



**The**

# Criterion

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## Twenty Something

Three words—take your time—have a powerful impact, page 16.

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Fathers Thomas Day, left, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker sit beside Bishop Lucius Hre Kung of Hakha, Myanmar, right, and brother priests during the June 7 Mass during which they were ordained archdiocesan priests.

At top: Transitional deacons Thomas Day, left, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker lay prostrate in prayer on June 7 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral during the Mass in which they were ordained as priests. Joining them in prayer is Archbishop Charles C. Thompson. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

## Overflowing congregation welcomes three new priests with joy, applause

By Sean Gallagher

Catholics from across central and southern Indiana filled SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral to overflowing on June 7 for the ordination of three new archdiocesan priests: Fathers Thomas Day, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker.

With all 950 seats of the cathedral filled, parents and children, young adults and Catholics of all ages stood at the back of the cathedral during the joyous liturgy.

At the start of the Rite of Ordination of Priests during the Mass, after Archbishop Charles C. Thompson said, “Relying on the help of the Lord God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, we choose these, our brothers, for the order of the priesthood,” the large congregation expressed their approval by an applause that surged as the transitional deacons turned to face them.

See **ORDINATION**, page 9

## A family shares their own version of the perfect gift to celebrate Father’s Day

By John Shaughnessy

In its own way, it’s the perfect Father’s Day present, the one gift that most dads hope to get in life.

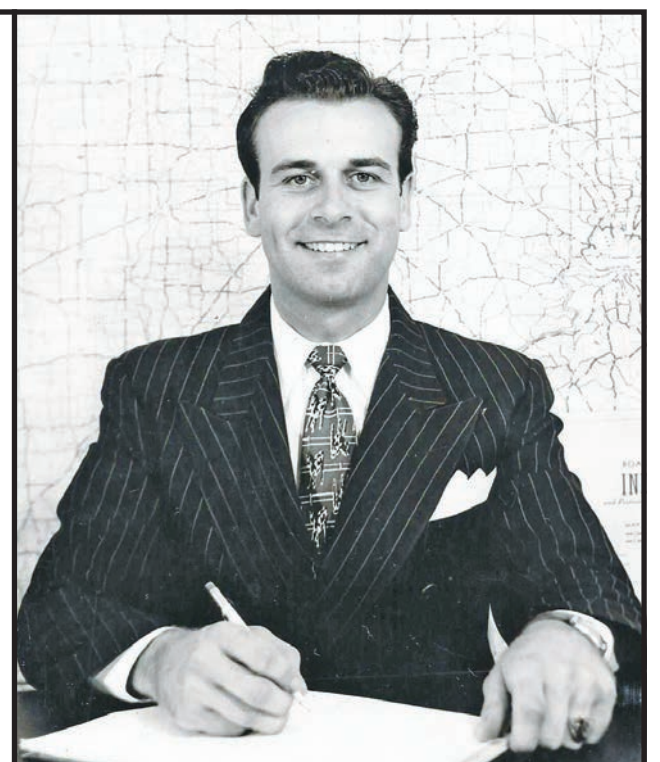
Yes, far more than a tie or a tool, fathers hope their children will hold onto the life lessons they share with them, understand the love and even the occasional tough love they pour into caring for them, and cherish the traditions of family and faith that are at the heart of their hopes for them.

All of which leads to the story of what the Funk family—with its roots across Indiana—has done in a touching tribute to Luke Funk and his brother, Paul.

As a father and a grandfather, Luke always strived to provide three gifts for his children and grandchildren.

See **FATHERS**, page 14

At right, a photo of Luke Funk. (Submitted photo)





# Gods love breaks down walls, opens borders, dispels hatred, pope says at Pentecost Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a world marked by wars and where people are disconnected and numb with indifference, Pope Leo XIV prayed that the Holy Spirit would “open borders, break down walls” and dissolve hatred so everyone can live as children of one human family.

“The Spirit breaks down barriers and tears down the walls of indifference and hatred” because he teaches and encourages “the commandment of love that the Lord has made the center and summit of everything,” he said.

“Where there is love, there is no room for prejudice, for ‘security’ zones separating us from our neighbors, for the exclusionary mindset that, tragically, we now see emerging also in political nationalisms,” Pope Leo said in his homily for Pentecost Mass in St. Peter’s Square on June 8.

The pope also spoke out against “an unhealthy desire for domination” and violence in relationships as well as the “numerous recent cases of femicide” in Italy.

As of June 7, three women had been killed in 48 hours by a husband or partner. At least 22 women have been killed since the start of the year, 10 of whom were killed by a partner or ex-partner, the newspaper *La Stampa* reported on June 6. An average of 100 women were killed between 2022 and 2024 in cases of voluntary manslaughter involving family members, according to the Italian government, and an average of 62 women were killed by their partner or ex-partner each year during the same timeframe.

“The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, brings to maturity within us the fruits that enable us to cultivate good and healthy relationships,” Pope Leo said.

In his homily, the pope reflected on the Holy Spirit’s gift of opening borders, building on an image of Pentecost described by Pope Benedict XVI in his homily on the feast day in 2005.

“The Spirit opens borders, first of all, in our hearts,” then in one’s relationships with others and, finally, between peoples, Pope Leo said.

“He is the gift that opens our lives to love” by breaking down “our hardness of heart, our narrowness of mind, our selfishness, the fears that enchain us and the narcissism that makes us think only of ourselves,” the pope said.

“The Holy Spirit comes to challenge us, to make us confront the possibility that our lives are shriveling up, trapped



Pope Leo XIV blesses the faithful with holy water at the beginning of Pentecost Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on June 8. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

in the vortex of individualism,” he said. “Sadly, oddly enough, in a world of burgeoning ‘social’ media, we risk being ever more alone. Constantly connected, yet incapable of ‘networking.’”

The Spirit “put us in touch with our inmost self, beneath all the masks we wear. He leads us to an encounter with the Lord by teaching us to experience the joy that is his gift” and to have one’s life become a place “of welcome and refreshment.”

The Holy Spirit also “broadens the borders of our relationships and opens us to the joy of fraternity,” which is “also a critical yardstick for the Church,” he said.

To truly be a Church of the Lord, he said, there must be “no borders or divisions among us.” The faithful must be able to “dialogue and accept one another in the Church and to reconcile our diversities,” becoming “a welcoming and hospitable place for all.”

The Holy Spirit “also opens borders between peoples,” the pope said, by uniting people’s hearts and making “us view others as our brothers and sisters.” This is how “differences no longer become an occasion for division and conflict but rather a shared patrimony from which we can all draw.”

Recalling Pope Francis’ homily on Pentecost in 2023, Pope Leo lamented the continued discord and division in the world.


“The wars plaguing our world are a tragic sign of this. Let us invoke the Spirit of love and peace, that he may open borders, break down walls, dispel hatred and help us to live as children of our one Father who is in heaven,” he said.

The pope also prayed for the gift of peace to dwell in people’s hearts, before praying the *Regina Caeli* after the Mass. †

## Indians hosting ‘Catholic Night at Victory Field’ on July 10

The Indianapolis Indians are hosting a “Catholic Night at Victory Field,” 501 W. Maryland St., in Indianapolis, on July 10. Gates open at 5:30 p.m., and game time is 7:05 p.m.

Discounted tickets are available for \$12, and any parish or group wanting to purchase them should contact Indians ticket sales executive Matt Marencik at [mmarencik@indyindians.com](mailto:mmarencik@indyindians.com) or 317-975-1464. †



### Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

June 15–July 2, 2025

<b>June 15-20</b> U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Special Assembly meeting, San Diego, Calif.	<b>June 28 – 5 p.m.</b> 75th Parish Anniversary Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, New Albany
<b>June 23-26</b> Priests Convocation at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad	<b>June 29 – 10 a.m. CST</b> Mass and altar consecration at St. Paul Church, Tell City
<b>June 28 – 10 a.m.</b> Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting at St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus	<b>June 30-July 2</b> The Institute on Catechism Convocation at University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Ill.

## As the National Eucharistic Revival ends, tell us how you were impacted—and how you’ll keep it going

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ three-year National Eucharistic Revival, which began on June 19, 2022—the feast of *Corpus Christi*—will soon come to a close in terms of official events and programs.

But the goal from the start was for the initiative to be the start of renewing our love for Christ in the Eucharist and sharing the good news with the world!

How has the revival—including the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis last July—renewed your love for Christ in the Eucharist? How has it inspired you to go out and share the good news? How are you continuing the spirit of the revival in your life, your parish or your community?

Please send your submissions to Natalie Hoefer by e-mail at [nhoefer@archindy.org](mailto:nhoefer@archindy.org) or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †

### The Criterion’s summer schedule will continue through August

*The Criterion* has begun its summer publication schedule. The reduced printing schedule will allow us to make the most efficient use of our resources during the summer.

*The Criterion* will be published on June 27, July 11 and July 25, and August 8 and 22. The newspapers will resume its weekly publication schedule with the September 3 issue.

Thank you for reading *The Criterion* and please continue to go to our website, [www.archindy.org/criterion](http://www.archindy.org/criterion), where our staff will be regularly posting news stories from across the archdiocese as well as important national and international news. †

## Official Appointments

Effective July 2, 2025

**Rev. Michael Clawson**, medical leave of absence (ending June 2025), and parochial vicar of All Saints Parish, Dearborn County; St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Aurora; St. Lawrence Parish, Lawrenceburg; and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, appointed parochial vicar of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Indianapolis.

**Rev. Brian Zuelke, O.P.**, new to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, appointed parochial vicar of St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



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# Father Paul Landwerlen, longtime parish priest, ‘lived his promises to Christ’

By Sean Gallagher

Father Paul Landwerlen, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, died on May 26 at Ascension St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis from complications of a surgery after he fell the day before. He was 97.



Fr. Paul Landwerlen

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on June 2 at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Shelby County. Burial followed at the parish cemetery.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant. Father Michael Keucher, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County, was the homilist.

Ordained in 1954, Father Landwerlen, at the time of his death, was the senior priest of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

Father Keucher had developed a deep friendship with Father Landwerlen since he began his ministry at St. Vincent and St. Joseph in 2018. Father Landwerlen lived in retirement in Shelby County.

They met and spoke frequently, including each Friday night at St. Joseph’s perpetual adoration chapel. Father Landwerlen prayed there from 10-11 p.m. on Fridays. Father Keucher took the 11 p.m.-midnight shift.

In an interview with *The Criterion*, Father Keucher recalled what Father Landwerlen said to him as the older priest left the chapel on May 23, just three days before he died.

“He was walking out when he said, ‘I’m looking forward to the day I never have to leave the presence of Jesus,’ ” Father Keucher said.

Father Keucher paused and then added, “He always talked about heaven. I doubt he ever preached a homily where he didn’t talk about heaven and the Eucharist, which is the way to heaven. Father Paul had been preparing for heaven his whole life. He had been ready to go there for a long time.”

At a Mass on May 4, 2024, at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville to celebrate the 70th anniversary of his ordination, Father Landwerlen indeed spoke about heaven and the Eucharist, as well as his life and ministry as a priest.

“It isn’t about me,” he said during his homily. “It’s

about God. That’s what this is all about. You’re not celebrating me. I really didn’t do anything. God did it all.

“It’s about his blessings and his love for us—the Eucharist, the Mass. Without the priest, there would be no Mass, no Eucharist. This is our heavenly liturgy. It’s something that was ordained in heaven. This is from God.”

When Father Keucher began his ministry in Shelbyville, he had been a priest for just two years. He was nearly 60 years younger than Father Landwerlen, who had been ordained more than 30 years before Father Keucher was even born.

“Father Paul showed me what it is to be a priest, what it is to be a pastor,” said Father Keucher, who also serves as archdiocesan vocations director. “The priesthood was not what he did. The priesthood was who he was. Everything about him was about the priesthood.”

In reflecting on the legacy of Father Landwerlen, Father Keucher said that he couldn’t point to a church or a school where he had overseen its construction. Father Landwerlen in his decades of priestly ministry hadn’t supervised any large building project. But he had given great care to the building up of the faith of his parishioners.

“His legacy is his people,” Father Keucher said. “His legacy is the spirit of prayer and devotion in the hearts and souls of the people who were fortunate enough to be his parishioners over the years.

“They saw in him a man totally devoted to God. And they then wanted to be more devoted to God themselves. That’s the most important legacy of all.”

One of those parishioners was Janet Brewer, a member of St. Vincent Parish since 1969.

She recalled how Father Landwerlen came to her faith community in 1996 when he was 67, just three years before he could retire from active ministry

“But he didn’t understand that word,” said Brewer with a laugh.

