provides the framework for our day, so we have a rhythm between prayer and work."

The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, is an age-old custom of prayer in the Church, described by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops as the official set of prayers "marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer." The prayer consists of psalms, hymns, Scripture and antiphons.

In the morning and evening, the sisters gather to share in this prayer as a community.

"As we gather for the hours of prayer and the Liturgy of the Eucharist each day, we present the gift of ourselves to God at

that moment," says Sister Marie Therese, who at 57 has been a professed sister for 14 years.

"And our presence at these liturgies is also a gift to one another, as we support each other in our seeking God both individually and communally in this monastic life."

Praying the Liturgy of the Hours is crucial to the Benedictine way of life, she explains. Indeed, chapter 43 of the *Rule* of St. Benedict states that, "On hearing the signal for an hour of the Divine Office, the [Benedictine] will immediately set aside what [is] in hand and go with utmost speed ... for indeed, nothing is to be preferred to the work of God."

Through these sanctifying prayers, says Sister Marie Therese, "We can become more and more who we were created to be, more and more the body of Christ. We're all on a path of conversion, so our time together in prayer helps us in that transformation."

That time in prayer is not just for the benefit of the sisters. All are invited to join them daily for morning and evening prayer, as well as for Mass. (See related article.)

Even those who cannot be present physically can still be part of the sisters' community prayer.

"Many people ask us to pray for them, people we minister to or people we know," says Sister Marie Therese. "We bring intentions on our hearts that, as we pray the Psalms, those are added to our prayer."

Prayer is not reserved for those in the religious life, she says.

"One thing I've come to understand—our Christian life is centered in God, but God plants desire for union with him in our hearts," she notes. "Our deepest desire, whether we know it or not, is to seek union with God."

'Where God talks to me'

Such union with God through prayer is not limited to communal experiences in the Benedictine life. Individual prayer is equally important.

"To me, individual prayer and communal prayer fuel each other," says Sister Harriet Woehler, 86, who has been a Benedictine sister for 66 years and was one of the founding members of the monastery in Beech Grove in 1955. "[It's] that spark that comes from being just 'me and Jesus.' That's the individual prayer for me—the time when God lights our fire, the Holy Spirit lights our fire."

Sister Harriet talks of praying



The Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove pray during a service in July in the monastery's oratory. (Submitted photo)



Benedictine Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner, prioress of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, prays in silence in the monastery's Blessed Sacrament Chapel in this June 1, 2015, photo. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

her way through the morning. She rises early for individual prayer, then moves to the oratory ("the little room with the big crucifix," she explains) for quiet meditation with a few other sisters, then joins with all of the sisters for the Morning Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours.

"I love the morning darkness, the time before dawn when you can just see the light, and everything is shadow and silhouette," says Sister Harriet of her individual prayer time in her room at the beginning of the day.

She likes to start her day with a form of prayer called "*lectio divina*," or "divine reading"—reading a Scripture passage and then reflecting and meditating upon the text.

"I mark mine up something fierce," she says of the booklet she uses that contains the current month's daily Mass readings. "That's where God talks to me. God drills [the Scripture] into my memory. And that gives me the fuel for when I go down for Mass or for the [Liturgy of the] Hours."

In the oratory before the Divine Office, she participates in centering prayer with a few fellow sisters.

"We sit for 20 minutes in silence and just look at the crucifix, and just rest and let [the] morning prayer soak in," she explains.

There is even individual time built into the Liturgy of the Hours, "a minute or two of silence [between each psalm] to reflect upon what you just said," says Sister Harriet, who once served as the community's liturgist. "It's like time for the psalm to wash over you, time to sit in the peace of it all without rushing on."

In addition to *lectio divina* and centering prayer, Sister Harriet likes to

pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the rosary.

But individual prayer can look different for each person, she notes.

For instance, while Sister Harriet prefers her individual prayer time indoors, she notes that others "like to go outside for a walk—we have beautiful gardens." The monastery's outdoor Stations of the Cross and cemetery—both of which are open to the public—also offer space for quiet prayer.

The monastery's adjoining Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center is a natural place for people to get away to pray, she adds—and not just during a retreat.

"The path through the peace and nature garden [at the retreat center] is just lovely," she says. And people are often seen quietly praying on the center's labyrinth, a replica of the one created circa 1220 in the stone floor of Chartres Cathedral in France.

Whether the rosary or *lectio divina*, inside or outside, individually or in community, prayer is something Sister Harriet says is a "hunger" in today's world.

"There are some people so hungry for it," she says. "I know a lot of good people that really do want to come to prayer and are intent on it, but rarely give the time to pray."

Not so for the Sisters of St. Benedict. "It's our light that we live by, it glows out from us—it just has to," says Sister Harriet. "It's what ignites us."

(To learn more about the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, go to www.benedictine.com.) †

Sisters of St. Benedict invite all to pray with them at their monastery

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, invite all to join them daily for Mass and for the praying of the Liturgy of the Hours.

Masses and community prayer are held in the monastery's oratory as follows:

- **Monday and Wednesday:**
 - Morning Prayer, 8 a.m.
 - Noon Prayer, 11:45 a.m.
 - Evening Prayer and Mass, 5:15 p.m.
- **Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:**
 - Morning Prayer and Mass, 8 a.m.
 - Noon Prayer, 11:45 a.m.
 - Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m.
- **Saturday:**
 - Morning Prayer and Mass, 9 a.m.
 - Noon Prayer, 11:45 a.m.
 - Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m.
- **Sunday:**
 - Morning Prayer, 9 a.m.
 - Mass, 11 a.m.
 - Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m.

Prayer requests can also be submitted online at www.benedictine.com/prayer-requests.

For more information, call 317-787-3287. †

'Hand of God' guides seminarian on journey to becoming a priest

By John Shaughnessy

Timothy DeCrane's path to the priesthood has been marked by major moments of doubt, like the time a counselor told him that the results of his career test strongly indicated he should become a lawyer—and DeCrane imagined himself going to law school, joining a firm and having a wife, children and a dog.

"And don't forget the house with a white picket fence," the 25-year-old seminarian says with a laugh.

But God has kept putting defining, doubt-removing moments along the path, he says, including the time he rode along with Father Wilfred "Sonny" Day as the pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight drove to the scene of a fatal farming accident in southern Indiana.

"It's one thing to hear how priests see life and death in a single day. It's totally different to witness it for yourself," says DeCrane, who had just finished his first year at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology at the time.

"I was with Father Sonny when he got the call. Driving over there, I'm freaking out. But when we got out of the car, this great sense of peace came over me. The family wanted Father Sonny there. He went into the ambulance where the body was, and said some prayers over the person. There were some family members in the field, and he was present to them. Then he went to the farmhouse and met with the mother and the siblings.

"It was eye-opening. It wasn't scary because you see God walking with you in that moment."

God's sense of humor—and support

Still, the doubts kept surfacing in his second year of seminary at Saint Meinrad as some friends left the seminary, and some friends back home in the



Seminarian Timothy DeCrane poses for a photo in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel on the campus of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

Indianapolis area shared the news of getting engaged, getting married, having kids and buying new cars.

"I was struggling through some personal things," says DeCrane, who grew up in Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove. "Is this what I really want?"

Then came the news that he was assigned to spend the summer following his second year at Saint Meinrad as a student chaplain at St. Vincent Indianapolis hospital—in the emergency

room and the intensive care unit—one of the last places the self-described "germophobe and hypochondriac" wanted to be.

"It shows that God has an ironic sense of humor," he says with a laugh.

Turning serious, he notes, "When I left seminary for the hospital, it was 50-50 that I would be back."

God was there to walk with him again, he says.

Working with some non-Catholics, DeCrane found the confidence to share his story and his faith "in a way I hadn't before." He also found the strength to put aside his fears and focus on the patients he met face to face.

"Being in the ICU and the emergency room, you see victims of gun violence, child abuse, domestic abuse, drug overdoses and auto accidents. It reminded me

of the summer before, working in those moments when you see life and death. But it also makes you see the depth of spirituality and the depth of the impact you can have on people.

"There's just a ministry in presence. Sometimes, you can't say anything, but sometimes being there is just enough. It showed me ministry in its messiest forms. That experience gave me the opportunity to see those gifts in myself for the first time. It let me see what family members and friends have told me in my journey of formation."

A 'big wake-up call'

His confidence and his belief in God's direction for his life grew even more during his pastoral internship experience at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus from September of 2016 through May of 2017.

During those nine months, DeCrane led a confirmation class, headed prayer services at nursing homes, was an extraordinary minister of holy Communion at hospitals, served as a substitute teacher in the parish school, and guided candidates in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program who wanted to be received into the full communion of the Church.

"What was really profound for me was when I greeted people before and after Mass," says DeCrane, the youngest of six children of Jim and Cathy DeCrane. People would say, "The joy you have when you approach Mass is contagious."

"And seeing how the sacraments really brought people together really differentiated it all for me. I get to be present in the sacraments. That was a big wake-up call for me."

His embracing of his calling was also noticed by others. During his time at St. Bartholomew, he shared an office with Kathy Davis-Shanks, the pastoral associate at the parish.

"His enthusiasm, his faith and his prayer life stand out. They were not only models for our parishioners, but the staff as well," she says. "He has a real gift of teaching. And what I found particularly beautiful was the way he was able to speak to a multitude of audiences. It didn't matter whether they were senior citizens, elementary school children or youth group members. He's a great servant leader."

As the vocations director for the archdiocese, Father Eric Augenstein was impressed when he visited DeCrane

at St. Bartholomew and watched him "from a distance as he interacted with parishioners and staff in an easy-going, friendly and sincere way.

"I thought to myself, 'This is what priestly formation can do.' It takes a young man who hears a call from God, helps him grow in personal discipleship and in ministerial skills, and works to mold him in the image of Jesus Christ. He will make a fine priest for our local Church."

'It fits what God has called me to do'

Another quality that will serve him well as a priest is his sense of empathy, says Father Robert Robeson, the pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish who has known DeCrane since Tim was about 10.

"He senses when people are struggling," says Father Robeson, who was also the rector of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis when DeCrane spent four years there. "He has a big heart."

Father Robeson knows the struggles that DeCrane has faced in his path to the priesthood.

"He went through a period of time when he mourned the possibility of being married and having children," Father Robeson says. "The Lord helped him realize that there are good and beautiful elements of becoming a priest. He trusted in God that he was on the right path. And over time, that was confirmed."

For DeCrane, the doubts have faded. They've been replaced with a sense of joy and purpose in anticipating that he will be ordained as a transitional deacon in 2018 and ordained as a priest of the archdiocese in 2019.

"I've really seen the hand of God in all the experiences I've had—when I thought I couldn't do it. I've learned, by and large, that the joy priests have is authentic. So is the brotherhood among the priests. And there's the influence of Pope Francis to live the joy of the Gospel.

"I now recognize that presence, that the sacraments are vehicles of salvation. And to know I am called to that is tremendously humbling. It fits me. It fits the man I've become. It fits what God has called me to do."

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the archdiocese, visit www.HearGodsCall.com.) †



Seminarian Timothy DeCrane carries a processional crucifix at the conclusion of the July 28 installation Mass of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

(Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Deacon experiences 'awesome feeling' in serving in parish, community

By Katie Rutter

Special to *The Criterion*

BATESVILLE—Like any proud father, Deacon Ronald Freyer looks with eagerness to the day when his eldest daughter, Melissa, will wed. But at the ceremony on Jan. 6, his role will be larger than the role of most parents. He will actually lead his daughter and her fiancé as they exchange their marriage vows.

"I'm gonna walk her up the aisle, then there's gonna be a small pause while I get vested," Deacon Freyer explained.

"I'm gonna try to do the homily if I can keep the tears from coming, but we'll see how that works. I might not get through that," he said with a laugh.

As a deacon in the church, Deacon Freyer has the spiritual authority to witness vows as lives are united in the sacrament of matrimony. Deacons can also baptize new members of the Church, preach at Masses and conduct funerals. Their role typically extends to numerous other ministries as well, especially those in service to people in need.

"It's just an awesome feeling and an awesome privilege to be a deacon. I'm still in awe of that," Deacon Freyer explained. "I don't think I'll ever get over that."