Father Landwerlen ended up serving as the pastor or administrator of St. Vincent for 17 years, retiring at 85. Even then, the priest continued to drive to parishes across central and southern Indiana to provide sacramental assistance well into his 90s.

Brewer described Father Landwerlen as “a million-dollar priest.”

“Holiness just emanated from him,” Brewer said. “His demeanor, everything about him—you just knew that

there was a lot of holiness there. He lived his promises to Christ.”

Paul Ernest Landwerlen was born to Martin and Mildred (Werden) Landwerlen on Jan. 28, 1928, in Indianapolis, where he grew up as a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish. He attended Cathedral High School in Indianapolis before becoming an archdiocesan seminarian and enrolling at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in education.

Archbishop Paul C. Schulte ordained Father Landwerlen a priest on May 3, 1954, at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad.

Father Landwerlen’s first assignment was as associate pastor of the former St. Andrew Parish in Richmond (now part of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish there), where he served from 1954-59.

He then ministered as associate pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis from 1959-64. This was followed by service as associate pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and the former Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown from 1964-68.

Father Landwerlen was assigned as a pastor for the first time in 1968 and led St. Mary Parish in Mitchell for two years. During that time, he also served Our Lord Jesus Christ the King Parish in Paoli as administrator.

From 1970-76, Father Landwerlen ministered as pastor of the former Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis. That was followed up by his service as pastor of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville from 1976-82.

He then ministered as pastor of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis from 1982-96.

In 1996, Father Landwerlen was assigned as the pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County and dean pro-tem of the Batesville Deanery.

He continued to lead St. Vincent as either its pastor or administrator until retiring in 2013.

This last ministry assignment brought Father Landwerlen to a faith community deeply tied to his family. His great-grandparents had been members of St. Vincent when they emigrated to the U.S. in 1854. And Father Francis Joseph Rudolf, a great uncle of Father Landwerlen, had served as St. Vincent’s pastor from 1868-1881.

Father Landwerlen is survived by his brother, Richard Landwerlen of Greenwood.

Memorial contributions can be sent to St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 4218 E. Michigan Road, Shelbyville, IN 46176. †

## Catholic schools in archdiocese receive \$5.4 million grant from Lilly Endowment

Special to *The Criterion*

The archdiocese has received a \$5.4 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Marion County K-12 Private Schools Initiative.

The grant is designed to help strengthen the academic achievement of students in Indianapolis and improve their prospects for success after high school.

With the grant, the 29 parochial and archdiocesan Catholic schools in Marion County will implement Project Magi: Know Your Gifts, Grow Your Gifts, Share Your Gifts.

The schools, which serve nearly 11,000 students, will collaborate with the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) to initiate, enhance and expand evidence-based programs to support improved academic achievement.

Three private Catholic high schools in Indianapolis also received similar grants from Lilly Endowment: Brebeuf Jesuit, Cathedral and Providence Cristo Rey.

Although Project Magi will focus on schools in Marion County, OCS will share what it learns through the project with education leaders throughout the archdiocese. Within the archdiocese, Catholic schools serve nearly 23,000 students in 69 schools.

The awarding of the grant thrilled Brian Disney, superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

“We are truly blessed by the generosity

of Lilly Endowment to positively impact our students and schools,” Disney said.

“Project Magi will support our ongoing efforts to provide outstanding Catholic education focused on making saints, preparing students for post-secondary success through offering rigorous academics and extracurriculars, and growing every day.”

Disney noted that Project Magi will build on the excellence of the Catholic schools in Marion County during the next five years. The project’s major initiatives include a comprehensive review of each school’s instructional programs, including classroom instruction, integration of the Catholic faith, assessment practices, its support systems, and the ways it meets the diverse needs of students.

With the findings from the reviews and other school data, the project will focus on improving and enhancing the efforts of the schools in these areas:

—Professional development for early career teachers and ongoing coaching to equip educators with the skills needed to be successful Catholic school educators.

—Development of student wellness programs that support mental, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being, ensuring that students are equipped for success both inside and outside the classroom.

—Development of adult wellness programs that foster a culture of wellness among educators and parents, recognizing

that the well-being of adults directly impacts the school community.

The plans for Project Magi were developed with significant feedback from stakeholders. A steering committee was formed with school leaders representing a cross-section of archdiocesan schools in Marion County, OCS staff members and partners from Marian University in Indianapolis. Focus groups of school leaders and staff members were held in September.

Lilly Endowment is also making grants to public schools in Indianapolis through a separate, complementary initiative.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly, Sr., and his sons, Eli and J.K., Jr., through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company.

In keeping with the founders’ wishes, the endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion. The endowment funds programs throughout the United States, especially in the field of religion, and maintains a special commitment to its founders’ hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. †

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OPINION



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*
Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*
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Editorial



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevates the Eucharist during a June 7 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis in which he ordained three priests concelebrating with him at the altar: Fathers Thomas Day, left, Liam Hosty (obscured) and Isaac Siefker. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

The Eucharist is an unmerited gift

None of us deserves to receive Christ in the Eucharist. Holy Communion is always a completely unmerited gift that we receive as a result of God’s grace. Nothing we can do by our own initiative makes us worthy that the Lord should enter our hearts. All we can do is try to be ready, try to “stay awake” and be attentive, and try to be truly grateful when our Lord gives himself to us in the great eucharistic mystery.

St. Augustine admonishes us to live as if we deserved Christ’s sacrificial gift to us. He challenges us to change our lives, as he did, and to see our lives as a progressive journey of hope in which we “seek the face of the Lord continually.”

St. Augustine knew from personal experience that conversion is a lifelong process. Only the Blessed Virgin Mary was sinless. The rest of us struggle mightily to be worthy of the love of Christ and the great gifts that we receive from him every day.

All these gifts—life and love, freedom and happiness, truth and hope—come to us freely from the abundant generosity of our God. We do nothing to earn God’s grace. We receive it freely because God’s very nature is to give generously, demanding nothing in return, simply because he loves us.

Of all God’s gifts, nothing can compare to the holy Eucharist. Why? Because it is a gift of self, an intimate communion between the Son of God and us, his sisters and brothers. Through our baptism, we have become members of his body, the Church. Through our reception of holy Communion we are joined to him in the most perfect way imaginable—becoming one with him, body and blood, soul and divinity. Our imperfections are made perfect by his union with us. Our sinful natures become pure and holy because he enters our hearts and transforms us by his grace.

But this experience of conversion is never “once and for all.” Every day we are invited, and challenged, to live as if we deserved to receive the daily bread from heaven that Christ offers us in the Eucharist. St. Augustine admonishes us, “Before you receive Jesus Christ, you should remove from your heart all worldly attachments which you know to be displeasing to him.”

St. Augustine knew that we all too readily forget that we have been made perfect in Christ. We easily fall from grace and give in to selfishness and sin. Our imperfections manifest themselves in our words and actions—in what we say or do and in what we fail to say or do. We are called to repent, to confess our sins, to resolve to sin no more and to do penance.

This continual striving for perfection is at the heart of the sacrament of reconciliation. Just as Christ gives himself to us freely in the eucharistic mystery, so he makes his love and forgiveness available to us just for the asking, with no strings attached. This is the great sacrament of reconciliation between God and us—the sinful men and women who do not deserve his mercy but who receive it abundantly nonetheless! We should thank God daily for his patience with us and for his readiness to forgive us and help us, whenever we fall short of his perfect love.

Despite God’s abundant grace, we are not perfect. We are always on the way to perfection. “Even in eternity,” St. Augustine says, “our seeking will not be completed; it will be an eternal adventure, the discovery of new greatness, new beauty and an even richer understanding of truth.”

This Sunday, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity (Trinity Sunday). Our reception of Christ’s gift of himself in the holy Eucharist allows us to participate in the inner life of the one God who is Three Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

When we are united with Christ, we are also joined to his Father and the Holy Spirit. When we pray before holy Communion, “Lord I am not worthy that you should enter my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed,” we acknowledge both our unworthiness and God’s power to forgive us and, so, make us worthy.

Let’s live as if we are worthy of this great gift of communion with our triune God and, so, grow in holiness and charity in union with Christ and with each other.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

May we overcome society’s heart of darkness that still exists today

“The people stood by and watched.” This simple line in the Gospel of Luke’s Passion narrative (Lk 23:35) struck me with unusual force during Holy Week.



Under Roman governance, executions were a public spectacle, part entertainment, part warning. The Gospel writers paint the picture of a rather noisy scene with people watching men die slowly and some shouting insults.

It sounds rather brutal to modern ears, yet because of a recent experience, I think it is not so distant from us at all.

As part of a civil rights tour sponsored by Catholic Mobilizing Network and the Congregation of St. Joseph Ministries, I recently paid a visit to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala.

The National Memorial is a sobering encounter with our country’s history of lynching. The brainchild of Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, it is an immersive, overwhelming experience of a part of our past many people these days would rather ignore.

Back then, lynchings were often covered by local newspapers, with little shame and less horror. Those who did the lynchings rarely suffered repercussions. Those who were lynched were overwhelmingly Black. There were no trials, no convictions. There were extra-judicial killings, the work of mobs fueled by rumors and race hatred.

But what is particularly horrifying was that they were seen as occasions for entertainment. I remember a photo of a lynching that had taken place in Marion, Ind., in 1930. A crowd of thousands reportedly watched the spectacle of torture and murder. The faces looking up at the dangling bodies were gleeful. As was often the case, when the bodies were cut down, spectators took pieces of them as souvenirs.

Lynchings were so popular that postcards were often made of the photos, and they were shared and collected like one would collect tourist memories.

Letter to the Editor

Reader: With election of Pope Leo XIV, it is interesting to know history of Pope Leo XIII

It is with great interest that I read everything I can about our Catholic faith.

With the election of Pope Leo XIV, much has been reported on the selection of his name, especially since his predecessor with this name wrote an encyclical, “*Rerum Novarum*,” that greatly influenced our understanding of Catholic social teaching.

I wonder how many of us are aware that Pope Leo XIII wrote at a time of massive urbanization due to the industrial revolution, and he was very aware of the dangers of the ideology that Karl Marx outlined in the book *The Communist Manifesto*, which he co-wrote with Friedrich Engels.

At the same time, Pope Leo XIII also understood the dangers of unfettered

As in the time of Jesus, such public executions were both entertainment and warning. Lynchings were used to enforce Jim Crow laws and to keep Black citizens terrified. The National Memorial has documented 6,500 lynchings so far. In the memorial, heavy metal boxes (as large as coffins), one for each county where one or more lynchings are documented, bear the names of those lynched there (if known) and the dates they died. The metal boxes hang from the ceiling, unable to touch the ground.

As one walks among, then under, the ascending rows and rows and rows of boxes, one feels the weight of this history, our history. It is a fearful reckoning. I found the names of the two Black men killed in Marion one day in 1930: Abram Smith and Thomas Shipp. I once lived not far from Marion, and although most lynchings happened in the South, these two men were personal to me.

Some listings begged further explanation, like Anderson County, Texas. There a mob in a homicidal fever killed 15 people, all without names, on July 31, 1910. The steel pillar simply listed each one as “Unknown.”

There are people who would have us believe that we should ignore this past. They might argue that we are far from this type of behavior today. But are we?

The treatment of the undocumented—calling them vermin, terrorists, criminals—is hardening us. A government-distributed video of human beings in shackles and chains led onto an airplane to be deported was viewed more than 100 million times. Also widely viewed were videos of people warehoused in an infamous Salvadoran prison, their heads shaved, their bodies bowed down.

The images are meant to terrorize. But what do they say about us, and to what extent are we being desensitized to more extreme forms of humiliation and violence?

When history writes the story of our age, may our grandchildren not find this line in their history books: “The people stood by and watched.”

(Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSV News. Follow him on Twitter @GregErlandson.) †

capitalism and the exploitation of the worker at the mercy of unscrupulous overlords.

My mother was born in a communist country, where religion was not allowed to be practiced. My father came from a devoutly Catholic family in Europe in order to start his own business in the U.S. This has given me a unique perspective of these two dangers that Pope Leo XIII and my father understood so well.

The St. Michael the Archangel prayer was written by the previous Leo. It is well to remember that our battle is indeed a spiritual battle. May the Father, Son and Holy Ghost guide our Holy Father and each of us as we journey to our final destination.

Lucy Bedwell  
Indianapolis

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

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

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

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367, or to [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org).



ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



# Christ the Cornerstone

## The Holy Spirit is God’s love in us

Last Sunday, we celebrated Pentecost, the day when God the Father and his only Son sent the Holy Spirit to kindle human hearts with the fire of Divine love.

Although we often relive this moment of grace—especially when we celebrate the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Holy Orders—there is something “once and for all” about Pentecost Sunday.

On this day, the gift of the Holy Spirit gave birth to the Church, and it changed the course of human history and the world as we know it. On this day, God’s love, which became Incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ, was given to all humankind through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

There are many charisms, or gifts, associated with the Holy Spirit, but the one that seems most amazing and unlikely is the gift of unity. Nothing is more evident in our world, and in our relationships with one another in our homes and families, and in our neighborhoods and nations, than the fact of our disunity.

We are a divided people always at odds with each other and frequently unable to understand one another. The

gift of the Holy Spirit brings unity and harmony in a divided, discordant world. It empowers us to speak to each other using the universal language of Divine love and to actually listen to what our sisters and brothers are saying to us.

In the first reading for Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2:1-11), we learned about the miracle worked by the Holy Spirit after God’s love was poured into the hearts of the Apostles:

*Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, “Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God.” (Acts 2:5-11)*

How is it possible that people from diverse cultures, who spoke different languages, could understand what was being said to them by uneducated fishermen from Galilee? Who or what was it that could open their hearts to the truth about Jesus of Nazareth—crucified, risen from the dead, and now ascended into heaven? Only God’s love can penetrate minds that are closed to the truth. Only Divine love can soften hearts hardened by the devil’s lies and the world’s coldness and cruelty.

On that day in the history of our salvation, the work of evangelization became possible. The fire of God’s love descended on Christ’s timid, inarticulate followers and made them bold, persuasive missionary disciples. They spoke the language of love, and they put their own lives on the line as Spirit-filled evangelizers and martyrs who courageously witnessed to their faith.

The Gospel for Pentecost Sunday makes it clear that it was the Risen Jesus, in union with his Heavenly Father, who gave his fearful disciples this gift:

*On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked,*

*where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” (Jn 20:19-23)*

The peace that Jesus gives is by no means passive or impotent. His peace blazes like a raging fire. It makes all who receive it people of courage, confidence and conviction. It allows us to say and do things that would be impossible for us on our own power.

This Sunday, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. As we prepare to give thanks and praise for the mystery of God’s three-fold unity, let’s ask the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with the fire of God’s love.

May we be faithful missionary disciples who carry the message of Christ’s redemptive death and resurrection to the ends of the Earth. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## El Espíritu Santo es el amor de Dios en nosotros

El domingo pasado celebramos Pentecostés, el día en que Dios Padre y su Hijo unigénito enviaron al Espíritu Santo para encender en los corazones humanos la llama del amor divino.

Aunque a menudo revivimos este momento de gracia—especialmente cuando celebramos los sacramentos del Bautismo, la Eucaristía y el Orden—hay algo “único y definitivo” que caracteriza al Domingo de Pentecostés.

En este día, el don del Espíritu Santo dio origen a la Iglesia y cambió el curso de la historia de la humanidad y del mundo tal como lo conocemos; el amor de Dios, que se encarnó en la persona de Jesucristo, se entregó a toda la humanidad mediante la presencia y el poder del Espíritu Santo.

Hay muchos carismas, o dones, asociados al Espíritu Santo, pero el que parece más sorprendente e improbable es el don de la unidad. Nada es más palpable en nuestro mundo, y en nuestras relaciones interpersonales—en nuestros hogares y familias, barrios y naciones—que nuestra evidente desunión.

Somos un pueblo dividido, siempre en desacuerdo y a menudo incapaz de entenderse. El don del Espíritu Santo aporta unidad y armonía en un mundo dividido y

discordante. Gracias a él podemos comunicarnos utilizando el lenguaje universal del amor divino y escuchar en verdad lo que nos dicen nuestros hermanos y hermanas.

En la primera lectura del domingo de Pentecostés (Hch 2:1-11), conocimos el milagro que obró el Espíritu Santo después de que el amor de Dios se derramara en los corazones de los Apóstoles:

*En aquel tiempo vivían en Jerusalén judíos piadosos, que venían de todas las naciones conocidas. Al escucharse aquel estruendo, la multitud se juntó, y se veían confundidos porque los oían hablar en su propia lengua. Estaban atónitos y maravillados, y decían: «¿Fíjense: ¿acaso no son galileos todos estos que están hablando? ¿Cómo es que los oímos hablar en nuestra lengua materna? Aquí hay partos, medos, elamitas, y los que habitamos en Mesopotamia, Judea, Capadocia, el Ponto y Asia. Están los de Frigia y Panfilia, los de Egipto y los de las regiones de África que están más allá de Cirene. También están los romanos que viven aquí, tanto judíos como prosélitos, y cretenses y árabes, ¡y todos los escuchamos hablar en nuestra lengua acerca de las maravillas de Dios! (Hch 2:5-11)*

¿Cómo es posible que personas

de culturas diversas, que hablaban lenguas diferentes, pudieran entender lo que les decían unos pescadores incultos de Galilea? ¿Quién o qué pudo abrir sus corazones a la verdad sobre Jesús de Nazaret, crucificado, resucitado de entre los muertos y ahora ascendido al cielo? Únicamente el amor de Dios puede penetrar en las mentes cerradas a la verdad; solo el amor divino puede ablandar los corazones endurecidos por las mentiras del inicuo y la frialdad y crueldad del mundo.

Aquel día de la historia de nuestra salvación, la obra de la evangelización se hizo posible. El fuego del amor de Dios descendió sobre los tímidos e inarticulados seguidores de Cristo y los convirtió en discípulos misioneros audaces y persuasivos. Hablaban el idioma del amor y se jugaron la vida como evangelizadores llenos del Espíritu y mártires que con valentía daban testimonio de su fe.

El Evangelio del domingo de Pentecostés deja claro que fue Jesús resucitado, en unión con su Padre celestial, quien concedió a sus temerosos discípulos este don:

*Aquel mismo primer día de la semana, al anochecer, estaban reunidos los discípulos en una casa, con las puertas bien cerradas por miedo a los*

*judíos. Se presentó Jesús en medio de ellos y les dijo: —La paz esté con ustedes. Dicho lo cual les enseñó las manos y el costado. Los discípulos se llenaron de alegría al ver al Señor. Jesús volvió a decirles: —La paz esté con ustedes. Como el Padre me envió a mí, así los envío yo a ustedes. Sopló entonces sobre ellos y les dijo: —Reciban el Espíritu Santo. A quienes perdonen los pecados, les quedarán perdonados; a quienes no se los perdonen, les quedarán sin perdonar. (Jn 20:19-23)*

La paz que da Jesús no es en absoluto pasiva ni débil; su paz arde como un fuego impetuoso y convierte a todos los que lo reciben en personas valientes, seguras y convencidas. Nos permite decir y hacer cosas que nos serían imposibles por nuestras propias fuerzas.

Este domingo celebraremos la solemnidad de la Santísima Trinidad y mientras nos preparamos para dar gracias y alabar el misterio de la trinidad de Dios, pidamos al Espíritu Santo que llene nuestros corazones con el fuego del amor divino para que seamos fieles discípulos misioneros que llevan el mensaje de la muerte redentora y la resurrección de Cristo hasta los confines de la Tierra. †



Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

**June 15**  
St. Mary Church, 212 Washington St., North Vernon.  
**Organ dedication concert**, 5 p.m., free. Information: 812-346-3604, [communications@stmarysnv.com](mailto:communications@stmarysnv.com).

**June 18**  
Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, [catholiccemeteries.cc](http://catholiccemeteries.cc).

**June 19**  
Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, [catholiccemeteries.cc](http://catholiccemeteries.cc).

**June 20**  
Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Peter Zubler, executive director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis, presenting “St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis: The Evolution of a Business Model to Meet the Ever-Changing Needs of our Community,” rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on June 17. Information, registration: [cutt.ly/CBE-Reg](http://cutt.ly/CBE-Reg).

**June 20-21**  
Christ the King Parish, 5884 N. Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis. **Summer Social**, 6-11 p.m., food, beverages, dancing, kids’

games, prizes, \$1 admission. Information: 317-255-3666, [ctksommersocial@gmail.com](mailto:ctksommersocial@gmail.com).

**June 21**  
Griffin Bike Park, 10700 Bono Rd., Terre Haute. **Quick Quack 5k Trail Run**, 6:30-7:30 a.m. registration, 8 a.m. race, benefitting Terre Haute Catholic Charities, chip timing, refreshments, \$30 until June 20, \$35 walk-up price, \$5 discount for each member of four-member teams received at on-site registration. Information and registration: [tinyurl.com/quickquack25](http://tinyurl.com/quickquack25).

Huber’s Orchard and Winery, 19816 Huber Road, Borden. **Huber’s Orchard Wine Run 5k**, 9 a.m., benefitting St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities; includes T-shirt, shatterproof wine glass, finisher medal, race bib, online race results, pour of wine; \$25 ages 20 and younger, \$30 ages 20 and older. Information, registration: [bit.ly/SECC25](http://bit.ly/SECC25).

Ryves Youth Center, 1356 Locust St., Terre Haute. **Trauma-Informed Mentoring for Excellence (TIME) for Me mentor training workshop**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., train to mentor youths ages 8-17 at Ryves Youth Center for one hour a month for one year, must be 21 or older and complete background check and online Safe Parish training before attending, free, lunch included. Information, registration: Juhi Beri, 812-235-1265 or [jberi@ccthin.org](mailto:jberi@ccthin.org), or [ccthin.org/time-for-me](http://ccthin.org/time-for-me).

**June 22**  
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Filipino Mass**, Divine Mercy 3 p.m., rosary 3:10 p.m., Mass 3:30 p.m. with homily in English, every fourth Sunday. Information: [mariasolito@yahoo.com](mailto:mariasolito@yahoo.com).

**June 25**  
McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Theology on Tap**, 6-9:30 p.m., Jamie Baxter, founder and CEO of Exodus 90, presenting, for ages 18-39, includes presentation, full bar, food trucks and socializing, free admission. Information: 317-592-4006, [emastronicola@archindy.org](mailto:emastronicola@archindy.org).

**June 27**  
Marian University, Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **All Things Spiritual: Rev. Noah J. Casey Tribute Concert**, 1:30-3 p.m., Carrie Newcomer and Gary Walters performing, free, RSVP requested. Information, reservations: [tinyurl.com/ATSCconcert25](http://tinyurl.com/ATSCconcert25), [colleen.kenney@comcast.net](mailto:colleen.kenney@comcast.net), 317-840-0906.

**June 28**  
St. Ambrose Parish School Gym, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour. **Parish Festival**, 4-8 p.m., fellowship, food and fun, free admission. Information: 812-522-5304.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany.

**75th Anniversary Mass and Celebration**, 5 p.m., Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Seattle Archbishop Paul D. Etienne, Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori and parish pastor Father Joseph Feltz concelebrating, free. Information: 812-944-1184.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: [holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com](mailto:holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com).

Ryves Youth Center, 1356 Locust St., Terre Haute. **Trauma-Informed Mentoring for Excellence (TIME) for Me mentor training workshop**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., train to mentor youths ages 8-17 at Ryves Youth Center for one hour a month for one year, must be 21 or older and complete background check and online Safe Parish training before attending, free,

lunch included. Information, registration: Juhi Beri, 812-235-1265 or [jberi@ccthin.org](mailto:jberi@ccthin.org), or [ccthin.org/time-for-me](http://ccthin.org/time-for-me).

**June 28-29**  
St. Catherine of Siena Parish, St. Maurice campus, 1963 N. St. John St., Greensburg. **June Festival**, Sat.: 1 p.m. Jeep/ATV ride, \$25; 6 p.m. poker tournament, \$50. Sun.: 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., chicken and roast beef dinners, games, raffles, beer garden, live music, turtle soup, adult meals \$15, children’s meals \$7. Information: 812-663-4754, [stcatherinekb@gmail.com](mailto:stcatherinekb@gmail.com).

**June 29**  
Victory Field, 501 W. Maryland St., Indianapolis. **Indianapolis Indians vs. Omaha Storm Chasers**, fundraiser for Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry, 1:35 p.m., gates open 12:30 p.m., children ages 14 and younger get free meal of hot dog, chips and juice, enjoy dinosaurs

at the ballpark during their Jurassic weekend, \$16. Information: 812-212-3463, [contactus@covenantresources.org](mailto:contactus@covenantresources.org). Tickets: [gofevo.com/event/Covenantresources25](http://gofevo.com/event/Covenantresources25).

**July 2**  
MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—ages 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

**July 4**  
Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, [msross1@hotmail.com](mailto:msross1@hotmail.com). †


### Wedding Anniversaries

**JEROME AND DORIS (BANET) STILGER**, members of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on June 18.

The couple was married in St. Mary-of-the Knobs Church in Floyd County on June 18, 1955.