Deacon Freyer was ordained a deacon on June 23, 2012. The men with whom he was ordained were only the second group of permanent deacons in the history of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

The Second Vatican Council, recalling the presence of deacons in Scripture and the early history of the Church, re-established the permanent diaconate and declared that married men could be ordained deacons.

Deacon Freyer has been married to his wife Mary Beth for 37 years, and they have proudly raised four adopted children. He puts in about 50 hours a week at his day job welding, fabricating, painting and, in his words, "whatever else they need me to do" at Greensburg's Heritage Industrial Contracting.

After his ordination, his responsibilities were extended even further. He was appointed to serve at his home parish of St. Louis in Batesville. He was also to minister at the hospital and nursing homes in the area.

Still answering this call, Deacon Freyer spends most of his Sundays visiting the local hospital or St. Andrews Health Campus, a nursing home and assisted



Deacon Ronald Freyer, left, listens to Franciscan Sister Francis Clements during a visit to St. Andrews Health Campus in Batesville on Oct. 22. Visiting the sick in hospitals and nursing homes in the southeastern Indiana town is part of Deacon Freyer's ministry. (Submitted photos by Katie Rutter)

living facility in Batesville.

During his usual visit to St. Andrews on Oct. 22, Deacon Freyer walked the halls, stopped at dozens of doors, knocked gently and repeated the same question: "Do you want to receive Communion?"

For most residents, the answer was "Yes." Deacon Freyer would enter and, after a few moments of friendly conversation, he would lead the residents in an Our Father and distribute the Eucharist. Each time, before leaving the room, he flashed one of his warm smiles and bid the resident a good day.

"He's a superstar. But don't tell him I said that," said Angela Probst, 93, prompting Deacon Freyer to laughter.

In addition to visiting the sick and elderly, Deacon Freyer's busy schedule includes assisting with a weekly youth group attended by about 100 teens from three parishes: St. Louis Parish, St. Anthony Parish in Morris and St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County. Deacon Freyer also ministers most of the baptisms at St. Louis Parish.

"It's in the personal interactions that I think Deacon Ron's biggest strength is," explained Father Stanley Pondo, pastor of St. Louis Parish. "He does relate so well to people. He is a good ministerial presence for them."

More than 1,100 families are members of the faith community, where Father Pondo is the only resident priest. When it comes to filling the spiritual needs of



Deacon Ronald Freyer serves as a Communion minister during an Oct. 22 Mass at St. Louis Church in Batesville.

parishioners, Father Pondo often relies on Deacon Freyer to help.

"Every activity I do means there's another activity that I can't do," explained Father Pondo. "Having Deacon Ron here does multiply what we can do in terms of ministry to people."

Deacon Freyer tries to be present for at least two of the four weekend Masses, standing alongside Father Pondo, proclaiming the Gospel and assisting with the liturgy. Once a month, he attends all four Masses and delivers a homily.

"I wasn't much for speaking in front of people," Deacon Freyer said, recalling one of the challenges of his deacon formation.

"I picked the paper up a couple of times, and I know my kids used to ask me why my paper's shaking. And I said, 'There's a good reason why my paper's shaking,'" he related with a hearty laugh.

After five years in front of a congregation, Deacon Freyer's hands remained steady throughout the entire

liturgy on Oct. 22. He proclaimed the final dismissal clearly and articulately, the whole congregation booming the reply, "Thanks be to God."

As the faithful streamed out of the church, Deacon Freyer stood near a door, shaking hands with a big smile.

"He is just a treasure. You can't find a nicer person," said parishioner Leron Giesting, cradling a child who had been baptized by Deacon Freyer.

"I think there were times throughout the process that weren't terribly comfortable for him, but he knew that he needed to do it. And I'm grateful that we have him," Giesting said.

Deacon Freyer agrees. Despite the challenges, he said he is grateful for his vocation.

"I love being with people, I just want to try to help them understand who Jesus is," Deacon Freyer said. "I'm just so blessed to be a deacon."

(Katie Rutter is a freelance writer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †

Deacon Ronald Freyer

Age: 59

Ordained: June 23, 2012

Parish: St. Louis in Batesville

Wife: Mary Beth

Anniversary: Sept 13, 1980

Kids: Josh, 31, Melissa, 25, Joe, 20, Angela, 18. All are adopted.

Grandchildren: Austin, AJ, Christian (all sons of Josh)

Occupation: Welder, fabricator, painter at Heritage Industrial Contracting in Greensburg

Favorite Bible verse: Isaiah 40:31

Favorite saint: St. Francis of Assisi

Favorite prayer/devotion: Honoring the Virgin Mary and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Hobbies: Raising his kids



Priest seeks to make parish into 'disciple-making machine'

By Sean Gallagher

SELLERSBURG—You might think that after being a priest for 27 years, Father Thomas Clegg would have gotten it by now.

But this self-described “self-improvement junkie” is driven to learn more about what it means to be a priest in the 21st century, and then to put that into action at St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, where he serves as pastor.

“I think I’ve learned more about being a pastor in my last five years than in the 15-20 years before that,” said Father Clegg. “That’s exciting. It keeps it alive.”

A native of Indianapolis who grew up in St. Philip Neri Parish, Father Clegg was drawn to the priesthood as he grew up in the 1960s and 1970s through his love of teaching, of helping others as a firefighter and the prospect of preaching and leading others in worship.

His embrace of priestly life and ministry today, though, is rooted in what he’s learned about the ultimate purpose of pastoral leadership in parishes.

“I stay a priest, and specifically as a pastor,” he said, “because it’s an opportunity to mold a parish into what I think God calls a parish to be, which is a disciple-making machine.”

As driven as he is about priestly life and ministry, Father Clegg started his journey to it in a kind of meandering way.

He enrolled at the Latin School of Indianapolis, the archdiocese’s former high school seminary, only after his pastor told him that, of all the boys in his eighth-grade class, he thought he could be a good priest.

As it turned out, the pastor convinced eight other boys in the class to enroll at the high school seminary in much the same way.

Father Clegg, the seventh of nine children, said that his family was “never overly religious.”

“Sunday Mass was certainly there,” he recalled. “But we weren’t a family that prayed the rosary every night or anything like that.”

He graduated from the Latin School in 1978, the same year that it closed, and went through a couple of stints in college and major seminary before being ordained in 1990.

In the periods in between, Father Clegg worked as a teacher at St. Philip Neri School and followed in his father’s footsteps by serving as a firefighter in the Indianapolis Fire Department.

“When someone has a toothache long enough, they go to a dentist,” Father Clegg said of the way the idea of the priesthood kept recurring to him. “It was just kind of gnawing at me for so long. I really had to check it out.”



Father Thomas Clegg, pastor of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, preaches a homily during a Sept. 27 Mass with students of the New Albany Deanery faith community’s school at St. Paul Church in Sellersburg. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Over his 27 years as a priest, Father Clegg has served as chaplain at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis and in parishes in Indianapolis and the New Albany Deanery.

During much of that time, he has led parishes that have either had to merge with or collaborate more closely with a nearby faith community.

That trend started in 1992 when Father Clegg led the former St. Catherine of Siena and St. James parishes on Indianapolis’ south side to merge and become Good Shepherd Parish.

He later served as pastor of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes. It was the first time that the two Jeffersonville faith communities had to share a priest.

In 2013, Father Clegg was assigned as pastor of St. Joseph and St. Paul parishes, both in Sellersburg. A year later, the two faith communities merged to become St. John Paul II Parish.

In all of these cases, Father Clegg says, the parishioners drove the process of coming together.

“In all three of the complex pastoring situations I’ve been involved in, it’s been the parishioners who have made the decision,” he said. “It has never been my agenda to merge churches together.”

Tom Meier served as pastoral associate with Father Clegg at Good Shepherd Parish and had previously been a

longtime member of St. James Parish.

As he observed his young pastor bring his home parish and St. Catherine together, he saw a priest that “was well beyond his years in terms of maturity.”

“He was fantastic,” said Meier, who later served as Good Shepherd’s parish life coordinator from 2000-04.

“What impressed me most about [his] ability to bring the parishes together was his ability to follow a process and let that process unfold.

“Most people, myself included, would have gotten



Father Thomas Clegg, pastor of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, distributes Communion to Emma Nevitt, a seventh-grade student at the parish’s school, during a Sept. 27 Mass at St. Paul Church in Sellersburg. Jamie Bruggeman, who teaches first grade at the parish’s school, second from left, serves as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion at the Mass.

so frustrated and just said, ‘Let’s go ahead with this.’ But he was able to sit back and let the process happen, getting input from the people.”

Susan Wheatley-Huff saw these same qualities in Father Clegg when she served as a pastoral associate at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Jeffersonville.

“I think he made a huge difference by modeling who Christ was for us, by being open to the power of the Spirit during that time of coming together,” she said. “He was good at trying to bring people together and to understand that, even though we were to be together, each parish would keep its own identity.”

Don Day, a member of St. John Paul II Parish and president of its pastoral council, says his pastor “is like the Energizer bunny.”

“He’s really made our parish come alive,” said Day. “There are a lot of things going on in different ministries. Our parish has really become more vibrant that way. He’s impressed me. He’s a real leader, very mission-oriented and makes things happen.”

It’s the mission of the Church that Father Clegg ultimately says is at the heart of the process of bringing parishes together as one.

“I really think it’s a question of how we best facilitate the mission of the Church, which, in my mind, is the mission that Jesus gave us, the great commission of making disciples,” he said. “How do we best do that? If it’s best to do that with two small communities, then you stay with two smaller communities. But if you can do that better by working

together, then that’s the way to go.”

The mission to make disciples has also led Father Clegg to take 17 mission trips to Haiti, although he isn’t sure who is ministering to whom when he goes there.

“For me, when we do our mission trips, I almost like to call them a reverse mission,” he reflected. “We don’t build houses. We don’t paint buildings. We don’t want to take a job out of the hand of a Haitian.

“We go just to learn about them, their culture and their lives. I call a mission trip a success if anyone on our mission team can call 10 people by name at the end of the trip, and 10 people can call them by name. It’s really about building relationships and learning about the culture.”

And for Father Clegg, relationships—with God and other people—is at the heart of being a priest.

“You’re led into people’s lives at times of great emotion, whether it’s going to a hospital to anoint someone who’s dying, or at a wedding,” he said. “People just invite you into their lives. And sometimes, it’s not because they know you. It’s because you’re a priest.”

Father Clegg encourages men considering the priesthood to nurture their relationship with God.

“It’s about an openness to God’s action in your life,” he said. “If God is calling you and you don’t close yourself off to that call, you’ll find the answer.”

(To learn more about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †

Father Thomas Clegg

Age: 57

Ordained: June 2, 1990

Home Parish: St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis

Parents: The late John and Rosemary (Wilson) Clegg

Education: Latin School of Indianapolis; Marian University in Indianapolis; Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Cincinnati

Favorite Scripture verse: Jn 10:10

Favorite saint: St. Peter

Favorite prayer/devotion: Prayer of trust and confidence by Thomas Merton

Hobbies: Texas hold ‘em poker, golf, reading



Young monks use podcasts to shed mystery and show the joy of monastic life

By John Shaughnessy

It's a story touched with humor, a story that shows the humanity of the Benedictine monks who call Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad their home.

One of the long-standing traditions of the archabbey in southern Indiana involves the church bells that call the monks to prayer, bells that are rung manually by the novices—men who are in formation to become monks.

As the story goes, a novice tried to ring the bells one morning, but no sound came from them. Further frantic efforts to ring the bells by the suddenly-panicking novice provided the same results.

Finally, it was discovered that the hammers of the bells had been cushioned and wrapped in duct tape.

The person—or persons—responsible for the prank remains a mystery years later. But the way that story was shared recently—in a podcast hosted regularly by two monks—shows how Saint Meinrad Archabbey is using social media to help unveil the mystery and the stereotypes surrounding the 90 monks who live together there.

A podcast offers a series of digital audio or video files in the form of episodes, episodes which someone can download on the Internet to listen to and watch. The one from Saint Meinrad—an audio podcast—is called “Echoes from the Bell Tower” and promises “stories of wit and wisdom from Benedictine monks who live, work and pray in southern Indiana.”