They have two children: Becky Owens and Steve Stilger.

The couple also has four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.




**RONALD AND MARJORIE (SCHWERING) REITMAN**, members of Immaculate Conception Parish in Millhousen, will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on June 27.

The couple was married in the former St. Denis Church in Jennings County on June 27, 1970.

They have four children: Rhonda Edwards, Tricia Maples, Dominic and Paul Reitman.

The couple also has 17 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

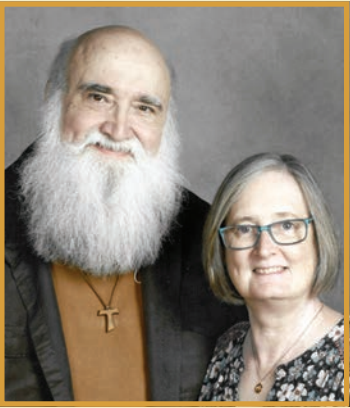


**BRIAN AND MARGARET (FELTS) FOUST**, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 14.

The couple was married in St. Patrick Church in Fort Wayne, Ind. (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend), on June 14, 1975.

They have two children: Karen and Paul Foust.


The couple also has one grandchild.



**RICHARD AND MONICA (MALONE) SANTANGELO**, members of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 14.

The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Collingdale, Pa., on June 14, 1975.

They have one child: David Santangelo.



*Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to [cutt.ly/anniversaries](http://cutt.ly/anniversaries) or call 317-236-1585.*

## Register by June 30 for ‘Healing to Love’ conference in Spanish at Catholic Center on July 19

A conference titled “Healing to Love: Healing the Heart and Recovering Hope” will take place in Spanish at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on July 19.

The conference will be presented by Evan Lemoine, co-founder of Amar Al Maximo Institute and an internationally known speaker on Theology of the Body. He will speak on the need for God’s love to heal interior wounds so we can be fulfilled

and love as God calls us. Lemoine will also share his testimony on how the Theology of the Body changed his life.

Sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, the conference is open to anyone ages 18 and older.

The cost is \$25, which includes lunch. The registration deadline is June 30 or when tickets sell out.

For more information or to register, contact Claudia Corona at 317-800-9306 or [ccorona@archindy.org](mailto:ccorona@archindy.org). †

## Inscríbese antes del 30 de junio en la conferencia en español ‘Sanar para amar’ que se celebrará en el Centro Católico el 19 de julio

El día 19 de julio, de 9 a.m. a 4 p.m., se llevará a cabo una conferencia en español, titulada “Sanar para amar: Sanando el corazón y recuperando la Esperanza” en el Centro Católico Arzobispo Edward T. O’Meara, ubicado en 1400 N. Meridian St., en Indianapolis.

El conferencista será Evan Lemoine, cofundador del Instituto Amar al Máximo y ponente de renombre internacional en materia de Teología del Cuerpo, quien hablará de la necesidad de que el amor de Dios cure las heridas interiores para que podamos realizarnos y amar según el

llamado de Dios. Lemoine compartirá también su testimonio de cómo la Teología del Cuerpo transformó su vida.

La conferencia, patrocinada por la Oficina de Matrimonio y Vida Familiar de la Arquidiócesis, está abierta a cualquier persona mayor de 18 años y tiene un costo de \$25, que incluye el almuerzo. El plazo de inscripción finaliza el 30 de junio o cuando se agoten las entradas.

Para obtener más información o para inscribirse, comuníquese con Claudia Corona en el 317-800-9306 o en [ccorona@archindy.org](mailto:ccorona@archindy.org). †



# How martial arts students went from mat, to Mass, to receiving sacraments

By Natalie Hoefer

During the Rite of Election—part of the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults—Isaiah Doss made an unusual comment to fellow candidate Hannah Carroll. “How funny is it?” he said. “The first time we saw each other we were punching each other, and the second time we’re joining the Church.”

No need for concern—the “punching” was done on a mat as part of their martial arts training.

And it’s likely their second meeting would have again been on a mat rather than the Rite of Election, if not for the witness of martial arts instructor and SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral parishioner Michael Valenti.

But God scores again for working in mysterious ways. Carroll and Doss were welcomed into the full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass on April 19 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Following are their separate journeys of faith from serving blows to receiving the sacraments. †



Isaiah Doss, second from left, and Hannah Carroll smile with Michael Valenti, at left, and Father James Brockmeier after the Easter Vigil Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on April 19, during which Doss and Carroll were welcomed into the full communion of the Church. Both were introduced to the Catholic faith by Valenti, who served as Carroll’s sponsor. Father Brockmeier is rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish. (Submitted photo)

# How a ‘first step’ in courage led to an unexpected journey of faith

By Natalie Hoefer

When Hannah Carroll began training in martial arts in July of 2024, she had a particular goal in mind.

“I initially started martial arts to conquer some of my fears,” she says. “I lived a lot of my life saying I want to do something but never having the courage to actually take the first step. I had contemplated martial arts for a while, and one day decided to just bite the bullet and go.”

That “first step” was also the start of an unexpected journey to embracing the Catholic faith.

## ‘Those conversations can lead to Christ’

Both paths began at the School for Self Defense in Carmel, Ind.—the intentional journey during martial arts classes, and the unplanned one during “open mat” time.

“Open mat just means, ‘I’m done teaching. But if you want to spar with each other, keep practicing techniques or workout, I’ll be here for an hour or so,’” explains martial arts instructor and school owner Michael Valenti.

“But I’ve found that the vast majority of the time, people just come up to me during that time and we just talk. And those conversations can lead to Christ.”

Through those open mat chats, Carroll and Valenti realized they were both artists.

And when she showed him a pencil portrait of Christ she created, that’s when “we realized we were both believers,” says Carroll. “And that just kind of opened up the door to discussing faith more.”

Growing up, Carroll first attended non-denominational Christian churches with her family. When she was 10, the family became Baptist.

“I’ve always considered myself Christian,” says Carroll. “But I kind of stopped going to church regularly in my 20s.”

So, when Valenti asked her where she went to church, she admitted she wasn’t a consistent churchgoer.

“And then he invited me to go to his church with him and his friends,” says Carroll.

Valenti’s church is SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

## ‘It was just more about curiosity’

“I think we talked about [Catholicism] quite a bit before I actually went,” Carroll says. “I never really challenged him or the Catholic teachings. It was just more about curiosity and trying to figure out the truth.”

Valenti recalls her curiosity and questions.

“When I explained about the Eucharist,” he says, “she was like, ‘Well, where is that in the Bible?’ And I showed her everywhere it was in the Bible. Same thing when I talked about apostolic succession, and I showed her where it’s in the Bible.”

The more they talked and the more Carroll researched, those teachings became two of her draws to the Catholic faith.

“When you look at Church history and apostolic succession, it’s just obvious that it’s the original Church that Jesus founded,” says Carroll.

“And when you look at Scripture about the Eucharist in the Bible, it seems to be very apparent that the Catholic teaching is the truth, that it’s the actual body and blood of Christ.

“So, when you think about if those are true, then why would I want to go to other churches?”

There was one other attraction to Catholicism for Carroll—Valenti’s passion for the faith.

“That’s something that I saw in him that I missed in myself,” she says. “I just wanted that kind of relationship with God and my faith again.”

## ‘The confirmation of everything’

By the time Carroll registered to participate in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) at SS. Peter and Paul last fall, she says she “still had a few questions” but “was pretty certain I was going to become Catholic.”

Which was odd for her.

“I’m a very cautious person,” Carroll explains. “So, for me to join the Church or be confirmed when I only



Hannah Carroll smiles on Easter, the day after she was welcomed into the full communion of the Church at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

started learning about it in July—normally something like that would take me a year or two to really discern and make sure I’m making the right decision.”

As the OCIA sessions covered more topics, Carroll felt even more certain.

See CARROLL, page 8

# ‘One little conversation’ sets Indianapolis man on course to Catholicism

By Natalie Hoefer

Martial arts student Isaiah Doss typically trains at a particular studio. But every now and then he goes to the School of Self Defense in Carmel, Ind., to train with the studio’s owner Michael Valenti.

The two had “only met a few times,” says Doss, when he, Valenti and their mutual friend, Wesley Stevens, traveled to Chicago for a martial arts seminar in November of 2022.

They were seated at a restaurant table ready to dig into their dinner, but

Valenti and Stevens paused first to pray.

“I remember they made the sign of the cross,” says Doss. “I was like, ‘Interesting—you’re Catholic.’ I’d never met anyone so into their Catholic faith until that moment.”

He attended a few Masses with his maternal grandfather “when I was very, very young,” says Doss. But he was raised in the Christian faith as a Baptist.

After realizing Valenti and Stevens were Catholic, Doss became curious.

“I said, ‘Enlighten me: I think Jesus was anti-organized religion and was just about love and peace.’

“In a couple of sentences, Michael already broke my knowledge with [an explanation of] apostolic succession and the concept of Communion as the body and blood of Christ, which I’d never heard before,” says Doss.

## ‘Our faith has a strong backbone’

After the seminar in Chicago, he and Valenti “didn’t see each other much,” he says.

But Doss started researching the Catholic faith online. Eventually he turned to his friend Stevens for book recommendations.

“I read several books on theology and where the Catholic Church really found its roots,” says Doss. “I learned the Church’s 2,000 years of history and documentation show it’s the first [Christian religion]. I learned that the

teachings of the Catholic faith were in line with my beliefs—the [early] Church Fathers put into words what I was thinking.”

Doss also found that sources on apologetics—explaining and defending the faith—were a way “to strengthen my knowledge.

“It’s a lot like martial arts. You take in these facts, you learn so much, and you’re in time able to stand on what you believe in.

“That’s the charm of the Church for me. Faith is not a gamble. Our faith has a strong backbone through apostolic succession. I quickly realized that it’s dangerous to have a faith based on different interpretations because humans are just so flawed.”

Doss found another similarity between martial arts and the Church.

“The hardest thing in martial arts is starting,” he says. “That’s how it felt with the Catholic faith. It took a lot of courage to take that first step.”

He recalls training with Stevens one evening in the fall of 2024 when he “just finally said, ‘You guys really opened my eyes about the Church. I’m in. I want to become Catholic, but I don’t know where to start.’ He told me to text Michael.”

## ‘I can’t see myself in any other Church’

Doss and Valenti, a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in

See DOSS, page 8



Isaiah Doss, his wife Brianna and their daughter enjoy a family trip to the Indianapolis Zoo. (Submitted photo)



# CARROLL

continued from page 7

“Michael and I had talked about everything pretty in depth beforehand,” she says. “I think it was just the confirmation of everything he said, seeing it in the *Catechism [of the Catholic Church]*, seeing it in the Bible—just all of that confirmed in my mind that it was the right choice.”

When it came time to choose a sponsor, she asked Valenti.

## ‘Following God’s path for my life’

When Carroll finally agreed to go to Mass with Valenti and his friends last summer, she was moved by the experience.

“There just seems to be so much more reverence for God,” she says. “I think a lot of churches nowadays, it just seems to be more like they’re putting on a concert for the entertainment of the congregation. With the Mass, it just seems like our only concern is to please God, to worship God.”

Still, the Easter Vigil Mass at SS. Peter

and Paul on April 19 took that reverence to a new level for Carroll who, already baptized, was confirmed and received the Eucharist.

Not that there weren’t light moments, though. Carroll forgot that those welcomed into the full communion of the Church were supposed to be first in line to receive the Eucharist.

“So, it was kind of like I rushed up there, I bumped into the kneeler, I dropped my program,” she recalls with a laugh. “It was kind of an embarrassing moment.

“But at the same time, it also felt like I was rushing up there to receive Jesus—it was interesting how that happened.”

Carroll chose St. Rose of Lima for her confirmation saint. The reason harkens back to her reason for taking martial arts classes.

“I’ve struggled at times in my life with vanity, like striving for the approval of men,” she says.

“St. Rose was a very beautiful woman, and she had a lot of suitors. But she had made a commitment to God. She even did things to make herself less

beautiful like cutting her hair short.”

So, Carroll did the same. It was a way to turn her focus on her relationship with God and on his plans for her life.

There was another benefit to cutting her hair.

“With martial arts, long hair just is a pain,” she says with a laugh. “It gets ripped out. It gets caught in everything.”

And so, the planned and unplanned journeys that began last summer have come full circle.

“I remember trembling in the car as I drove to the martial arts school” last July, says Carroll. “I’ve been conquering fears just about every day since, plus gained physical and mental strength, confidence, and some of the best friendships I’ve ever had.”

And as for her unexpected journey of embracing the Catholic faith? Her experience of the Easter Vigil Mass describes it best.