An introduction to the podcast also notes, “We’re hoping to give you a chance to learn what monks are like by hearing from us monks—and not Hollywood. Saint Meinrad Archabbey is a monastery in the 21st century. We have monks from all different kinds of backgrounds. We’re many things to many people, but mostly we’re just 90 regular guys seeking God.”

Certainly the two “regular guys” who host the podcast exude a lot of joy—and a fair share of fun—in offering listeners an inside glimpse of life “on the hill.”

A glimpse into a life of faith

There's Benedictine Brother Joel Blaize, the 30-year-old with the smooth voice whose hobbies include reading, riding his bike, writing music and playing the French horn and the penny whistle.

He's matched with his good friend

Benedictine Brother Kolbe Wolniakowski, a 30-year-old who bikes, bakes bread, enjoys running half-marathons and describes his on-air voice as “talking a mile a minute and randomly dropping letters from words.”

Neither of them knew they were even auditioning as hosts for the podcasts when they were interviewed for a potential future segment in the summer of 2015 by Benedictine Brother William Sprauer and Krista Hall, the two driving forces behind the podcast.

“We did the interview together, we get along well, and there was a lot of laughing and joking,” Brother Kolbe recalls.

The connection was so good that they were offered the opportunity to host the podcast. And while there's a lot of laughing, joking, storytelling and sharing knowledge about the monastic life in the episodes, the true connection they're always seeking is to help their listeners—and themselves—move closer to God.

“That's our number one goal—to help people seek God, to get to know him,” Brother Joel says. “Really, our whole life is built around our search for God. To give people a glimpse of how we do that, too, maybe it will inspire them to do the same thing.”

“And underneath that, a lot of people have ideas of what it's like to be a monk, and we want to dispel those myths.”

In one episode, you hear a monk at Saint Meinrad talking about how he “never expected to be in a place with people from Vietnam and Korea and Africa. On this hill is kind of a glimpse of the world.”

Other episodes include insights about a day in the life of a monk, the way monks celebrate Halloween, the tradition of monastic music, the importance of bells to monastic life, and the different hobbies and interests of the monks.

That last episode included Brother Simon talking about his beekeeping hobby, Brother John Mark playing the cello, and a band of brothers discussing their beer-making efforts.

It's all part of drawing listeners into the essence of community life for the monks of Saint Meinrad—a way of life and searching for God that is now being conveyed through two young men who once never imagined themselves being

monks at a monastery in southern Indiana.

‘We do come here to seek God’

Growing up in Illinois, Brother Joel was raised in a “devout Christian” home, and even as a young adult he always had “a love for life and God.” Still, he felt “something was missing.”

That lost feeling led him to explore the Catholic faith, and he found a home in it when he was received into the full communion of the Church in 2011. From there, he entered Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology with thoughts of becoming a priest, but he felt more drawn to the life of prayer and community that the Benedictine monks offered.

Brother Kolbe grew up Catholic in a home right next to his church in a small town in Michigan. As a young adult, he had a job he loved, co-workers who were friends, and a family support system that brought him joy. Yet he felt restless and began praying to God for an answer to relieve that feeling.

A short while later, his sister, Sister of Mercy Maria Faustina, called and told him that she and her fellow religious sisters thought the time was right for him to consider life in a Benedictine community. Never mind that he didn't know anything about the Benedictines.

Still, he eventually made a visit to Saint Meinrad. While that time didn't create an immediate connection, it was enough to make him return for more visits. Finally, he entered the community as a novice in 2015.

“I continue to feel I'm moving closer and closer to God,” Brother Kolbe says. “I'm so thankful for Saint Meinrad and what the community has meant to me. There are so many people here who are so bright, who are great men, who hold each other accountable. We're living our lives in a way to get closer to God.”

Not that their lives there are ideal, they say. They both acknowledge they are similar to most Christians in that they face



Benedictine Brothers Joel Blaize, left, and Kolbe Wolniakowski sit on the steps of the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad. The two monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey are the hosts of the “Echoes from the Bell Tower” podcast that features “stories of wit and wisdom from Benedictine monks who live, work and pray in southern Indiana.” (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

rough times in their journeys of faith.

“We do come here to seek God,” Brother Joel says. “The *Rule of St. Benedict* says that the monastery is a school of the Lord's service. One of our monks says it's a school from which you never graduate. I can identify with people who struggle with their faith.”

“You have to realize your whole life is a search, and you may not have the security of always having the answers. That's what a life of faith is. You really do have to trust in God when you can't see the end.”

In an intriguing way, hosting the podcast has added joy to the production of the episodes *and* the search for God.

“We generally have a good time when we're making them,” Brother Joel says. “Sometimes, it's hard to keep a straight face. You're recording, and you burst out laughing again.”

He laughs before he turns serious. “As Benedictines, our motto is, ‘Prayer and Work.’ We see our work as prayer, and sometimes our prayer is work. Doing the podcast energizes my vocation. I've learned so much from my fellow monks, and their example can be inspiring. From some of the older monks, I see they've lived their life of faith as a journey. And you can see how it's worthwhile.”

(To listen to episodes of the “Echoes from the Bell Tower” podcast, go to soundcloud.com/saint-meinrad-archabbey. For more information on Saint Meinrad Archabbey, visit www.saintmeinrad.org.) †

Providence sisters in formation find belonging, joy in religious life

By Jason Moon

Special to *The Criterion*

For Providence Sisters Arriane Whittaker and Emily TeKolste, choosing the path of a woman religious was really a matter of fit, to find where they truly belonged.

Both were looking for deeper, spiritual meaning in their lives. And they found it when they met the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

“I know for me, I choose to discern religious life because when I met my community, there was a longing in me to learn more about who they were and what they were doing,” Sister Arriane said. “I think a deep, even subconscious part of me knew that their story was intertwined with mine. It was like for the first time in my life, I felt like I truly fit.”

Sister Emily got to know the Sisters of Providence more personally through her work with the Catholic Worker community in Indianapolis.

“As I lived out my time at the Catholic Worker community and got to know the Sisters of Providence better, it started to become clear to me that the Sisters of Providence were the fit for me in the long term,” she said.

The Sisters of Providence motherhouse is located at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 10 minutes northwest of downtown Terre Haute. They strive to collaborate with others to create a “more just and hope-filled world through prayer, education, service and advocacy.”

They minister in 17 states, the District of Columbia and Asia. The Congregation was founded by Saint Mother Theodore Guérin in 1840.

While Sister Arriane was born in Indianapolis, she grew up in Germantown, Wis. Her first encounter with the Sisters of Providence came while volunteering at the St. Ann

Medical and Dental Services Clinic, now known as the Wabash Valley Health Center in Terre Haute. The clinic was a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Providence when Sister Arriane arrived as a volunteer.

“It was an amazing experience, and indeed, quite a providential one, too,” Sister Arriane said.

During that volunteer year, Sister Arriane grew closer to the Sisters of Providence. Consequently, her life plans began to change, as she began to feel the spiritual pull to religious life.

Sister Arriane, 30, said she felt a joy that she had not felt before.

“It is not always easy to live this life, and you may find yourself questioning from time to time, but this joy is everlasting,” she said. “It is this joy that feeds our lives of service, prayer and communion. And I believe that this joy is rooted in our lives of service to God's people.”

Currently, Sister Arriane is enrolled in the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Indianapolis.

Sister Emily, 29, also a native of Indianapolis, entered the community's novitiate in August 2017. She said since coming to the congregation, she feels as if she has grown exponentially from a spiritual point of view.

“We are very intentional about trying

to grow together, to learn from each other, to build relationships with each other,” Sister Emily said. “I love the support that the community allows us to provide for each other. We can dream together, celebrate and mourn together and build together better than we could do any of those things by ourselves.”

“We can combine our skills and our efforts to be better than the sum of our parts.” Sister Emily added that the continued inspiration she receives from other Sisters of Providence adds to the joy she feels regarding being part of the congregation.

“I have the opportunity to be a part of a community whose members inspire me to be better, excite me with the exemplary lives they've lived, and walk with me as I continue to discover who I am and how I am called to live my life,” Sister Emily noted.

“Plus, we're a lot of fun!”

(Jason Moon is the media relations manager of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. For more information on the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, log on to spsmw.org, or call or text vocations director Providence Sister Editha Ben at 812-230-4771 or e-mail her at eben@spsmw.org.) †



Sr. Arriane Whittaker, S.P.



Sr. Emily TeKolste, S.P.

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St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis celebrates 100 years of faith

By Mike Krokos

Mary Harper knows a lot about the history of St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis. She should.

She's lived through nearly all of it.

Harper, 97, was among the approximately 400 people who attended the Oct. 7 Mass celebrating the parish's 100th anniversary. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant.

"I was baptized in St. Ann's, I'd say in April some time in 1920," said Harper, who was born in March of that year.

Harper spent the majority of her life as a member of the parish, but joined St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis (St. Ann's sister parish) when she moved to Crestwood Village, a residential community for seniors.

Still, she felt compelled to come home to her longtime parish for the centennial celebration and share fond memories of St. Ann's, which was founded in 1917 by Father John F. Patterson near Stout Field, a former Army Air Field on the west side of Indianapolis and the current headquarters of the Indiana National Guard.

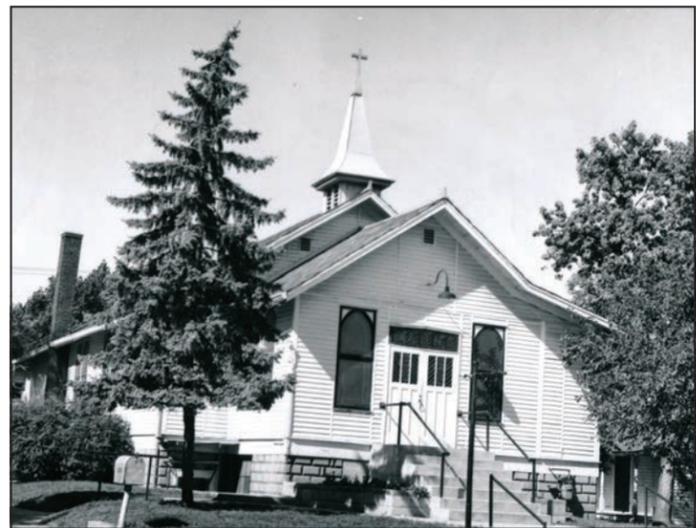
"It was my church, the old church, but then I learned to love the new one [on Holt Road] then," Harper said. "That one I loved. I still love that old church. ... That's where my heart was.

"This [new church] is a beautiful place," she added.

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson cited several momentous realities that have transpired since the founding of the parish 100 years ago near the end of World War I, including several subsequent wars, technological advancements, and the landing of a man on the moon.

"The parish itself has a history of churches, ... a history of priests and now deacons, ... a history of worship, ministries and services to tell," the archbishop said. "Through it all, faith has been the hallmark of response to all that transpires both within and beyond this parish."

According to *Like a Mustard Seed Growing*, a history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis from 1834-2009, written by Franciscan Sister Francis Assisi Kennedy, the parish originally used a Quonset hut as a church. A second church, a frame structure, replaced the hut in 1927, and in 1969 a third one, a contemporary



This 1964 photograph shows St. Ann Parish's second church building in Indianapolis. (Archives photo)

round building located on Holt Road, followed.

Based on a feasibility study begun in 1998, it was determined that St. Ann Parish should build a new church closer to the center of Decatur Township to support the growing Catholic population there.

The newest church building is on a portion of a 56-acre tract of land on the southwest side of Indianapolis that was purchased in 2003. On June 28, 2008, a procession of cars moved from the church to the new site for a groundbreaking ceremony. Then-Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein presided at the Mass of Blessing a Church and Altar at the new parish address at 6350 Mooresville Road on Sept. 26, 2009.

"We ourselves who are bound here in faith and love are the living Church set in the world as a sign and witness of God's love for all," Archbishop Buechlein told the assembly at the 2009 Mass, which included Father Glenn O'Connor, then the pastor of the parish who helped lead the effort to build the new church. "I come to express my congratulations. I come to commend you for your great faith, and I commend you for what you have accomplished with this new church."

Like Harper, Alana Schubert Swain has lots of memory at St. Ann Parish. She's been a longtime member—except for 2 1/2 years when she and her husband Chad lived in Louisville, Ky.—and her grandparents John and Mary Schubert Sr. were founding members of the parish.

"My father, John Schubert Jr., and his brothers and sisters were members of the church, too," said Swain. "My mother, Dolores Rathz Schubert, started attending Mass there after she and my father were married. My six brothers and sisters and myself attended St. Ann School."

Alana and her husband were married at St. Ann in 1998, and Chad, who oversees the parish's website, was received into the full communion of the Church in 2002. Their daughter Emma was baptized there in 2004.

The family's love and commitment to the parish is evident through their volunteer efforts. Chad has served on the parish council for 11 years, and Alana is in charge of its monthly parish newsletter and its Giving Tree program, which in collaboration with the its St. Vincent de Paul Society chapter helps provide Christmas presents to needy children and food and gift cards to families. They all help out at the annual parish festival, and Alana and Emma also volunteer at Vacation Bible School.

But Alana said their family is no different from many other St. Ann members, who always step up to volunteer.

"The thing that makes our parish



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson prays during the Oct. 7 Mass celebrating St. Ann Parish's 100th anniversary. He is joined at the altar by Deacon Joseph Beauchamp, left, Father Robert Hausladen, Father Harold Rightor II and Father Ming Quang Duong. (Submitted photo by Frank McGrath Jr.)



Shirley Verhonik, left, Louise David, Mary Harper and Jeanette Clements, all members of St. Joseph Parish, St. Ann's sister parish in Indianapolis, pray the Our Father during the Oct. 7 centennial Mass. Harper was a longtime member of St. Ann Parish and baptized in its church in 1920.

(Photo by Mike Krokos)

special is its parishioners!" she said. "We have people who generously give their time and talents to make our Church the best it can be!"

Alana said that was especially true when it was decided to purchase the land and build the church on Mooresville Road.

"I've seen the faith of our parish lived out when we decided to build our current church," she said. "It took a lot of time and effort from our parishioners, but it got done."

Father Robert Hausladen, the parish's pastor since 2012, said he is "constantly humbled" by parishioners.

"This is a parish of beauty in diversity, a church of great faith expressed in lives of generosity and hope, and I am truly blessed to be a part of it," Father Hausladen wrote in his message to parishioners for the centennial liturgy.

"While facing great obstacles and adversity, St. Ann has made and continues to make tremendous strides

in sharing the Good News and building the kingdom of God," he continued. "It is through the grace of God and constant efforts of so many that St. Ann has been and is a beautiful witness to God's love."

As parishioners move forward into the next 100 years, Archbishop Thompson encouraged them to continue to be a faith community committed to prayer.

"Prayer is that wellspring of our discipleship," he said. "It is through prayer, both individually and communally, especially in the celebration of Mass, that we discern the will of God in our lives in order to take on the heart and mind of Jesus Christ.

"It is that very Christ-centered conviction that has enabled those who have gone before us to persevere in faith, hope and charity, so that you, who are part of this parish today, have that foundation, something to build upon. It must be so with us as well." †

God created human beings to love and be loved, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—God's

"dream" for human beings is that they would know they are loved by him, that they would love him in return and that they would love one another, Pope Francis said.

"In fact, we were created to love and

be loved," the pope said on Oct. 29 before reciting the *Angelus* prayer with visitors in St. Peter's Square.

Pope Francis focused his remarks on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Matthew, in which Jesus tells the Pharisees that the greatest commandments are "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37, 39).

Jesus lived according to those two commandments, the pope said. His preaching and actions were all motivated by what was essential, "that is, love."

"Love gives energy and fruitfulness to life and to the journey of faith," he said. "Without love, both life and faith remain sterile."

True fidelity to God involves loving God and loving the other people he created, the pope said. "You can

do many good things, fulfill many precepts, good things, but if you do not have love, they are useless."

The ideal of love Jesus offers in the Gospel passage, he said, also corresponds to "the most authentic desire of our hearts."

Jesus gave himself in the Eucharist precisely to fulfill that desire and to give people the grace they need to love others like he loves them, the pope said. †



Pope Francis

Hispanic ministry coordinator finds joy in helping others

By Natalie Hoefler

Saul Llacsca recalls the defining moment in his life with a quiet, reverent voice.

"I was 14 years old," he says. "I saw my mother crying in my back yard, kneeling down and crying.

"I asked her, 'Why are you crying?' And she told me, 'I beg God to bring every day food to our table.'

"I saw in her an example of Jesus Christ. Jesus laid down his life for us. At that point I said to myself, 'Why can I not lay down my life so that others can live?'"

Since that day in his hometown of Tarija, Bolivia, in South America, Llacsca, now 31, has "felt God calling me to do more things—more than just helping others—to follow him."

That call led him to Indianapolis, where this summer he became the archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry in July.

But Llacsca has always had a heart for helping others through the Church.

"I grew up in the Church," he says, noting that his mother was the coordinator of religious education for his parish.

After becoming a catechist himself, he says, "I was always trying to see what God was calling me to.

"It seemed I loved to help my neighbors. It seemed I really enjoyed doing things for them, things to help other people, that I can change some lives.

"And that was what was rewarding for me. Just to see other people happy, that made my heart happy."

Nevertheless, his father wanted him to earn a law degree, "then you can do whatever you want with your life," Llacsca recalls.

He did earn his law degree, then went on to earn a master's degree in Catholic philosophy as well as studying theology for two years.

In 2011, both of Llacsca's parents died.

The year after, he joined his brother in Naperville, Ill.

"My brother told me, 'Saul, would you like to learn English so you can help more people?' That was very tempting!" Llacsca

says with a laugh.

He attended seminary to become a priest for the Archdiocese of New York, but later discerned he was not called to the priesthood.

Llacsca's years in the seminary were not without impact. As a seminarian in October of 2015, he was invited to serve a Vespers liturgy presided over by Pope Francis in New York.

"It was very touching to see Pope Francis face to face," he said. "I got to hold the book for him. He is Peter, through all the divine succession. There are simply no words [to describe seeing] Peter the Rock in front of you."

Oscar Castellanos, director of the archdiocesan Office of Intercultural Ministry, describes Llacsca's role as archdiocesan Hispanic ministry coordinator as "becoming a liaison with other diocesan offices, other groups and ministries."

"Ten years ago, [archdiocesan Hispanic ministry] was more focused on pastoral ministry as they were adapting to the culture," Castellanos explains. "We were trying to provide the basic needs for sacramental preparation. ...

"But it was becoming like a mini-diocese—providing services, but somehow disconnected with the greater Church.

"Now I see how [the archdiocesan role] is shifting more toward someone who can direct [parish] Hispanic ministries to the other offices. We're trying to collaborate."

The job is not without its challenges. "There are cultural differences

between Latinos," Llacsca notes. "Latinos from South America are not all the same, and they are different from [Latinos from] North or Central America. Different communities have different needs, but we're open to working with all of them."

Regardless of what country Latino Catholics in the archdiocese hail from, Llacsca hopes "to help them to be more integrated and more useful to society, [and] to really also show the gifts and the beauty of the Latino people in the United States—but always keeping our



Saul Llacsca, new archdiocesan coordinator for Hispanic ministry, smiles before offering the opening words at the archdiocesan V *Encuentro* event at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish on Sept. 30. He started in the role in July. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

focus on Jesus Christ."

And when he's not doing that, Llacsca likes to spend time in a few other places: in Naperville visiting family, on the road running, and in the kitchen baking.

"Growing up with three sisters and being the youngest [of seven], in some ways I was forced into the kitchen," he says with a laugh.

His talent has not gone unnoticed. "He's already taking orders" for baked goods from his co-workers, says Castellanos.

More importantly, he says, Llacsca's adaptability and his passion for the faith also stand out.

"We were looking for someone who had experience, yet [was] open to working in a situation that's very

unique, with transitioning to the new archbishop, with an office that is also transitioning," says Castellanos, who has served less than a year in his own role.

"When we met Saul and had the interview, that was something we immediately noticed," he says. "He was willing to say, 'This is what I bring to the table, but I'm here to learn.' ...

"[And] number one is his passion when he talks about his faith. Every time I had the opportunity to talk on the phone or e-mail, I noticed his passion."

That passion exudes from Llacsca.

"I love my Church so much," he says. "My hope is in my God and my Church. That is what keeps me moving forward." †

Coordinador del ministerio hispano encuentra alegría en ayudar a los demás

Por Natalie Hoefler

Saúl Llacsca rememora el momento que definió el rumbo de su vida con una voz apacible y reverente.

"Tenía 14 años," recuerda. "Vi a mi madre llorando en el patio de atrás, arrodillada y llorando.

"Le pregunté: '¿Por qué lloras?' Y me respondió: 'Le ruego a Dios todos los días para que ponga comida en nuestra mesa.'"

"Vi en ella el ejemplo de Jesucristo. Jesús entregó su vida por nosotros. Y en ese momento me dije: '¿Por qué no puedo yo entregar mi vida para que otros puedan vivir?'"

A partir de ese día, en su natal Tarija, en Bolivia, Sudamérica, Llacsca, de 31 años, ha "sentido que Dios me llama a ser más; más que simplemente ayudar a los demás: a seguirlo."

Ese llamado lo condujo a Indianápolis, donde se convirtió en julio de este verano en el coordinador del ministerio hispano de la arquidiócesis.

Pero Llacsca siempre ha sentido en su corazón el deseo de ayudar a otros a través de la Iglesia.

"Crecí en la Iglesia," observa, destacando que su madre era la coordinadora de educación religiosa de su parroquia.

Después de convertirse él mismo en catequista, afirma, "siempre intentaba descubrir qué me pedía Dios que hiciera.

"Parecía que me encantaba ayudar a mis vecinos; en verdad disfrutaba hacer cosas para ayudarlos a ellos y a los

demás, y el hecho de poder transformar vidas.

"Y en ello me sentía recompensado. Con solo ver la alegría en las otras personas, yo me sentía feliz."

Sin embargo, su padre quería que él se graduara de abogado "y después, podrás hacer lo que quieras con tu vida," recuerda Llacsca.

Efectivamente estudió Derecho y cursó una maestría en filosofía católica, además de estudiar teología durante dos años.

En 2011, los dos padres de Llacsca fallecieron.

Al año siguiente, se reunió con su hermano en Naperville, Illinois.

"Mi hermano me dijo: 'Saúl, ¿te gustaría aprender inglés para poder ayudar a más personas?' ¡Esa idea me resultó muy tentadora!" Comenta Llacsca riéndose.

Cursó estudios de seminarista para convertirse en sacerdote de la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, pero más adelante se dio cuenta de que no estaba llamado al sacerdocio.

Sin embargo, los años que pasó en el seminario no fueron en vano. En octubre de 2015, como seminarista, fue invitado a servir en las Vísperas que ofició el papa Francisco en Nueva York.

"Fue muy conmovedor ver al Papa Francisco frente a frente," recuerda. "Le sujeté el misal. A través de la sucesión divina, él es Pedro y sencillamente no existen palabras [para describir la experiencia de ver] a Pedro, la roca, delante de ti."

Óscar Castellanos, director de la Oficina para el ministerio intercultural de la arquidiócesis, describe la función

de Llacsca como coordinador del ministerio hispano arquidiocesano como un "enlace entre las demás oficinas diocesanas, otros grupos y ministerios."

"Hace 10 años, [el ministerio hispano de la arquidiócesis] se concentraba más en el ministerio pastoral que en adaptarse a la cultura," explica Castellanos. "Intentábamos atender las necesidades básicas de la preparación sacramental.

"Pero nos estábamos convirtiendo en una mini diócesis, prestando servicios, pero de algún modo desconectados de la Iglesia madre.

"Ahora observo que [la función de la arquidiócesis] está cambiando, más bien enfocándose en alguien que pueda dirigir los ministerios hispanos [de las parroquias] hacia las demás dependencias. Estamos intentando colaborar."

Pero esto encierra sus propios desafíos.