“I felt more peace than I felt in a long time,” says Carroll. “And I think that was something I wasn’t exactly expecting.

“But at the same time, I wasn’t surprised, because I feel like I was following God’s path for my life.” †



Last summer, after Hannah Carroll showed Michael Valenti this portrait of Christ she drew, he asked what church she attended. When she said she didn’t go regularly, he invited her to Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Carroll was welcomed into the full communion of the Church there on April 19. (Submitted photo)

# DOSS

continued from page 7

Indianapolis, met to discuss Doss becoming Catholic.

“So, I sat down with Isaiah and got right to the hard stuff,” says Valenti.

He asked Doss what he believed about the Eucharist. “It’s the true body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ,” Doss answered.

And what about Mary? “She’s the Mother of God and a perpetual virgin.”

And what about praying for the saints’ intercession? “Sounds like a good idea to me.”

“I was like, ‘Wow!’ He basically catechized himself!” says Valenti. “We just had this one little conversation, then he disappeared, and two years later he came back on fire.”

Doss’ comment to Valenti proved those words true: “I can’t see myself in any other Church.”

**I’ve found a whole new family’**

He enrolled in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) at SS. Peter and Paul last fall. Doss, who was already baptized, was welcomed into the full communion of the Church at the cathedral’s Easter Vigil Mass on April 19, receiving the sacraments of confirmation and the Eucharist.

Before the Mass, the OCIA catechumens and candidates practiced receiving the Eucharist using unconsecrated hosts.

“Later, I joked and said [the Eucharist] tastes substantially different as the body and blood of Christ,” Doss quips. “I said it jokingly, but it’s true—not literally, but it’s a different experience, receiving the true body and blood of Christ.”

The married father of a 14-week-old daughter recalls feeling “a lot of emotion when I made the decision” to become Catholic. “So, when I was confirmed, I was like, ‘Finally! I’m Catholic!’ ”

There’s one more martial arts connection to round out the story—Doss’ sponsor Aaron Ryker.

“I slept on his couch for the Chicago conference,” says Doss. “He was from Indy, but he was living [in Chicago] as a student.”

By the time Doss was looking for a sponsor late last year, Ryker “had moved back to Indy and recently became Catholic”—another martial artist influenced by Valenti’s witness.

“He’s a brother for life now,” Doss says of Ryker.

“I’ve never had such a strong sense of community as an adult,” he adds. “Before, I went to church because it’s where the family went. But here [at SS. Peter and Paul], I found that, with God’s help, I’ve found a whole new family.” †




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# ORDINATION

continued from page 1

Then-Deacon Hosty beamed with happiness as he looked across the crowded cathedral and saw many relatives, friends and others from across the archdiocese whom he has come to know through his formation and ministry.

“My heart was just expanding, knowing that I will be serving them as a priest,” he told *The Criterion*.

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson reminded the men he was about to ordain of the goodness of the faithful across central and southern Indiana, represented by those who filled the cathedral.

“... Although we are called to be leaders of faith and to be examples of holiness, we can be amazed at times at the holiness of the people with whom and for whom we serve,” Archbishop Thompson said. “Never take that for granted.”

That thought filled Father Siefker’s heart and mind as he looked out on the congregation as they applauded.

“I just thought of the experiences I’ve had with them,” he said after the Mass. “They think of me as ministering to them. But I receive much back from them.”

## One, holy, catholic and apostolic

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson reflected on the four marks of the Church—one, holy, catholic and apostolic—professed in its creed, which was first defined 1,700 years ago at the Council of Nicaea.

The oneness of the Church, Archbishop Thompson said, is a reminder that it belongs to Christ alone. He

reminded the deacons that they “must remain true to the mission and teachings of the Church, never severed from its head and cornerstone, Jesus Christ.”

Holiness in the Church, Archbishop Thompson noted, comes solely from God.

“The Church is holy because of the abiding presence and grace of the Holy Trinity,” he said. “This is the way God chose to save us, not as individuals in a vacuum from one another but as a community of believers gathered in his name and presence.”

On the “catholic,” or universal, nature of the Church, Archbishop Thompson said that each person who makes up the faithful “in every nook and cranny of the world, ... lends to the beauty, goodness and truth of unity in diversity reflecting the face of God.”

The Church’s roots in the Apostles lead those called to the priesthood, Archbishop Thompson said, to “keep in mind that his promise of respect and obedience binds him to this apostolic way of remaining steadfast in the authenticity of the Church rather than some preferred version of his liking.”

“The Church is founded on the Apostles, and it is the successors of the Apostles, especially the Holy Father and one’s bishop, that the priest should look and listen to for guidance ... .”

In his last words to the deacons, Archbishop Thompson noted that such trends in contemporary culture as “radical individualism, consumerism and the dehumanizing standards of polarization” can make living an authentic priestly life and ministry difficult.

To persevere and grow in this, he said, priests “must be rooted in prayer personally and with the community, in Scripture, the word of God, sacramental grace—not only being dispensers of that grace, but also receivers, in need always of that grace—generosity of service, presbyteral fraternity, ongoing formation and education and lifelong conversion.

“Everything about the Church—especially the liturgy and everything within it, particularly the homily—belongs to the people of God rather than any individual,

deacon, priest or bishop,” Archbishop Thompson said in closing. “In a word, we must, especially as priests, remain Christ-centered in our life and ministry within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, founded on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ.”

## ‘It felt completely natural’

At the start of the ordination liturgy, the three men to be ordained sat with their parents. When the rite of ordination was complete, they took their place among the approximately 80 priests present at the Mass.

After the liturgy, Father Day told *The Criterion* that the movement “felt like the most natural thing in the world” to him.

“It just felt like this was the way it should be,” said Father Day. “It felt completely natural, like I was at home.”

Home for Father Day starting on July 2 will be Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, where he will serve as parochial vicar (associate pastor).

His parents, Michael and Jeanette Day, members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, were happy to see their son joining so many priests who have become his brothers in Christ.

“They’re all his friends,” she said. “I said to Mike, ‘Look at all the friends he has.’ It was beautiful.”

“There is strength in numbers,” Michael said. “Being part of a great group like this is going to give Tom confidence moving forward.”

## ‘Called from the community’

For permanent Deacon Thomas Hosty and his wife Julie, the parents of Father Liam Hosty, seeing many priests who have served at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, their spiritual home, ritually lay hands on their son and embrace him in a sign of peace was like seeing their son’s life flash before their eyes.

“He’s had the privilege of absorbing their goodness and grace,” Julie said. “I just pray that he continues to listen and reach out to them for the rest of his journey, because it’s not over.”

Father Hosty was aware of the power of so many priests, who helped form him from the time he was a child, welcoming him into the priesthood.

“It was surreal,” he said. “I’ve called many of those priests ‘Father’ most of my life, and now I get to call them ‘brother.’ ”

Father Hosty will begin ministry on July 2 as parochial vicar of St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis and St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.

Like his son, Deacon Hosty was impressed by the applause that the congregation gave to his son and the other men to be ordained priests.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and priests process into SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral on June 7 at the start of a Mass during which transitional deacons Thomas Day, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker were ordained archdiocesan priests. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

“Liam has always said that he was called from the community, and the community has lifted him up and supported him,” Deacon Hosty said. “Then he got to hear all of that support from the community. It was beautiful.”

## ‘Pure mercy, pure grace’

Dale Siefker, Father Siefker’s father, was overcome with the power of the ordination Mass.

“It was overwhelming,” said Dale, who with his family are members of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington. “What a great blessing. What a great calling and a great gift from God.”

Father Siefker was similarly humbled during the Mass when Archbishop Thompson prayed the Rite of Ordination of Priests’ prayer of consecration. The prayer expresses the biblical roots of the Church’s priesthood.

“This is such an ancient thing,” he said. “It’s all part of God’s initiative and inspiration and finally brought to fruition in Christ. And I’m just this tiny, little bit of nothing ... stepping into this much bigger picture, the infiniteness of Christ and his priesthood. I’m just a little drop in the bucket.”

Starting on July 2, Father Siefker will begin service as parochial vicar of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis and Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove.

Father Siefker may have gained some of his humility from his mother Monica. After the ordination Mass, she spoke to *The Criterion* about how she felt unworthy to be the mother of a priest.

“But I’ve come to see now that it’s the mercy of God,” said Monica. “It’s pure mercy, pure grace.”

(To view more photos from the ordination Mass, go to [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com). For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit [HearGodsCall.com](http://HearGodsCall.com).) †

## Serra Club Vocations Essay

By Lyra Eskew

Special to *The Criterion*

As a child, I was always surrounded by Jesus. I grew up in a Catholic school, and I will go to a Catholic high school this fall. Now, I am much more involved in my path of faith.



But I was not always as close to God as I wanted to be. I had help along the way. All my life, our church has had one pastor, Father Bob (Gilday). I knew

his name before I knew my own, and he most definitely encouraged me and helped me on my path to faith. During his homilies, he would ask all the kids

questions about the Gospel or the other readings that day.

I was always quite eager to answer the questions, and after Mass would even ask him questions of my own. He shared lots of wisdom with me, performed my baptism, first Communion and my first reconciliation. He helped me realize how much God really loves me and how he will always be on my side, cheering for me through every hardship.

I know my vocation is married life and motherhood. This brings lots of hope and joy into my life. When I imagine the idea of bringing life into this world and starting a family, it comforts me, knowing God will help me through all of it. The mere thought of being a mother has always had a special place in my heart, as I love to babysit and take care of children. Knowing that this is my

vocation is comforting, because I know God has a plan for my life.

Though I am young and I have the rest of my life ahead of me, I am preparing to know where God is calling me to build up his kingdom by exploring the gifts he gave me. I joined my school’s choir almost four years ago and have loved it ever since. That’s because I am not only singing, but I am singing for the Lord.

Father Bob taught us that singing is a very important form of praying; and I take that lesson with me whenever I sing in the choir or when I go to Mass.

I feel another gift God has given me is a heart for serving others. I know that I will have the opportunity to serve God in my life and I am going to strive to fulfill that. I serve God in many ways, both as an altar server and in helping members of my community. I have

volunteered at multiple food banks and charity events for those in need, and I believe that helping one person at a time will help to rebuild God’s Church.

As I keep growing in my faith, I plan to stop and listen for what God has in store for me. When I am older, I will continue applying the lessons I have learned from Father Bob and using my God-given talents of singing and serving others as I live out my vocation.

(Lyra and her parents, Brent Eskew and Iris Vogel-Eskew, are members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. She recently completed the 8th grade at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School in Indianapolis and is the 8th-grade division winner in the Indianapolis Serra Club’s 2025 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.) †



# *‘We choose these, our brothers, for the order of the priesthood’*



Msgr. William F. Stumpf, left, Father Timothy Wyciskalla and Father Eric Augenstein ritually lay hands on, from left, transitional deacons Thomas Day, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker during the June 7 Mass in which they were ordained as priests. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Newly ordained Father Isaac Siefker, right, offers part of the eucharistic prayer during the June 7 ordination Mass. Standing by the altar are Father Thomas Day, left, and Father Liam Hosty, who were also ordained during the liturgy. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson prays a prayer of consecration over transitional deacons Thomas Day, left, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker kneeling before him during a June 7 Mass in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral during which the deacons were ordained priests for the Church in central and southern Indiana. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually lays hands on transitional deacon Isaac Siefker during a June 7 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during which Deacon Siefker and two other deacons were ordained as priests. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Meredith Elam, director of music of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, leads the congregation in the singing of the responsorial psalm during the June 7 ordination Mass. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Newly ordained Father Thomas Day blesses three Little Sisters of the Poor, including Mother Maria Christine in the middle, at a reception at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis after the ordination Mass on June 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Newly ordained Father Liam Hosty ritually receives a chalice and paten from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during the June 7 ordination Mass. Also pictured is Father Peter Marshall. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Newly ordained Fathers Thomas Day, second from left, Liam Hosty, second from right, and Isaac Siefker, right, pose with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on June 7 in the rectory of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral after the ordination Mass. Joining them, at left, is Bishop Lucius Hre Kung of the Diocese of Hakha, Myanmar, who was visiting the Burmese Catholic community in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Then-transitional deacon Liam Hosty shares a smile with his father Deacon Thomas Hosty at the beginning of the ordination Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on June 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Newly ordained Father Isaac Siefker, left, smiles with his friend and mentor Father Daniel Mahan while the two exchange a sign of peace during the ordination Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on June 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson anoints the hands of newly ordained Father Thomas Day with chrism oil during the June 7 ordination Mass. Assisting him is transitional Deacon Jacob Miller of the Diocese of Lafayette, Ind., left, Father Peter Marshall and seminarian Timothy Khuishing. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



# What are the qualities that your mother tried to instill in you?

(Editor's note: The Criterion invited you, our readers, to share your stories and tributes about motherhood from two perspectives—the gift of having your mom and the gift of being a mom. We have received so many wonderful responses that we are sharing another collection of stories this week.)