"Existen diferencias culturales entre los latinos," señala Llacsca.

"Los latinos de Sudamérica no son todos iguales, y son distintos de los de Norte o Centroamérica. Las distintas comunidades tienen diversas necesidades, pero estamos dispuestos a trabajar con todas ellas."

Independientemente del país del que provengan los católicos latinos de la arquidiócesis, Llacsca espera "ayudarlos a integrarse más y ser más útiles a la sociedad, para de esta forma también demostrar los dones y la belleza del pueblo latino en Estados Unidos, pero siempre manteniendo nuestro norte en Jesucristo."

Y cuando no se está ocupando de estas

cosas, Llacsca disfruta pasar tiempo en otros lugares: en Naperville visitando a su familia, trotando en los senderos y horneando en la cocina.

"Al criarme con tres hermanas y ser el menor [de siete hijos], en cierta forma me obligaron a meterme en la cocina," dice riéndose.

Su talento no ha pasado desapercibido.

Sus compañeros de trabajo "ya le han hecho pedidos" de pasteles, afirma Castellanos.

Pero lo que es más importante, asegura que la capacidad de adaptación de Llacsca y su pasión por la fe son aspectos que lo distinguen.

"Buscábamos a alguien que tuviera experiencia y, al mismo tiempo, estuviera dispuesto a trabajar en una situación que resulta bastante peculiar, con la transición al nuevo arzobispo y un despacho que también se encuentra en transición," comenta Castellanos, quien se ha desempeñado en su propio cargo desde hace menos de un año.

"Cuando nos reunimos con Saúl y lo entrevistamos, fue algo que notamos inmediatamente," afirma. "Estaba dispuesto a decir: 'Esto es lo que yo puedo aportar, pero estoy aquí para aprender.' ...

"Y lo principal es su pasión al hablar acerca de su fe. Cada vez que tengo la oportunidad de hablar con él por teléfono o por correo electrónico, percibo esa pasión."

Llacsca exuda esa pasión. "Amo a mi Iglesia" recalca. "Mi esperanza se encuentra en mi Dios y en mi Iglesia. Eso es lo que me motiva a seguir adelante." †

Ecumenical dialogue fosters unity now and in the future

By David Gibson

Something virtually unthinkable happened during the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s. Numerous Christians who were not Catholic were invited to serve as formal observers of the council proceedings at the Vatican.

These observers' surprising presence at the council confirmed that a centuries-long polemical era of disputes and contention, a time when divided Christians basically turned their backs to each other, was undergoing a profound transformation.

The council offered the world's Catholic bishops and its official observers many opportunities to turn toward each other in conversation and friendship. The observers included Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, representatives of the world's Orthodox Churches and others.

Simply put, the council enabled the bishops and the observers to get to know each other and sometimes, no doubt, to better understand each other's faith convictions. Did more unite divided Christians than separated them? The realization that this was the case would take deeper and deeper root in the decades to follow.

No longer, for example, would conflicts of Reformation and Counter-Reformation times be allowed easily to devour the relationships of divided Christians.

One U.S. council observer was the Rev. Albert Outler, a United Methodist theologian. In a 1986 speech, he told how Vatican II opened "a new era of cordial coexistence between Roman Catholics and other Christians," and "moved us beyond grudging 'tolerance' toward truly mutual love."

George Lindbeck, then a theologian at Yale University in New Haven, Conn., was a Lutheran observer. Seven years after the council, he spoke of the "remarkable amount" of agreement being witnessed on official levels in the faith traditions regarding the values a Christian way of life implies.

One October evening in 1963, Blessed Paul VI met in his private library with the Vatican II observers. "What could be simpler, more natural

or more human," this pope asked, than "to speak to one another and to get to know one another?"

But "there is more," he remarked. The council provided opportunities "to listen to each other, to pray for each other and, after such long years of separation and after such painful polemics, to begin again to love each other."

He shared his assurance that "we are turning toward a new thing to be born, a dream to be realized."

It was time, Blessed Paul proposed, for divided Christians "not to look to the past but toward the present, and above all toward the future." Remaining fixed on the past meant running the risk of "getting lost in the maze of history and undoubtedly reopening old wounds which have never completely healed."

The pope did not spell out which "old wounds" he meant. But among them, surely, were points vigorously disputed in the 16th century when dividing lines between communities of Western Christians were drawn and so much that they shared in terms of faith began to recede from view.

One line of division involved the doctrine of justification. "Opposing interpretations and applications of the biblical message of justification were in the 16th century a principal cause of the division of the Western Church," says the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" signed in 1999 by leading representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church.

At issue was Martin Luther's insistence, central to his theology, that Christians do not earn salvation through good works, but are saved through faith.



Pope Francis talks with the Rev. Martin Junge, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, during an ecumenical event at the Malmo Arena in Malmo, Sweden on Oct. 31, 2016, that launched a yearlong observance of the 500th anniversary of the start of the Protestant Reformation. Ecumenical dialogue over the past half century is aimed at fostering great Christian unity now and in the future. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

If the presence at Vatican II of observers who were not Catholics had been nearly unimaginable, given the realities of past times, the degree of agreement on the doctrine of justification reached on the eve of the 21st century by Lutherans and Catholics was earthshaking!

Yet, Lutherans and Catholics confessed together in the 1999 declaration that "by grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works."

Much later, in a 2016 statement, Pope Francis and Bishop Munib Younan, president of the Lutheran World Federation, agreed that divided Christians seeking greater unity must not get detoured by past conflicts. Instead, they should look to the present moment and to the future. Their statement anticipated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation being

observed in 2017.

"We emphatically reject all hatred and violence, past and present," the two leaders stressed. They prayed for the healing of "memories that cloud our view of one another."

They recommended that at this time Catholics and Lutherans should work together for "dignity, justice, peace and reconciliation" in the world, welcoming the stranger, coming to the aid of those forced to flee their homelands and defending refugees' rights.

Scholars still will study the important points of faith that erected walls between Christians in the 16th century and afterward. But, as Pope Francis and Bishop Younan said, "what unites us is greater than what divides us."

Instead of "conflicts of the past," their advice now is to allow "God's gift of unity among us" to "guide cooperation and deepen our solidarity."

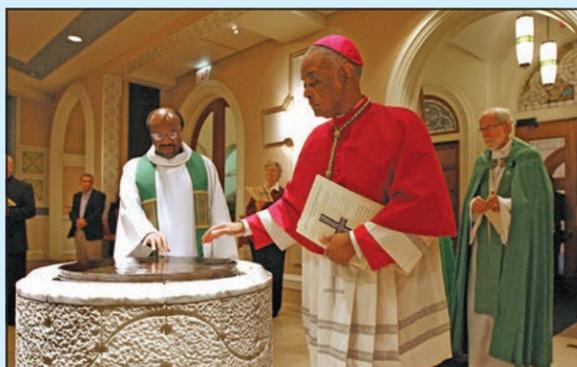
(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service's editorial staff for 37 years.) †

Doctrine of justification no longer divides Catholics and most Lutherans

By Samuel Wagner

On Oct. 31, 1999, leading representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church signed the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification." What is this? Today, the doctrine of justification isn't usually a common theme on Sunday mornings in Catholic or Lutheran parishes.

Moreover, understanding the means of justification



The Rev. Ishmael Noko, left, then-general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, and Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta dip their hands in holy water at the start of an Oct. 1, 2009, Vespers service marking the 10th anniversary of the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago. (CNS photo/Karen Callaway, Catholic New World)

("by faith and through grace") might seem like an exercise in mental gymnastics rather than anything of real practical value in our day-to-day lives. Yet, these were Church-dividing issues for nearly five centuries.

Awareness of Martin Luther's historical context can be helpful in understanding the joint declaration. Luther, though typically remembered as the quintessential rebel, believed himself to be a faithful servant of the Church until his death in 1546. As modern scholarship, both Lutheran and Catholic, has made clear, Luther never intended to divide the Church.

In the spring of 1517, the stage was set for a perfect storm. Johann Tetzel, a Dominican friar, was in Germany under papal order to raise funds for the building of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The strategy was the sale of indulgences. For a fee, the Church would intervene and shorten the length of purgatory for loved ones. It was an effective and popular scheme among the townspeople.

However, the practice troubled Luther, then an Augustinian friar and professor of theology in Wittenberg. He had a simple question: How is a sinner justified? That is, who or what forgives sins and grants salvation? Is it something we do?

Further, as the sale of indulgences implied, could the Church, or the pope, mediate forgiveness and salvation?

Luther had his "aha" moment in reading St. Paul's Letter to the Romans. He arrived at the understanding that Christ alone mediates forgiveness of sins and grants salvation; salvation is a gift of God's grace through faith. Luther's writings around this insight, in addition

to his "95 Theses," didn't spark the fruitful theological exchange within the Church he had intended.

Instead, it began a rupture in the Church. In 1521, Luther was excommunicated. What ensued was hostility and an unwillingness to dialogue on both sides. For the reformers, justification by faith alone became the doctrine by which the Church stands or falls, a view held in opposition to so-called "works of righteousness."

Caricatures of this issue ("Catholics believe they are saved by good works," or "Lutherans don't believe good works are important") were common for several centuries. It was not until the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) that a genuine theological discussion between Catholics and Lutherans became possible.

To date, the great achievement of those conversations is a joint understanding that we are justified, or saved, by our faith through God's grace, and that good works are a natural result of a life lived in Christ. Christian living is not a choice between good works or faith, but an interconnectedness of the two.

The "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" is a milestone in Catholic-Lutheran dialogue. The document expresses, in theological language, that Catholics and Lutherans of the World Lutheran Federation agree that salvation is mediated by Christ, by faith, through God's grace, and that this necessarily leads to good works that further God's kingdom.

(Samuel Wagner is director of Dialogue and Catholic Identity at Georgetown University in Washington.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Fathers Phil and Dan Berrigan were anti-war activists in the 1960s

Last week, I wrote about some of the ways our country and Church changed during the 1960s, one of the most tumultuous decades in U.S. history.



This was also the period when the controversial Vietnam War was taking place. This week, I'll write about some Catholics' opposition to this war—specifically, about the Berrigan brothers.

Philip and Daniel Berrigan were both priests—Phil a Josephite and Dan a Jesuit. Phil began their symbolic acts against the war on Oct. 27, 1967, when he and three others sneaked into a draft board office in Baltimore and poured blood, some of it their own, on some draft files. The blood was supposed to conflate Christ's sacrifice on the cross with the lives sacrificed in the war. Phil was sentenced to six years in prison for that act.

However, on May 17, 1968, while Phil was out on bail, both brothers and seven others broke into another draft

board office, in Catonsville, Md., and seized some 600 files that they burned in the parking lot, using napalm. Then they waited to be arrested, hoping to dramatize the connections they saw between resistance to the Vietnam War and Christ's passion.

This ignited "the Catholic Left," composed mainly of anti-war clergy, nuns and laity associated with Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Movement, aided by the writings of Thomas Merton. They staged more than 100 raids in various parts of the country.

The Catonsville Nine were tried in Baltimore. During the trial, Dan Berrigan, a gifted poet and writer, took notes that he turned into a play, *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*. It ran for 29 days on Broadway. The defendants were sentenced to up to three-and-a-half years in prison.

After an appeal failed, five of them, including the Berrigans, went underground, immediately being put on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. Phil surrendered in two weeks, but Dan was a fugitive for another four months, appearing from time to time in his black sweater and beret at anti-war

rallies. He was eventually captured in Rhode Island and sent to prison for two years.

Meanwhile, Phil, while in prison, was discovered exchanging letters with a nun, Sister Elizabeth McAlister, about blowing up steam tunnels under the Pentagon. Their trial ended in a hung jury, but the news leaked out that Phil and Liz had "married" in a private exchange of vows (later renewed in Danbury prison with Dan as a witness).

The Berrigan brothers were to continue their protests against war after their release from prison, even after the Vietnam War was over. In 1980, they organized the Ploughshares Movement. That year, too, they and six others hammered on two nose cones at a G.E. missile plant and poured blood on documents. Ten years of trials and appeals followed, but they didn't go back to prison.

Phil died on Dec. 6, 2002. Dan went on to teach poetry at Fordham University and assisted AIDS patients, but always remained an activist. Besides protesting nuclear war, he was a pro-life activist and an opponent of capital punishment. He died on April 30, 2016. †

A More Human Society/
Richard Doerflinger

Fallen show no greater love than this

President Donald J. Trump often says things that invite criticism. So I'm puzzled when his critics bother to



attack even his more innocent remarks.

The president is charged with insensitivity for saying to the widow of a fallen soldier that "he knew what he signed up for ... but when it happens, it hurts anyway."

I don't know whether he said exactly this, and if so in what manner. But it's what my wife and I told ourselves, and what friends said to us, after our son Thomas was killed in 2004. He was shot while providing cover fire for his Army comrades, as they confronted insurgents attacking police stations in Mosul, Iraq.

We meant that Thomas was not the random victim of some meaningless accident. He deliberately risked his life to protect others. He was a hero.

Our soldiers do know what they signed up for, before going into combat. They are given a questionnaire about their preferences for funeral arrangements in case they don't survive.

Thomas wanted to be buried at our local Catholic cemetery, not at Arlington, in a suit rather than a uniform. "The Army has me for five years, or until something happens to me," he told us. "But eternity is mine."

There are many arguments about why we send some of our finest young people to risk their lives in the Middle East. After 9/11, a reason that made sense to many was: We send them to draw the fire of the terrorists and return that fire, so the terrorists can't come here and kill thousands of innocent men, women and children. They lay their lives on the line for others.

This ran through my mind when I read about a recent court decision, claiming that a Peace Cross near my old neighborhood in Maryland is an unconstitutional "establishment of religion." The cross memorializes 49 local men killed in World War I. It is part of a memorial park that has clearly secular symbols, but is set apart in the middle of a traffic circle and is the tallest monument.

In a 2-to-1 decision, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said this cross illegally uses public land to teach Christianity. The court demands that it be removed, or—I'm not kidding—that the arms be chopped off to make it an obelisk.

Maybe the court didn't know that obelisks were symbols of an ancient Egyptian religion, worshipping the sun god Ra. Or that the world's most famous obelisk stands in (gasp) St. Peter's Square in Rome. (The Washington Monument doesn't count—it's made of many stones, and genuine obelisks are of one piece.)

But the important question is: What does the cross symbolize that makes it appropriate for war memorials—even for the fallen who may not be Christians?

The answer seems obvious. Jesus is the pre-eminent example of a "man for others." He loved children, humble sinners and the poor; he challenged the "powers that be," and was crucified for it as he predicted. He knew what he signed up for.

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). Jesus taught this, and lived by it. Christians additionally believe he died for all our sins, and triumphed over death in his resurrection.

But his saying is invoked at funerals of any religion or none—for fallen soldiers, and others (missionaries, Peace Corps volunteers, police officers, firefighters) who pay the ultimate price while helping others. In this human sense, they are "Christ figures."

Perhaps other judges will realize this when the case is appealed.

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

Instead of subscribing to what the world values, live by God's standards

Recently, I had the opportunity to listen to some gifted guest speakers at an event. The speakers were prominent, witty and had lots of letters behind their names.



Two of the keynotes had such impressive degrees and titles that their names and credentials barely fit on their allotted introductory slides.

One speaker was a renowned medical doctor, entrepreneur and faculty member at a prestigious university. He shared stories that brought listeners to tears.

Another was a businessman, world traveler and writer. He could speak multiple languages, and mesmerized the crowd with his photographs and poetry.

The speaker who most captured my interest was a professor of education who didn't wow the crowd with the places she'd been or the patients she restored to wellness. She simply shared an idea that empowered everyone seated in that auditorium.

She explained that she recently returned from a sabbatical, wherein she spent all of her time with family, reflecting on her faith and reading voraciously. She mentioned reading the

works of author Parker Palmer and shared one of his nuggets of wisdom: the idea that we may not be able to change the whole world, but we can change the world three feet around us. Simply by how we live our daily lives, we have great power to create positive change.

Suddenly, I felt empowered. I was reminded that I don't have to have multiple degrees or lots of money or frequent flyer miles to make my mark on the world.

It was as if God spoke through this woman to tell us that we don't have to be the "best" and do the "most" to do his work and please him.

In the midst of constant troubling stories and images in the media, it's easy for us to throw our hands up and forget that God has strategically placed us *right where we are* to better the world around us.

We are called to change our world three feet at a time, out of love. We can manifest God's love in some pretty strange places—in the waiting room at the orthodontist's office, in our weekly office staff meeting, in line at the post office or on a street corner waiting for the bus and sharing an umbrella with a stranger who wasn't prepared for rain.

That speaker reminded me to release the feeling of being overwhelmed and accept that I can act as an agent of God to

change my part of the world for the better.

We all have the power to make our little corner of the world more patient, loving and kind.

Musical artist Sherry Newcomer, in collaboration with Parker Palmer, wrote a beautiful song called "Three Feet or So."

A few of the lyrics:

"It's not out there somewhere,

It's right here.

If I start by being kind,

Love usually follows right behind.

It nods its head and softly hums

Honey, that's the way it's done ...

I can't change the whole world,

but I can change the world I know—

Within three feet or so."

St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, "What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family."

We are called to start where we are. In our modern, complex world, it's easy to assume we have to take it to a higher level. The truth is that we please God by loving those he put right under our noses.

I'm trying to remind myself to live by God's standards, instead of subscribing to what the world values—three feet at a time.

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Reflection/Sally Meyer

Like spreading ripples, late friend's life a beautiful example of love and faith

When we lose someone we love, questions begin to surface. Why did this happen to such a good person? Can I envision living my life differently now with this new empty place?



Do I really know God's purpose for my life? Does what I do really matter?

I watched the rays of the sun reflect off the surface of the lake. As I sat at the edge of the water, I felt a deep sense of sadness and loss. I had just left the funeral of my close friend, Annie, and I wanted some time to be alone with my own thoughts. She loved nature, and I was taking the opportunity to reflect on how grateful I was to have known her.

Without focusing on anything in particular, I picked up a small pebble and threw it into the lake. I immediately noticed how the ripples

formed a perfect circle and moved outward. I repeated this process several times. Each time I threw a rock (regardless of size), I was amazed at how large the circles of waves became and how long they lasted before they disappeared. It also occurred to me that, when the ripples formed, they expanded in perfect circles. As the waves moved in a steady rhythm on their journey outward, one ripple didn't become misshapen or disconnected from the others.

My thoughts returned to Annie. Her life impacted so many people—more than I will ever know. Just like the ripples of the waves spreading out, so does Annie's beautiful example of love and faith. Her influence will always be felt by those who knew her and loved her.

Those moments sitting by the lake also reminded me of God's providential care.

Our lives are impacted by many things, good and bad. But just like the waves of circles in the water, God holds us steady

and somehow keeps us connected to one another according to his will.

While I may not always recognize and feel this, or understand it fully, I believe it.

Even in my sadness and grief, I know that I am included in an unending rhythm of God's love and care. I am grateful that there is a merciful God who holds each human heart close to himself, his Son, and his Spirit, all laboring to create harmony with what is and what is yet to be. In a mysterious yet beautiful way, watching those waves helped me affirm my worth and purpose in this life and feel secure about Annie's in the next.

I have lost a special friend. But by the grace of God, I am more at peace knowing that Annie and I remain connected in a beautiful circle that will be forever.

(Sally Meyer is a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis and a teacher at St. Jude School in Indianapolis.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, November 5, 2017

- Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13
- Matthew 23:1-12

The Book of Malachi provides the first reading for this weekend's Mass. The prophet's name, Malachi, reveals his role. In Hebrew it means "messenger of God." As a prophet, he brought God's message to the people.

Often in prophetic writings, as in this weekend's reading, the prophets wrote in a way in which God spoke in the first person. The prophets presented themselves merely as earthly instruments through whom God spoke, but the actual communicator was God.

Malachi did not write at a time of crisis for God's people, as was the case for other prophets, or when life was filled with peril and destitution. Malachi, nevertheless, shared with all the prophets the opinion that when the people were sluggish in their religious observance, or when they had altogether rejected God, they risked their own well-being.

Lack of fervor, in the estimation of the prophets, was the height of ingratitude. By contrast, God always was merciful, always faithful to the covenant.

This weekend's reading, again with God's words given in first person, accuses the people of sin. God is the perfect and all-knowing judge. He is merciful, but does not prevent people from sinning. It is their choice. He also does not interrupt the consequences of sinning.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the second reading. In this reading, Paul reassures the Christians of Thessalonica, to whom the letter is addressed, that he cares deeply for them and for their spiritual vitality.

Essential to these feelings of care and love has been Paul's proclamation of the Gospel. He could do nothing greater for the Thessalonians than to share with them the saving story of Jesus.

For its third reading, the Church presents a passage from St. Matthew's Gospel. It is the last in a series of stories in which Jesus discusses or argues with the Pharisees or with others. As often is the case elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus

denounces the Pharisees' hypocrisy.

Pharisees were learned in Jewish law and tradition. They usually occupied central places in synagogues, and were regarded as knowledgeable in religious matters, hence the Lord's reference to the "chair of Moses" (Mt 23:2). Still, they were human and thus subject to temptation. They were not perfect, and would have known it if they were intellectually honest.

Humans are always insecure and confused, burdened by their inadequacies. To compensate, to convince themselves or others of their superiority, humans often seek places of privilege or control over others.

Jesus tells the disciples to serve others. He calls them to be bold. He encourages them. With God's grace, nothing needs to be feared.

Reflection

For weeks in these readings from St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus has assumed the role of the final authority, of the ultimate judge. Jesus pronounces on the most supreme of all laws, the law of Moses.

For Matthew, Jesus judges as the Son of God, in a position to pronounce on anything and everything.

Matthew depicts Jesus always presenting the wisest and most reasonable of judgments on matters that usually perplex others.

In this weekend's Gospel reading, Jesus directly addresses the most basic of human inadequacies, the deep fear within us all that we, even unwittingly, will make mistakes and pay the price.

Be strong, the Lord admonishes, there is nothing to fear. Be sincere. Follow the Lord in confidence.

Supporting this view are the readings from First Thessalonians and Malachi. God is always with us in mercy, love, guidance and protection. He sent us the prophets, the Apostles and, of course, Jesus.

Still, God does not overwhelm us. We must voluntarily turn to God. We must hear and love God. Always crippling us will be our embedded fears and defenses, but in conquering self, we do not leave ourselves at risk. God strengthens us. †



Daily Readings

Monday, November 6

Romans 11:29-36

Psalm 69:30-31, 33-34, 36

Luke 14:12-14

Tuesday, November 7

Romans 12:5-16b

Psalm 131:1cde, 2-3

Luke 14:15-24

Wednesday, November 8

Romans 13:8-10

Psalm 112:1b-2, 4-5, 9

Luke 14:25-33

Thursday, November 9

The Dedication of the

Lateran Basilica

Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12

Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9

1 Corinthians 3:9c-11, 16-17

John 2:13-22

Friday, November 10

St. Leo the Great, pope and doctor of the Church

Romans 15:14-21

Psalm 98:1-4

Luke 16:1-8

Saturday, November 11

St. Martin of Tours, bishop

Romans 16:3-9, 16, 22-27

Psalm 145:2-5, 10-11

Luke 16:9-15

Sunday, November 12

Thirty-second Sunday

in Ordinary Time

Wisdom 6:12-16

Psalm 63:2-8

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

or 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

Matthew 25:1-13

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Annulments can be sought in dioceses where a petitioner currently lives

QI have been divorced for three years and need to proceed with getting an annulment. My ex-husband is getting remarried next month, and I am getting married again next spring (eight months from now). I did not pursue this before because I had been led to believe that my ex-husband would have to be involved in the process, and I knew that he would not want to do that. Now, from a recent column of yours, I understand this is not so and that is such a relief.

But I do have a few questions. I no longer live in the diocese where I got married: Can I just go to the priest in my current parish and get the application form, and where do I submit it?