By John Shaughnessy

If you were asked to share the qualities that your mom tried to instill in you, the lasting example she tried to set for you—what would you say?

Monica Livers and Diane Raver have considered that question extensively since their mother, Anna Mae Raver, died in January of this year at the age of 86.

“She was a wonderful mother instilling in us by example to put others first, work hard, love completely, forgive quickly, and keep God present in our lives,” Livers says.

Raver adds, “She taught me the importance of finding joy in the little things, whether it be making a special dessert, enjoying the sunshine on a beautiful summer day, or having a sweet treat. She stressed the importance of family and being together. Most importantly, she taught us by example to trust in God, believe in the power of prayer, and to always attend Mass.”

The sisters recall the different ways their mom brought those qualities to life as they grew up on the family farm in Oldenburg with her, their dad Elmer, and their five other siblings.

While their dad farmed, their mom took care of the seven children, cleaned the house, tended a large garden, canned fruits and vegetables, fed the animals and baled hay. She also made dresses for her five girls and shirts for her two sons. Still, maybe her best talents were as a cook

and a baker—which made an impression on Livers’ seven children later in life.

“When I was cooking French toast for breakfast one morning, our son Alex climbed up on a chair next to me and proceeded to tell me I wasn’t making it right because ‘that’s not how Grandma made it,’ ” Livers says. “Another time, our son Amos asked if Grandma could move in with us so he could eat good food every day.”

The sisters, both members of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg, also note the many examples of love that their mom shared, including how she cared for their dad when health issues required him to sleep in a hospital bed in the family’s living room. Their mother slept on a couch next to him, so she was close when he needed any help.

In a letter about their mom that they wrote together, Livers and Raver also focus on the depth of her faith.

“Besides being at home on the farm, Holy Family Church was Mom’s favorite place to be,” they note. “When she faced a difficult time, she came to the church to light a devotional candle and pray. Mom often had a rosary in her hand. When she felt we needed to, she would announce we were going to say the rosary. As kids, we would sigh and whine but, ultimately, we would all kneel, and she would lead us in the prayers.

“Mom left us with many wonderful memories and life lessons that we will carry with us always.”



Pam Ryker, left, and Connie Covert share a moment of joy with their mother, Genny Evans. (Submitted photo)

## ‘It’s the best job in the world’

The extended family of Jeannine Domesick knew she was dying soon. They also remembered all the times—even as she suffered from dementia—she had told each of them, “I love you.” So, the rules of a hospital weren’t going to stop them from trying to let her know how much they loved her.

“We had a different kind of family gathering a few days before she died,” recalls her daughter, Pamela Proctor, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. “We were able to break the hospital rules and about 15 of us were there in her room.

“We had each family’s picture taken with her. We sang, prayed and spent time loving her. My nephew asked what she would like him to pray about for her. She just asked that God would keep us all safe.”

The selflessness of that prayer request reflected her mother’s approach to her family, Proctor says. That attitude mirrors how Proctor and many women also approach being a mom.

“I love being a mother, and so did my mother,” Proctor says. “It’s the best job in the world, and I am grateful that God in his love and wisdom entrusted me with raising our children.

“It has not always been an easy road to travel, and it is not promised that it would be. I have turned to the Holy Family and our patron saints many times for their intercession during difficult times. It takes the theological and cardinal virtues to weather the stormy times, but with faith and trust, I have been able to enjoy the fruits of perseverance in my vocation of motherhood.”

## ‘I loved the sound of her voice’

One of the great gifts that parents can give their children is reading to them.

Pam Ryker had the joy of sharing that experience with her mother, Genny Evans. It was also an experience that helped reveal the depth of her mother’s faith, another gift that Evans passed along to her daughter.

“My earliest memories of childhood stories come from nap time, my loving mother and her copy of *Catholic Mothers Helper*,” recalls Ryker, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. “The book contained biblical stories about Noah and the Ark, Adam and Eve, and the events of the New Testament—told in a format for pre-school children.

“At naptime, Mom would lay down with me and begin reading a story from her book. This was a simple book without glossy pictures; just the words. I loved the stories and the sound of her voice. Even though I tried to fight off falling asleep, the stories and her gentle voice lulled me to slumber.”

Still, it’s the story of her mom’s approach to life that has had the most lasting impact on Ryker. That impact has continued even after Evans died in 2014 at the age of 90.

“Mom’s faith was evident in her everyday way of life, the choices she made, the activities she got involved in, the way she cared for her family and others. She shaped my faith, life and love by showing me through her actions, and I have tried to do the same. There is no better lesson than watching a mom at work.” †



# To love and to serve

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# Marriage ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be a part of our Fall Marriage Edition

July 11 issue of The Criterion

Couples who are planning to be married between July 11, 2025, and Jan. 31, 2026, in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between Feb. 1 and June 14, in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in *The Criterion* are invited to submit the information for the upcoming July 11 Fall Marriage Edition. Announcements can be submitted by using the form at [www.archindy.org/engagements](http://www.archindy.org/engagements).

## E-mailed photos

Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment to the e-mail: [alewis@archindy.org](mailto:alewis@archindy.org). Subject line: Spring Marriage (Last name). Photos may also be texted to 317-236-1585 with the couple’s names.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the names of the couple to The Criterion, 14000 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis 46202. Please no photocopies or laser prints. To have the photo returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

## Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by 5 p.m. on June 16.



# 'It takes all of us to carry on mission of Christ,' archbishop says

By Natalie Hoefer

In his first remarks to the world after his election on May 8, Pope Leo XIV pledged to walk with his flock “as a Church, united, ... ever seeking to act as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, in order to proclaim the Gospel ...”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson mirrored that sentiment later that same day.

“It takes all of us, united, to continue to carry on the mission of Jesus Christ, focusing here in central and southern



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Indiana,” he said. And “the hinge upon which we’re united” is Christ. The archbishop made these remarks in his homily during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

The Mass, followed by a dinner at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis, was part of the archdiocese’s annual Circle of Giving event highlighting the impact in central and southern Indiana of donations made to the United Catholic Appeal (UCA) and Catholic Community Foundation (CCF).

Archbishop Thompson noted that, through those contributions, the archdiocese—and each donor—is able to “serve others, beyond those we sometimes even see.”

**‘Called to be a people of encounter’**

The readings for the Mass provided “beautiful imagery of the two great, sacraments of our Church”—baptism and the Eucharist—the archbishop said. Both sacraments “bind us together and

give us the grace that we need to carry on the mission of Jesus Christ.”

He noted that the Eucharist “is what unites us and helps us, through the word and sacrament, to discern what that mission is clearly and what is our part in that, each one of us.

“And then the Eucharist is what gives us the fuel, the energy, the grace we need to carry out that call to holiness and mission in a very co-responsible way. But realizing there’s ultimately one mission, and it’s about unifying, binding ourselves to God and one another in and through the passion, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

Archbishop Thompson noted how earlier that day, Pope Leo “mentioned our call to encounter, to dialogue, ... to build unity.”

“We’re called to be a people of encounter,” the archbishop reiterated. And we’re to do so “in a very Christ-centered way. And certainly, that’s what our ministries, our services are about here in the local Church,” bringing “our gifts, our talents, our treasure to that mission.

“But we always are lacking apart from being united in Christ and allowing our gifts, our talents, our treasures to be permeated by the Holy Spirit.”

**‘A bridge between your gift and someone’s greatest need’**

In his remarks at the dinner after the Mass, Archbishop Thompson noted that donations to the UCA “are able to bear fruit today,” while funds created through the CCF “continue to help to nurture and grow tomorrow’s blessings.”

Father James Brockmeier spoke about the UCA in a video shown during the event.

“The United Catholic Appeal is so important because there are so many ministries and services that an individual

or an individual parish or an individual group in a parish can’t do on their own,” said Father Brockmeier, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and director of the archdiocesan Office of Worship.

“It’s easy to take those ministries for granted and that work for granted. But for every ministry that we experience or take part of, there’s a lot of behind-the-scenes work that happens to organize and set it on the right path, and the United Catholic Appeal supports that work well.”



Father James Brockmeier

Donations to the UCA are “a bridge between your gift and someone’s greatest need,” Jolinda Moore said to those present. She is executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development and the Catholic Community Foundation.

By donating to the UCA, “You’ve helped prepare [future priests] as they enter the seminary,” Moore continued. “You’ve helped catechists form the hearts and minds of parishioners across the archdiocese. You’ve fed the hungry, housed the homeless and comforted the grieving, ... sharing the love of Christ with people who may never walk through the doors of your parish, but are still your brothers and sisters in Christ.”

**‘Generosity is a witness to the love of Christ’**

While UCA donations assist “the Church today,” planned gifts that donors create through the CCF invest in “the Church tomorrow,” Moore said, noting that such gifts plant “seeds of hope that will grow long after all of us are gone.”

Through the nearly 600 funds created by members of the archdiocese—from individuals to couples to priests, deacons and more—CCF distributed more than \$10.7 million to parishes, schools and agencies across the archdiocese during the 2023-24 fiscal year.

For those who establish funds through the CCF, that figure shows how “your legacy is already at work,” said Moore.

An example shared in the video was a fund created by Deacon Nathan Schallert. In memory of his mother’s sorrow at the thought of those living on the streets being buried in a paupers’ grave “with no names, no place for people to visit,” he created an endowment to help cover burial expenses for the homeless.

By creating the fund, “I have seen more and received more coming to me than I think I have given out,” Deacon Schallert said in the video.

Whether donating to the UCA or creating a CCF fund, “Giving isn’t just about money—it’s about trust,” said Moore. “Trust in God’s providence. Trust that what we give will be multiplied, and trust that our contributions, when united with others, can do far more than we would ever imagine on our own.

“Generosity is more than a donation. Generosity is a witness to the love of Christ.”

(To learn more or to donate, go to [unitedcatholicappeal.org](https://unitedcatholicappeal.org) or [tinyurl.com/ArchIndyCCF](https://tinyurl.com/ArchIndyCCF).) †

Valedictorian  
**HARLEY CAMPBELL**  
Salutatorian  
**ZITA EKE**



**CARDINAL RITTER  
HIGH SCHOOL**

**CONGRATULATIONS  
CLASS OF 2025**

Top Ten  
Left to Right: Yeraldin Guadarrama Marquez,  
Beth Seyoum, Chiemeziem Ekere,  
Yorda Fisshaye, Layla Anderson,  
Trevor Liston, Jose Ochoa,  
Zita Eke, Ayana Griffin  
And Harley Campbell