And is it true that if I get an annulment, then my children will have been born out of wedlock? And how long does the annulment process take? (Virginia)

AYou may file for a declaration of nullity of your previous marriage, commonly known as an annulment, in the diocese where the marriage took place, in the diocese in which you now reside or in the diocese in which your ex-husband now resides. Please note that while your ex-husband is not required to participate in the process, he must be informed of

the process by the Tribunal and given the opportunity to participate.

You would be well-advised to consult your parish priest right away and ask him which of the dioceses he thinks might be able to process the case more quickly.

There is some variation on this, depending on the size of the marriage tribunal staff and the number of cases that are pending. In many dioceses, once the paperwork is accepted, it could take upward of 12-18 months for the testimony to be evaluated (including that of the witnesses), any necessary follow-up questions to be asked and a decision to be rendered.

So your time frame already may be a bit ambitious if your hope is to get married in a Catholic ceremony. And parishes are generally not permitted to schedule a wedding until a declaration of nullity has been granted.

Ask your parish priest for the necessary forms. He will either have them or ask the diocese to send them to you.

Finally, as to the legitimacy of your children, not to worry—the Church's *Code of Canon Law* speaks to this: canon 1137 says that "children conceived or born of a valid or putative marriage are legitimate," and canon 1061.3 explains that a "putative" marriage is one that had been entered into in good faith by at least one of the parties.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

My Journey to God

With My Own Eyes

By C.S. Likins

I saw Jesus take my Dad to Heaven at the moment of his death
My Dad lay still with his arms at his sides
barely a breath from parted lips
He's gone—I heard someone say
and it was at that moment
I was blessed by God to have the veil lifted
and the light of the Holy Spirit showed
Our Lord Jesus Christ to me
He was a giant
bent down on one knee
So big he could not have stood up in that room
leaning forward with outstretched arms
My Dad sat up straight and lifted his arms
eyes shining and smiling brightly
at the recognition of Jesus
the Ultimate Loved One
there to lift him up

(C.S. Likins is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. An angel on a tombstone is adorned with a necklace of flowers and a rosary at Gethsemani Abbey in Trappist, Ky., in this photo from July 8.)

(File photo by Natalie Hofer)



Martin de Porres

1579 - 1639

feast - November 3

This illegitimate son of a freed Panamanian slave and a Spanish knight became a hero to the people of Lima, Peru, his birthplace, for his compassionate care of the sick and poor. Apprenticed at age 12 to a barber-surgeon, Martin also learned herbal medicine from his mother. After working for several years at a Dominican monastery as a Third Order member, he made his profession as a lay brother in 1603. He founded an orphanage and founding hospital, ministered to African slaves, practiced great penances and experienced mystical gifts. Martin was carried to his grave by prelates and noblemen and all Peruvians acclaimed him their beloved saint. He is the patron of hairdressers and interracial justice.

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.

BATTIES, Mark D., III, 73, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Sept. 28. Husband of Liliberdia Batties. Father of Robin McCann, Robin Pritchett, Tawana Ruffin, Dawn, Shannon, Darryl and Michael Blanchard, William Pate, Anthony Robinson, Shawn and Mark Batties IV. Brother of Thomas Batties, Sr. Grandfather of nine.

BENSON, Kenneth, 74, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Oct. 7. Husband of Mary Benson. Father of Jonathan and Stephen Benson. Brother of Katherine Van Dyke. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of one.

CISLAK, Margaret F. (Noble), 84, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 19. Wife of Peter Cislak. Mother of Carol DeSmul, Susan Sokolsky and Gregory Cislak. Sister of Barbara Miller. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of five.

COOKE, Charles W., 67, Prince of Peace, Madison, Oct. 24. Husband of Marina Cooke. Father of Jody Gray and John Cooke. Brother of Priscilla Branham, Carolyn Thieman and J. Robert Cooke. Grandfather of nine.

EBERT, Kathleen, 71, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Oct. 5. Wife of Jim Ebert. Mother of Julie Becher, Jill Ebert-Lasher, Kim and Jeff Ebert. Sister of Jane Benda, Ramona Pfaff, Marilyn,

Benedictine Sr. Paulette, Michael and Richard Seng. Grandmother of 11.

FLEDDERMAN, Ronald H., 78, St. Louis, Batesville, Oct. 17. Husband of Jacqueline Fledderman. Father of Ronda Green, Rachelle Matthews, Jay, Jody and Joel Fledderman. Brother of Susan Bonelli and Pat Ertel. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of six.

FORESMAN, Gloria, 87, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 4. Mother of Teresa Brugma, Kathy Faulkner, John, Rob and Will Foresman. Grandmother of five.

HAWKINS, James E., 84, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Oct. 9. Husband of Laura Hawkins. Father of Sandy Clegg, Michele Lyall, Dan and Patrick Hawkins. Brother of Dan and Dale Hawkins. Grandfather of nine.

HAYS, Patricia, 72, St. Agnes, Nashville, Oct. 11. Wife of Jim Hays. Mother of Theresa Mixon and Sherry Timmerman. Daughter of Margaret Rush

Very. Sister of Helen Scott, Jeannie Stewart and Val Tingley. Grandmother of one.

HENRY, Alma, 92, Holy Family, New Albany, Oct. 15. Mother of Karen Johnson, James, Mark and Phillip Henry. Sister of Rosalie Swadish and Robert Lenfert. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 19.

KAHL, Ruth A. (Ritz), 97, St. Mary, New Albany, Oct. 19. Mother of Sandy Kahl Frost. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of seven.

LAKER, Helen L., 66, St. Louis, Batesville, Oct. 21. Wife of Eugene Laker. Mother of Rae Crain, Jan Hogan, Lynn Norwold, Amy Ronnebaum and Jill Tekulve. Daughter of Erma Amberger. Sister of Mary Best, Marsha Luers and Eleanor Miller. Grandmother of 11.

LAUZON, Kim, 61, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Oct. 15. Husband of Mary Jane Lauzon. Father of Michelle Stephens and Matthew Lauzon. Brother of Maryann McArthur, Arthur, Bryan and Father Kris Lauzon.

Grandfather of seven.

MARTIN, Zoe N., 7, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Oct. 20. Daughter of Laura Martin. Granddaughter of Bud and Linda Martin. Great-granddaughter of Ruth Ann VanNote.

MATYI, Stephen R., 82, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 11. Husband of Frances Matyi, Father of Andrea Feeney, Laura and Stephen Matyi. Grandfather of six.

MCCARTHY, William G., 91, St. Patrick, Terre Haute, Aug. 26. Husband of Susan McCarthy. Father of Susan Reynolds, Isabel, Mary Catherine, Daniel and Joe McCarthy. Brother of Ellen Rossi. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of three.

MEYROSE, Donna K., 72, St. Mary, Greensburg, Oct. 16. Wife of Michael Meyrose. Mother of Michelle Hensley, Jeffrey and Kevin Meyrose. Sister of Linda Klene. Grandmother of two.

PFISTER, Dorothy, 84, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Oct. 19. Wife

of Gordon Pfister. Mother of Kathleen, Marcella and Daniel Higdon. Stepmother of Binky Gadd, Tina Streul and Randy Pfister. Sister of Martha Johnston, Sue Pfeiffer, Dora Zweydooff, John and Ronald Durbin. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 23.

RICHARDS, Alice M. (Weingardt), 91, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Oct. 22. Mother of Janine Axsom, Gayle Disbro, Gloria Kermeen, Gwen and Janice White and Daniel Richards. Sister of Harry Weingardt. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of 20.

SCHMIDT, Stephen M., 26, St. Patrick, Terre Haute, Oct. 20. Son of Martin and Veronica Schmidt. Brother of Lisa Whitaker, Jessica, Rebecca, Christopher, Eric, John, Martin and Michael Schmidt. Uncle of several.

SIEGLE, Eileen M. (Hanlon), 94, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Oct. 19. Mother of Katherine Sleva, David, Jr., John, Richard and Stephen Siegle. Sister of John Hanlon. Grandmother of

10. Great-grandmother of seven.

SUFAN, John H., 88, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Oct. 24. Father of Diana Akel, Widad Farah, Amira Kehoe, Sonya Kunkel, Kamal and Jim Sufan. Brother of Nasser Sufan. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of 17.

THOMSON, Richard C., 70, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Oct. 20. Husband of Kathleen Thomson. Father of Jill Newnum, Lisa Work and Scott Thomson. Stepfather of Amanda Petrovato and Anna Waggoner. Brother of Mary Ellen Kutcher, Sheryl Leary, Jane Maryre, Joan Relf, John and Mark Thomson. Grandfather of four. Step-grandfather of one.

ZUTTARELLI, A. Ralph, 82, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Oct. 22. Husband of Judith Zuttarelli. Father of Anna Matthews and Anthony Zuttarelli. Brother of Sarah Bryant, Mary Morgan and James Zuttarelli. †



Remembering the faithful departed

St. Mary Parish's cemetery in Alexandria, Va., is seen on Oct. 19. Catholics observe the back-to-back feasts of All Saints and All Souls on Nov. 1 and Nov. 2. November is also a month in which the Church especially encourages prayers for the faithful departed. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

Puerto Rico recovery effort shows 'a Church that walks with the poor'

LAS MARIAS, Puerto Rico (CNS)—By joining forces to create coalitions on behalf of those who are suffering in the wake of Hurricane Maria, the Catholic Church in Puerto Rico has been fulfilling Pope Francis' expressed wish to see "a Church that walks with the poor."

At the parish level, that cooperation has been notable at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Las Marias, a small town nestled in Puerto Rico's western mountains.

Father Carlos Francis Mendez, the parish's pastor, has teamed with the local Pentecostal church, Plenitud lay youth group

and Samaritan's Purse to pool and distribute material resources in a coordinated way to the poorest sectors of Las Marias.

Initially, the church's parish hall became a busy warehouse and operations center full of volunteers providing relief to victims of Hurricane Irma in Haiti. Hurricane Maria refocused their mission toward the local community.

"What we have done is create *Proyecto de Vida* [Life Project] by joining different religious and civil organizations to gather all we have, and that way magnifying what we can give to the poor," Father

Carlos told Catholic News Service (CNS).

Local and federal agencies had been notably slow distributing aid to Las Marias. Some aid was brought in during the first weeks after Hurricane Maria, but it had been sitting undelivered to the needy.

Deep off-road in Plato Indio sector on Oct. 24, Father Carlos was busy leading a party of volunteers to distribute food, water filters and plastic tarps, which are mainly being used to cover torn roofs. At each stop, the group also prayed for the families they were helping.

Plato Indio is a maze of narrow one-lane roads recently cleared of landslides debris and fallen power lines. It is an area dotted with unsafe houses and extremely poor families.

"We have been doing this since day one," said the young priest. "The idea is to get to the least [because] here it has been disastrous and aid was slow."

He said that during the first weeks after Hurricane Maria, the parish's delivery of aid was extremely difficult because it had to be done by foot because practically all local roads were blocked by landslides.

Nidia Sierra, parish secretary, explained that each coalition member receives donations individually and brings them to Proyecto.

"We sort them, put them in mixed bags and deliver them door to door out in the countryside," she said. "Last Saturday, we went out and delivered all we had, and when we came back there was a large

load of clothing items already waiting for us for the next distribution."

The last round of donations received by the coalition included \$5,000 from the Diocese of Arecibo for food items, hundreds of clothing items from the Pentecostals, as well as 200 water filters and hundreds of solar-powered lightbulbs from Samaritan's Purse.

One of the parish volunteers working with the Church relief operation was Martha Vega. Before the hurricane, the young mother had been separated from her husband, her son and her daughter. Both men are incarcerated, and the girl has been placed under child protective services. Hurricane Maria took all Vega had left: her house in a nearby wooded area and her personal property.

"I have lost everything. My house was torn apart. It took me four days to make it to my house walking by way of trails because the road was impassible," said Vega. She was temporarily staying with a friend. "The only thing I can do now is start over," she told CNS. "I'm motivated because I'm here, helping others, and because all help that I have requested, I have received it here."

Luz Lamboy, 82, who has Alzheimer's, was one of the last recipients of aid in Plato Indio. Cheerful and happy to have company, she was grateful for the items received.

When Father Carlos identified himself to her as a priest, she answered with a big smile: "I don't care who you are, as long as you bring me the gift of God's word." †



Father Carlos Francis Mendez, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Las Marias, Puerto Rico, comforts a girl at her home on Oct. 24 in a remote area outside the town. Father Mendez, and parishioners distributed relief goods to the home and others in the poor area that was affected by Hurricane Maria. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Pope asks U.S. to welcome migrants, urges migrants to respect laws

ROME (CNS)—Pope Francis called on the people of the United States to welcome migrants, and urged those who are welcomed to respect the laws of the country.

“To all people [of the U.S.] I ask: take care of the migrant who is a promise of life for the future. To migrants: take care of the country that welcomes you; accept and respect its laws and walk together along that path of love,” the pope said on Oct. 26 during a live video conversation with teenagers from around the world.

Pope Francis was speaking with teens participating in a program of the international network of “*Scholas Occurrentes*.”

At the event, broadcast by the U.S. Spanish-language network Telemundo, the host asked the pope for a message to immigrants in the United States.

Many face difficulties after the Trump administration’s recent call to tighten immigration laws, by raising the standard of proof for asylum seekers and limiting family members of current immigrants who can enter the country.

Other proposals include: constructing a wall on the southern border; cracking down on the entry of young Central Americans; criminalizing the overstay of a visa as a misdemeanor; and restricting federal grants to so-called sanctuary cities.



International passengers arrive at Dulles International Airport in Dulles, Va., on June 26. Pope Francis called on the people of the United States to welcome migrants during a live video conversation on Oct. 26 with teens from around the world. (CNS photo/James Lawler Duggan, Reuters)

Pope Francis said the U.S. bishops “have told me about what you suffer” and is aware that “there are people that do not want you.”

“I am a son of immigrants. And if there weren’t people who helped my father when he arrived at 22 years old, I would not be here today,” the pope said.

The call to welcome the migrant and the stranger, he added, is not a personal request he made as pope, but a mandate given “by someone much more important than myself.”

“God said it, and the Bible is clear,” the pope said. “Receive the migrant, receive the refugee, because you too were a migrant and refugee from Egypt. Jesus was also a refugee; they wanted to cut the little child’s head off.”

While video chatting with students from Houston, the pope also was asked by the host of the event if he had a message for immigrant youths in the United States known as “Dreamers.”

Approximately 800,000 young men and women who have benefited from the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, are at risk of losing their legal status.

President Donald J. Trump has said that in any bill to legalize DACA, Congress must include funding for a U.S.-Mexico border wall and more Border Patrol agents—as laid out in his policy proposals—or he won’t sign such a measure.

The pope told the Dreamers, “The first thing I want to say is that I’m praying for you, and I am close to you. Secondly, continue dreaming. And lastly, be close to people who can help you and defend you at this juncture. Do not hate anyone; look for help from those who can defend you. I am praying for you.”

Pope Francis also urged Europeans to welcome migrants and refugees who arrive on the continent seeking a better life, and he reminded Europeans that they are also “*mestizos*” [“mixed race”] from “the great migrations of the barbarians and the Vikings.”

“This isn’t the time to pretend this is [a] sterilized laboratory,” the pope said. “This is the moment to receive, to embrace and—to those who arrive—to respect the rules of the country that welcomes you.

“To the migrants who suffer,” the pope added, “know that the pope is very close to you. I accompany you and I am praying for you.” †

‘God said it, and the Bible is clear. Receive the migrant, receive the refugee, because you too were a migrant and refugee from Egypt. Jesus was also a refugee; they wanted to cut the little child’s head off.’

— Pope Francis



Bishops to vote for secretary-elect, committee chairmen-elect at assembly

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In November, the U.S. bishops are scheduled to elect the next secretary of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB),

a religious liberty committee chairman and chairmen-elect for five committees, as well as hear an update from the bishops’ working group on immigration.

They will gather for their fall general assembly on Nov. 13-14 in Baltimore.

The bishops also will hear several updates, including on last summer’s Convocation of Catholic Leaders in America, preparations for next year’s Fifth National *Encuentro* of Hispanic/Latino ministry and the 2018 Synod of Bishops on youth.

The nominees for secretary include Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City and Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit. New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond is the current secretary. His successor will serve one year as secretary-elect and then start a three-year term in office at the close of the conclusion of the 2018 assembly.

Last year, the bishops elected Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston and Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez to three-year terms as USCCB president and vice president, respectively. Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr is treasurer of the USCCB.

The bishops will vote for a new chairman for the USCCB Committee for Religious Liberty and chairmen-elect for the Committee on Communications, Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, Committee on Doctrine, Committee on National Collections and Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

The chairman of the Committee on Religious Liberty will assume his duties at the conclusion of the assembly. The others will serve for one year as chairmen-elect

and begin their three-year terms at the conclusion of the bishops’ 2018 fall general assembly.

Bishop-members for the board of directors of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) also will be elected.

The assembly will vote on the International Committee on English in the Liturgy translation on the Order of Baptism of Children.

There also will be a discussion and vote on the USCCB 2018 budget.

A voice vote was planned on endorsement of the canonization cause for Nicholas Black Elk Sr., a Lakota holy man and medicine man who became a Catholic teacher.

Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City, S.D., will present the action item.

Several reports are on the agenda from:

- Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

- Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

- Bishop George V. Murry, chairman of the newly established Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism.

- “Share the Journey” campaign on accompanying immigrant and migrant people launched by Pope Francis on Sept. 27.

- Sean Callahan, president and CEO of CRS, and Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA.

- The National Advisory Council.

Archbishop Jose Ulloa Mendieta of Panama will provide an update on preparations for the 2019 World Youth Day.

As the conference opens, a Mass marking the USCCB’s centennial is planned for the evening of Nov. 12 in downtown Baltimore. †



Archbishop Jose H. Gomez

Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City, S.D., will present the action item.

Several reports are on the agenda from:

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On contraception, Church must continue to defend life, cardinal says

ROME (CNS)—The acceptance of artificial contraception by some Christian communities beginning in the 1930s has led “to the monstrosity of what is today known as procreative medicine,” which includes abortion, said German Cardinal Walter Brandmuller.



Cardinal Walter Brandmuller

Inaugurating an Oct. 28 conference anticipating the 50th anniversary of Blessed Paul VI’s encyclical “*Humanae Vitae*,” Cardinal Brandmuller told participants that in ignoring Church teaching men and women today have seated themselves “on the throne of the Creator.”

In “*Humanae Vitae*,” published in 1968, Pope Paul underlined the responsibility that goes with human sexuality and marriage. While he taught that couples can space the birth of

their children for valid reasons, they must use only natural methods of avoiding fertility. Birth control, he said, causes an “artificial separation” of the unitive and procreative aspects of married love.

In his speech at the Rome conference, Cardinal Brandmuller said that after the Second Vatican Council, the Church faced significant pressure—including from within its own ranks—to endorse contraception as “morally justifiable” just as the Anglican Church had done at the 1930 Lambeth Conference and the U.S. Federal Council of Churches, the precursor of the National Council of Churches, did in 1961.

Nevertheless, he added, Blessed Paul defended the sanctity of life and brought “temporary closure to a series of doctrinal affirmations on the matter of contraception.”

“*Humanae Vitae*” proves that ultimately, it is the Holy Spirit that guides the process of “*paradosis*,” or teaching based on Church tradition, and “ensures that the faith of the Church develops in the course of time” while remaining faithful to Christ’s teachings, Cardinal Brandmuller said.

He prayed that the document would continue to “irradiate the ‘*splendor veritatis*’ [‘the splendor of the truth’], capable of illuminating the current darkness of minds and hearts.” †



Eucharistic procession in Tell City Deanery

On June 8, 1980, which was the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*), each of the parishes of the Tell City deanery gathered at St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad for a eucharistic procession to the St. Meinrad recreation field. Father (later Msgr.) Richard Lawler, who was co-pastor of three parishes in the deanery, carried the monstrance in the procession. The sermon was given by Father Stephen Happel, pastor of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County.

(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; (317) 236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)

Pope says space station crew like a ‘tiny U.N.’ with peaceful diversity

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—One perk that comes with floating aboard the International Space Station (ISS) is NASA arranges for occasional calls with celebrities to keep the astronauts’ spirits high during their monthslong flights.

Before his first space mission began this year, Catholic astronaut Mark Vande Hei of Falls Church, Va., requested a call from Pope Francis, and on Oct. 26 his wish upon a star came true.

The pope linked up live from the Vatican with the six-man crew as they orbited 250 miles above Earth.

“Good morning, good evening,” the pope told the crew at 3 p.m. Rome time “because when you are in space, you never know” what the real time is.

During their 20-minute link-up, Pope Francis asked five questions about how their unique perspective from the frontier of the universe has changed or enriched them, and what lessons they could share with people back on Earth.

Saying society today is very individualistic, but what is needed is

collaboration, the pope asked them how the ISS is an example of that collaboration.

Flight engineer Joseph Acaba of Inglewood, Calif., said it is the diversity of each individual that makes the team stronger.

“We need to embrace who we are as individuals and respect those around us, and by working together we can do things much greater than we could do as individuals,” he told the pope.

Pope Francis said they were like a tiny United Nations, in which the whole was greater than the sum of its parts. Thanking them for their work, he said they were “representatives of the whole human family” working on such an important project in space.

When the pope asked what brought them joy during their long mission, Commander Randolph Bresnik from Fort Knox, Ky., told the pope that it was being able to see every day “God’s creation maybe a little bit from his perspective.”

Bresnik, a Baptist, said, “People cannot come up here and see the indescribable beauty of our Earth and not be touched in their souls.” His fellow crew members were also Christians: two Russian Orthodox and three Catholics.

“We see the peace and serenity of our planet as it goes around 10 kilometers [six miles] a second, and there are no borders, there is no conflict, it’s just peaceful,” Bresnik said. “And you see the thinness of the atmosphere, and it makes you realize how fragile our existence here is.”

The commander said he hoped the beautiful images they capture from space and their example as international crew members successfully working together would be an inspiration and a model for the rest of the world.

The pope said he was struck by Bresnik’s awareness of the fragility of the Earth and humanity’s capacity to destroy it, but also the hope and inspiration the astronauts could feel.

When asked by the pope what has surprised them most about living in the ISS, Vande Hei said it was how



Pope Francis speaks from the Vatican to astronauts aboard the International Space Station on Oct. 26. The pope connected for about 25 minutes to astronauts 250 miles above the earth. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

differently things looked from such a unique perspective. He said it was also “unsettling” to be in constant rotation and have to orient himself by deciding himself what was “up” or “down.”

“This is truly a human thing—the ability to decide,” the pope replied.

When asked what made them want to become astronauts, Russian flight engineer Sergey Ryazanskiy said his grandfather was his biggest inspiration because he had been the chief engineer on the Soviet team that built Sputnik, the first artificial satellite successfully launched into Earth’s orbit. “So for me, it is a great honor to continue what he was doing to fulfill his dreams,” said Ryazanskiy.

After Pope Francis asked for their thoughts about Dante Alighieri’s verse in the *Divine Comedy* that love was the force that “moves the sun and the stars,” Russian flight engineer Alexander Misurkin said only love gives you the strength to give yourself for others.

Italian astronaut Paolo Nespoli said he hoped that someday people like the pope, “not just engineers, physicists,” but poets, theologians, philosophers and writers “can come here to space, which will certainly be [the case] in the future, I would like for them to be able to come here to explore what it means to have a human being in space.”

It was the second time a pope has called ISS crew members. Pope Benedict XVI spoke with 12 astronauts in 2011, praising them for their courage and commitment and for their comments on how science can contribute to the pursuit of peace and the protection of a fragile planet.

Nespoli was present on the ISS for both calls. Among the small number of personal possessions the devout Catholic is allowed onboard, he keeps a prayer card of St. Padre Pio and an olive branch he received from Pope Francis as a reminder of the importance of taking care of Earth, “our common home.” †

‘We see the peace and serenity of our planet as it goes around 10 kilometers [six miles] a second, and there are no borders, there is no conflict, it’s just peaceful. And you see the thinness of the atmosphere, and it makes you realize how fragile our existence here is.’



—Astronaut Randolph Bresnik