Lacy Abigail Adams	Noah D'Andre Clay	Yeraldin Itzel Guadarrama-Marquez	Diego Mejia-Dominguez	Cynthia Guadalupe Serrano-Gonzalez
Michael Oluwaseyitan Agboola	Antonio David Closser	Marshawnn Michael Jayden Henderson	Matthias Jalen Thelmon Mitman III	Bethlehem Mulugeta Seyoum
Yurely Aguirre	Victoria Correa-Medina	Melany Hernandez	Sarahi Morraz	Rikki Lynn Shanks
Argenis Alcala-Aguilar	Natalie Cuastle	Charles Emil Hutt	Rodney Navarrete	Kassidy Lynn Shelby
Angel Gabriel Alcauter-Reyes	D'Asia Diamond Davis	Rian Robert Reginald Hyde	Kristine Chiagoziem Nwanegbo	Ryan Andrew Siener
Jose Francisco Amezcua	Bryan Alexander De La Cruz	River Kaileena Ingram	Jose Alfredo Ochoa	Kimberly Silva-Perez
Layla Maria Anderson	Amy Marcia Deleon-Gonzalez	Carlos Daniel Jimenez Escobar	Fernanda Olmos-Esteban	Denise Silvestre
Kimberly Arteaga	Jonathan Alexander Diaz Trejo	Sannai Melaina Kiarrie Johnson	Alexis Yani Pedro-Palacios	Nathan Terrell Smith
Natasha Arteaga	Samuel Henry Duncan	Itzell Marie Jose-Gracia	Brian Perez	Mark Anthony Smoot II
Ivan Jaime Avila	Chizitaram Nneoma Olivia Eke	Joselyn Julian-Caballero	Franke Perez	Maria Alejandra Soto Meza
Rene Baca-Vilchez	Chiemeziem Somtochukwu Ekere	Seoyeon Kim	Noah Anthony Peterson-Teal	Kasien Antwan Stevenson
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Evelin Ayali Bartolo-Ortega	Jennifer William Franco Selfawell	Nikolas Jacob Lekse	Aaron Krasjon Qualls	Mackenzie Skye Sturm
Sarah Rose Bishop	Kelbi Lamont Gadis	Riley Joseph Lettich	Andrick Ramirez-Lopez	Angel Gabriel Suarez
Kevin Lamont Roscoe Brown	Daniel Alexander Garcia	Trevor James Liston	Peyton Grace Roddy	Helen Cinay Valladares-Mercado
Nicolas Cabanas	Emily Garcia-Bordonabe	Bretanie Bregette Lopez Icabalceta	Jisury Jamilit Rodriguez Furment	Marina Theresa Villarias
Daniella Camacho	William Ryan Gardner	Melaurey Louis	Yajaira Arizbeth Romo Perez	Dalena Suzanne Voegel
Harley Thomas Campbell	Noah Joachim Geppert	Celine-Manley Mbe Manley	Christian Gabriel Ronquillo	Abigail Elizabeth Wisthoff
Mekhi Koree Campbell	Micah Dionn Gibbs	Joel Marin-Nolasco	Wendy Mechell Rosales-Lopez	Mauricio Zapata
Salimah Iman Carson	Scarlett Guadalupe Gomez	Elizabeth Martinez-Mendez	Christopher Ruano-Moreno	Lisbet De Fatima Zeledon Tinoco
Azul Yolanda Castillo	Arleth Jhoselyn Gomez-Mayorga	Joseph Wesley Matthews, Jr.	Scarlett Sanchez	
Jennifer Ashley Cazares-Juan	Jonathan Salomon Gonzalez-Esqueda	Jaden Zakhar McCoy	Robbie Jermaine Sanders	
Abril Chiquillo-Castro	Larry Walter Gonzalez-Vicente	Aubry Davis McMichel	Kevin Everest Memmeh Sanyon	
Mya Alexandra Clarke	Ayana Damonie Griffin	McKenna Louise Means	Marquees Sontre Savage-Blackshear	





# FATHERS

continued from page 1

The gifts of faith, family and music were so intertwined in his life that they flow together so naturally when his children and grandchildren share their favorite memories of him.

“My grandpa’s faith provided an unwavering sense of joy which one could literally hear when in his presence,” notes Robbie Steiner, who grew up in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. “He moved through life with a song ever on his lips, quite literally. He could hardly allow a moment to pass without humming or singing a tune.

“To me, this was an outward, joyful sign of a man rooted in faith. Make no mistake, his life was not easy, but he faced life’s challenges with optimism and contentment, confident in God’s love.”

Luke’s son, Jim Funk, shares this memory of his father: “When I was 5, my dad was a member of the choir of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis. On Sundays when they sang, he would take me up to the choir loft with him, and I would sit in one of the pews there during Mass. When they stood up to sing—there were about 20 men—I was overwhelmed by the sound and the beauty of the music.

“I never forgot that. I didn’t understand the Mass and what was being said yet—the Mass was in Latin!—but I understood the beauty of the music.”

Most of all, the grandson and the son understand what the powerful combination of faith, family and music meant to Luke Funk, who died in 2015 at the age of 92. And in the past year, Steiner, Jim Funk and other members of Luke’s bloodline came together to pay tribute to him in a project that has combined those three loves of his life.

## Songs of innocence in a time of war

When a 2023 conversation between members of the extended Funk family turned to memories of Luke, it was casually mentioned that he had written two songs that were recorded in 1945.

With no musical training, Luke shared the lyrics and melody for “There’s a Place for You & Me” with his brother Paul who had received extensive training in classical piano at Indiana University. Paul composed the music for the song, a nostalgic tribute to Indiana. Then, Luke wrote another song, “Your Eyes Are Blue.” Both were recorded by Edna Odell, a popular singer known as “The Hoosier Songbird.”

While the two songs had a short life, the conversation

about them intrigued one of Jim and Tom Funk’s cousins, Steve Perillo, a musician. After listening to the songs, Perillo had the idea to rearrange them and record them as a family project.

The plan excited Jim, who has long sung and played guitar during Masses and weddings at different parishes in the archdiocese, including one wedding where he met the woman who is now his wife of more than 40 years, Trish.

Jim’s brother, Tom Funk, who plays electric bass during Masses at St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, also embraced the plan. So did Steiner, a singer with extensive musical theater experience who previously has sung as a cantor and choir member at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.

“The impromptu family combo worked from a simple lead sheet and a faint 1945 acetate recording,” Tom Funk says. “The songs have the feeling of small-town Indiana while wars were raging around the world. In fact, just months after these songs were written, my dad would be called to serve in the Pacific.”

After Perillo updated and expanded the musical arrangements for the two songs, the four musicians rehearsed the new versions in the music room of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, where another family member—Benedictine Sister Mary Margaret Funk—has embraced her religious vocation for nearly 65 years.

Pleased by the results of the rehearsal, the four family members headed to the recording studio with Steiner on vocals, Perillo on piano, Jim on guitar and Tom on electric bass.

The creation of two music videos followed—filmed along the Wabash River in West Lafayette and at the former Funk family farm where Luke and Paul grew up with their nine other siblings.

A website also captures the journey of the songs across 80 years, from the 1940s to the 2020s—[tinyurl.com/LukeFunkSongs](#).

## ‘Faith hiding in plain sight’

While the two songs and their music videos don’t have a particular faith element to them, they do reflect qualities that are at the heart of the Catholic faith—an appreciation of God’s creation of the land and nature, a celebration of marriage, and the gift of love that leads to family and community.

“It’s faith in action,” Tom Funk says. “It’s faith hiding in plain sight. It’s the fourth of the Ten Commandments, ‘Honor thy father and thy mother.’ ”

That element of honoring his grandfather resonates with Steiner.



Family members Steve Perillo, left, Robbie Steiner, Tom Funk and Jim Funk combined their musical talents to create a touching tribute to an ancestor. (Submitted photo)

“By revisiting these songs that my grandfather wrote, it is my hope that we are both honoring and continuing to learn from the joyful faith that sustained him during his time on Earth,” says Steiner, who is 37. “The songs express a genuine appreciation for the simple gifts of family, home and love. They celebrate and elevate the ordinary, just as Christ’s incarnation celebrated and elevated the ordinary human experience.”

Perillo says there were unintended benefits to the project beyond the music.

“Every project begins with a goal, but God often works through the unexpected,” Perillo says. “For us, it has meant rekindled family bonds, new friendships, and creative doors we never imagined opening.

“That’s the miracle that unfolded when four cousins began this musical journey—not only to resurrect Uncle Luke’s music, but to honor his spirit, his creativity and the faith that shaped his life and ours.”

Ten years after his dad’s death, Jim Funk views the updated two songs as one more way of thanking his father for the joy that music has brought to his life.

“It was a way I could give back to my dad for introducing me to music with the Immaculate Heart of Mary choir those 60-some years ago, and to honor the beauty and joy he found in music all his life,” says Jim, now a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “We hope that we will be able to reach others and bring them joy through music—and see how music can bring a family together.”

The songs live on. So does the love, the bond of family and the embrace of faith.

They’re all parts of a Father’s Day gift to cherish. †

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# SIMPLY CATHOLIC

## Influence of Pope Leo XIII continues to be felt in the Church today

By Russell Shaw

(OSV News)—Cardinal Robert F. Prevost selected the name Pope Leo XIV in a nod to Pope Leo XIII, who deserves to be called the founding father of Catholic social doctrine in modern times, with his 1891 encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*” as its foundational document.

The Catholic Church has taught social morality for many centuries. This body of teaching includes moral principles like the dignity and inviolability of the human person, the right to private property, the conditions for a just war and much else.

As social conditions have changed, however, the Church’s social doctrine has expanded to take in new concerns.

Commonly known by the title “On the Condition of the Working Classes,” the lengthy “*Rerum Novarum*” sets out a body of papal teaching in response to the state of industrial society in the late 19th century. In doing so, says Catholic writer Robert Royal, Pope Leo’s 1891 encyclical “has shaped Catholic social teaching ever since.”

The future pope, Gioacchino Pecci, was born on March 2, 1810, in Carpineto, a town in the hill country south of Rome, the sixth child in a family of the Italian minor nobility. A talented student, he studied at the Roman College and the Academy of Noble Ecclesiastics, the Roman training school for future members of the Vatican diplomatic service. He was ordained a priest in 1837.

He began his career as an administrator in the Papal States—first, as governor of Benevento and then of Perugia. In 1843, Pope Gregory XVI named him nuncio to Belgium. But there he involved himself in a dispute with the government over education policy, and the Belgian king requested his recall. He was then appointed archbishop of Perugia, a post he held from 1846-1878. He was named a cardinal in 1853.

After the 31-year pontificate of Blessed Pius IX, the cardinals at the conclave in 1878 to elect his successor evidently wanted someone who would be an interim pope—in office just long enough to tweak the policies of his predecessor but then leaving the scene.

Cardinal Pecci, nearing the age of 68 and believed to be in frail health, seemed to fit the bill on both counts. He was elected on Feb. 20, 1878. No doubt to the electors’ surprise, Pope Leo went on to serve as pope for 25 years, making his pontificate the third longest in history, after only those of Pius IX and Pope St. John Paul II.

On the political side, he achieved limited but real success, especially in Germany, where estrangement between the government and the Church was largely healed. Elsewhere—and especially in France and Italy—there was little or no improvement.

But beyond the sphere of politics, the years of his pontificate saw significant growth for the Church in many places, along with a continued expansion of missionary efforts. He had little interest in ecumenism; after study by a papal commission, he declared in 1896 that Anglican holy orders were “absolutely null and utterly void.”

It has been said of Pope Leo XIII that, in doctrinal matters, he was as much of a traditionalist as Pope Pius IX and had even had a hand in writing that pope’s famous “Syllabus of Errors.” An Italian journalist remarked of him that “the form is sweet, but the substance is absolute.”

Leo also continued to hope for a return of the temporal power of the papacy, at least in Rome if not in the rest of the former Papal States, now firmly in the hands of the government of a united Italy. But he brought to the papacy a comparatively gentle manner of expressing himself, together with a genuine desire for reconciliation between the Church and the secular culture taking shape in the late 19th century.

On the intellectual level, one of his most significant actions was to promote a revival of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, the great 13th-century philosopher and theologian.

For Pope Leo, this was not an exercise in antiquarianism but a way of drawing upon the permanent resources to be found in the thought of the man whom he called, in his 1879 encyclical “*Aeterni Patris*,” “the special bulwark and glory of the Catholic faith.” He called on the bishops to join him in promoting Thomistic studies and established an academy for this purpose in Rome.

Largely as a result of such efforts, the first half of the 20th century was to bring a flourishing of Thomism associated with Catholic thinkers like Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson and Josef Pieper.

But two other documents of Pope Leo stand out in



Pope Leo XIII is depicted in this Vatican portrait. He laid the foundation for modern Catholic social teaching with his landmark 1891 encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*,” addressing the rights and dignity of workers in the face of industrialization. (OSV News photo/Library of Congress)

particular. One is “*Rerum Novarum*,” dated May 15, 1891.

Responding to what he called “socialism”—understood broadly to include any social movement or school of thought advocating the abolition of private property—Pope Leo here vigorously defended the right of private ownership as a natural right and necessary basis for the exercise of other rights.

But in doing so, he positioned himself on the side of the working class, affirming such things as the right of workers to decent working conditions, a just wage, labor unions and the right to strike.

The great novelty of “*Rerum Novarum*” does not lie in championing these things but in the fact that they are here championed by a pope, which historian Eamon Duffy calls “truly revolutionary.”

For American Catholics, it’s a point of particular interest that one of the influences on Pope Leo’s thinking in writing “*Rerum Novarum*” was the defense of an early workers’ organization called the Knights of Labor by Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore when the pope was leaning toward condemning the group as a secret society.

This intervention by a prominent leader in the hierarchy in the U.S., soon to be reflected in the pro-labor stance of Pope Leo’s encyclical, helped place the Church on the side of working people at a critical moment in the history of the labor movement.

The introduction of “*Rerum Novarum*,” setting the encyclical in the context of the social tensions of its time, is noteworthy in this regard. Writing of the “spirit of revolutionary change” then abroad in the world, Pope Leo said:

“The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable, in the vast expansion of industrial pursuits and the marvelous discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and workmen; in the enormous fortunes of some few individuals and the utter poverty of the masses; the increased self-reliance and closer mutual combination of the working classes; as also in the prevailing moral degeneracy. ... There is no question which has taken deeper hold on the public mind” (#1).

Catholics in America also will have a special interest in a second document of Leo XIII—“*Testem Benevolentiae*” (“Witness to Good Will”)—containing a condemnation of “Americanism.”

The name “Americanism” refers to a set of ideas that the Vatican, rightly or wrongly, associated with the Church in the United States but that, in fact, may more commonly have been found in some Catholic circles in France. The real-life “Americanizers”—men like Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop John Ireland of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Minnesota—had little interest in theories but were convinced of the need for Catholic immigrants to become integrated into American secular society.

They denied having any personal sympathy with the “Americanism” condemned in Pope Leo’s letter, which is cast in the form of a letter to Cardinal Gibbons dated Jan. 22, 1899.

Whether or not Americanism was a problem then, the pope’s letter unquestionably does anticipate some real problems that have surfaced in Catholicism in America in more recent times.

Among these are an understanding of the religious state that values activism over contemplation and thereby fosters “disregard for the religious life,” a dismissive attitude toward the Church’s teaching authority (“rejected as superfluous, nay even as useless”) in favor of individual reliance on the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and a pick-and-choose approach to doctrine that today is often called “cafeteria Catholicism.”

As pope, Leo XIII reigned with a decidedly monarchical style. But he was also, in the words of a papal chronicler, “a man of deep, conservative piety.” He died on July 20, 1903, at age 93—the oldest man to occupy the papal office up to now and, thanks to “*Rerum Novarum*,” also among the most influential.

(Russell Shaw, a veteran journalist and writer, is the author of more than 20 books, including three novels.) †



Joyful Witness/Kim Pohovey

A village of supporters stands behind each seminarian

A priest has been present for almost every pivotal moment of my life:

Baptism, first Communion, confirmation, marriage, family deaths and work experiences.

In both difficult and joyful times in my life, I have experienced the kindness, wisdom and faithfulness of a Catholic priest.

I have been greatly blessed to have known so many amazing priests throughout my life and career working for the Church. Some have been my teachers, some my pastors, others my bosses or co-workers, and a few I am fortunate enough to call friends.

In these priests, I have witnessed selflessness and their commitment to a life of faith and service. I have experienced empathy, love and compassion. I have benefited from their guidance and been inspired by their example. And I have enjoyed lots of good humor and laughs with my priest friends.

Good and holy priests don’t just happen. They are called, formed and then set forth to bring God’s love to his people. And while the onus is on the priest himself to heed God’s will for his life, it takes a community to support him through

his education, formation and priestly vocation. We are that community. I believe we—all baptized Catholics—have a responsibility to help in the formation of a potential future priest.

Many of us encourage priestly vocations with our financial support. Were you aware that, on average, it costs \$350,000 to educate and form each seminarian? That can only happen through the generosity of the Catholic community, devoting its resources to help foster more vocations. Some of us mentor or “adopt” young seminarians, sharing encouraging notes, meals and small gifts to let them know we are rooting for them. And I would hope most of us offer unending prayers for their ongoing priestly discernment.

I envision that, for every priest, there is an entire village of supporters enabling him to follow God’s will. In that respect, we should all celebrate when a seminarian is ordained a priest. We all share in his achievement.

As I write this column, an ordination Mass was to be celebrated on June 7 in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. I know two of the three transitional deacons who were to be ordained—Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker. The third was transitional deacon Thomas Day. All three attended Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, for which I raise funds as

part of my job, at some point during their formation as a priest.

It has been nothing short of amazing to see these young men mature and flourish. In fact, Deacon Liam graduated from Roncalli with my son, and I first heard of his intention to pursue a priestly vocation while at their high school senior awards ceremony. The following year, I got to know him when he began his college studies at Bruté. This is my ninth year working at the archdiocese—the same length of time Deacon Liam has been preparing for the priesthood through undergraduate and graduate studies. I feel incredibly privileged not only to know him, but to have witnessed his priestly journey.

I just saw Deacon Liam last week, unexpectedly running into him at a local restaurant. Every time I see him, I am the recipient of his genuine smile and a huge hug. While I’m sure he isn’t looking for my affirmation, I can’t help but feel incredibly proud of him. And maybe I’m just a little proud of all of us for standing behind him and his fellow ordinands with our financial support, cheers and prayers.

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

The gift of taking your time

As I write this, I am keeping company with a Mama Robin on our backyard balcony, so I’m treading lightly. Tapping, not pounding, the keyboard. Sliding, not slamming, the door. Basking in the breeze.

We planted raspberries in the garden below her nest, where she is now incubating her eggs. It all feels like a prayer—fingers pressed down

into soil, not upright at a pew. Will it hatch? Will it grow? We water and we wait.

We survived the jam-packed month of May, and I am still recovering. When baseball was rained out yesterday, I crawled into bed at 4:30 p.m. and took the most delicious nap.

I relish many of the roles in my life, but being Keeper of the Clock is not one. Start times, end times, drive times, deadlines. Coaxing and corralling. Life measured by minutes. All the while, our bodies keep score: shoulders hunched, neck strained.

The other day, I felt the ticking clock bearing down on us, and a phrase sprang to mind that immediately halted it.

“Take your time,” I said.

Ahh! Three little words—three syllables—yet so powerful.

It felt good to say. Like an exhale. Like a hug. Like a permission slip. It’s OK to move at your own pace. It’s OK to be in the moment, to relish, not race. You’re doing just fine.

Now my goal is to say that loving phrase whenever I can—to others and to myself. To the kid sorting Lego pieces. To the 10-year-old knitting hats. To the preteen swinging. To the writer tinkering on the balcony.

There are worthy pursuits happening here, and they cannot be rushed. Good things take time. This is a truth of the spiritual life.

Last month, I got to meet one of my heroes in the Catholic press: Brother Mickey McGrath, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales. I had been pushing through an hour of traffic when I finally reached the blue two-story house in north Minneapolis that serves as a monastery for the Visitation Sisters. I spotted Brother Mickey, their dear friend, on the front porch. He looked just as I expected, and his presence struck me as both gentle and jovial.

Now 68, the award-winning artist was enjoying his final night in Minnesota. He sounded reluctant to return to the demands of daily life back in Camden, N.J. Brother Mickey didn’t commit to a full-time art career until his late 30s, but since then, he has been prolific—which is to say, faithful.

We chatted about our work as I sliced strawberry-and-cream cake. When I shared a goal that has eluded me, he had the perfect response: “There’s no rush.”

It was just what I needed to hear.

Creative work takes time, and I like to believe that some of my best ideas are still incubating. The process can’t be forced.

One of my favorite practices of the year has been slow reading. I pick up the same book each night and read just a page or two. I approach it as a compliment: This book is good enough to savor.

The objective is not to reach the last page, but to enjoy the reading, absorbing the parts that will enrich my mind, lingering over the most meaningful passages.

Summer invites us to do the slow, holy work of being human. Take your time.

The robin eggs have now hatched, and I can see four fuzzy heads and upturned beaks in the nest. Mama flies in every few minutes to feed them. Her waiting has paid off, and she is ready.

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Support of Catholic Charities helps young mother in need

Catholic Charities agencies support the pro-life movement. Our mission centers on helping individuals—especially those in poverty and in vulnerable populations—reach their full potential from conception to natural death. This includes providing services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, support for families facing unplanned pregnancies, and advocacy for social justice.

Several years ago, Shannon came to Catholic Charities feeling anxious and depressed about being pregnant, initially believing adoption was her only option.

Like many women in similar situations, it wasn’t her first choice, but she felt unable to provide for a second child and wanted to ensure her baby would have the stability and care every child deserves. She knew adoption could offer her child a loving, permanent home and allow her to focus on creating a better foundation for her life.

The staff at Catholic Charities immediately began counseling sessions with her. These sessions gave Shannon space not only to explore her thoughts about adoption—including its many benefits for birth parents, adoptive families and children—but also to reflect on her entire life, past and present.

She learned that adoption could be a positive, empowering decision for women who feel unprepared for parenting, offering emotional support, long-term stability for the child, and even open communication with the adoptive family.

As Shannon opened up, some of the weight of her depression began to lift, allowing her to see a path forward. With the clarity and support that counseling provided, Shannon came to realize

that, for her, adoption was not the right decision.

She was then introduced to one of Catholic Charities’ birthmother counselors, who began helping her address the challenges preventing her from creating a safe, stable home for both of her children. One of the most important steps was ensuring Shannon received the mental health support she needed to better manage her depression. With improved clarity, she began taking meaningful steps toward stability.

Shannon secured Section 8 housing and moved into a new apartment. She arranged for her 5-year-old to stay temporarily with the child’s father so she could focus on settling in with her newborn. This time allowed her to find a job, locate a trusted day care with flexible hours, and enroll in school.

Today, Shannon’s life is moving in a positive direction. She now receives child support and has stable employment, and both of her children are thriving in day care. She’s pursuing an associate’s degree in health administration, made possible through a scholarship.

At her most recent meeting with her counselor—nearly three years after beginning services—Shannon shared that she no longer feels as fragile, has grown in her ability to trust others, and feels a deep sense of contentment. Despite a difficult beginning, Shannon is now building a brighter, more secure future for herself and her daughters.

Her story is a powerful example of how comprehensive support—including honest, compassionate conversations about adoption—can help women make informed, confident decisions that reflect what’s best for themselves and their children.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at dbethuram@archindy.org.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Do you have a routine for reading holy Scripture? If not, start one

Is Scripture intimidating to you? I have learned that many fellow Catholics don’t always read the Scriptures routinely outside the celebration of the eucharistic liturgy. And even if you wished to be more familiar with every book in sacred Scripture, then there is the eternal question: Where would you start?

The key, it seems to me, is to begin somewhere and also to make it part of a daily routine.

I once heard a speaker whose motto was, “No Bible, no breakfast.” This was definitely true for me because I had already found that the best time for Scripture reading was with that first or

second cup of coffee each morning before a multitude of other activities begin to crowd into my daily schedule.

If you start a specific book of the Bible only to find that the reading is confusing and that nothing makes sense at first, don’t give up. There are supplemental commentaries available that a person can use that are quite helpful in understanding the various books of the Bible.

A person can always also give themselves permission to start somewhere else. I would suggest starting with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Many passages are very familiar because we read such a large portion of these four volumes during the course of three years in the Church’s liturgical cycle of readings.

Other possible places to start are

the Psalms, Genesis, Ruth, Esther, Tobit, the Acts of the Apostles or any of the shorter letters in the New Testament. Starting with these shorter books can give a person a sense of accomplishment as well as some motivation to keep going in what might have initially seemed like a daunting task of reading the entire work!

I have found that there is great value in reading each book from start to finish and not just reading shorter passages with no reference to the original context.

For example, a section might begin, “The next morning …” and it is important to know—the next morning after what?

For those looking for a companion on this journey, there is “The Bible in a Year” podcast. Featuring Father Mike Schmitz,

See ETIENNE, page 18



The Most Holy Trinity/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, June 15, 2025

- Proverbs 8:22-31
- Romans 5:1-5
- John 16:12-15

The Church celebrates Trinity Sunday this weekend, and it uses the celebration to teach us about the mystery of three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—in the one God.



For its first reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Book of Proverbs. It is part of the section of the Old Testament known as the wisdom literature. The purpose

behind these books was to reassure pious Jews that their belief in the one God of Israel, a divinity of mercy and eternal faithfulness, was fully in harmony with sound human reasoning.

This reading reveals the essential link between God and the quality of wisdom. Wisdom is of God. “The Lord possessed me,” personified Wisdom declares in the reading. “From of old,” it continues to say, “I was poured forth. ... I was brought forth” (Prv 8:23-24).

In other words, God gives us wisdom, another gift of divine mercy and love. Without this wisdom, we cannot fully understand reality.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. As so often appears in the writings of Paul, the realities of Jesus and life in him are majestically presented. Humans are reconciled with God through the Lord Jesus and through his sacrifice accomplished in the incarnation and redemption.

God’s love comes to us through the Holy Spirit. This statement affirms the Spirit’s divine identity. Love is dynamic. It is not a commodity. Love is something essential to the lover. It is not incidental.

St. John’s Gospel provides the last reading. As is typical of all the parts of the fourth Gospel, the reading literally gleams with eloquence and grace.

This passage is a direct quotation from Jesus. In it, the Lord powerfully reassures the Apostles that the Holy Spirit will come to strengthen and empower them. “He will guide you to all truth,” the Lord tells the Twelve (Jn 16:13).

The reading establishes the place of the Apostles in the unfolding of salvation. It testifies to the esteem in which the Church holds the Apostles, and their successors, today.

The reading also reveals the Trinity, albeit obliquely. The Holy Spirit will convey God’s truth to the Apostles. As with love, truth is not a commodity. It is an awareness of what actually is. Only the supremely wise, namely God, possesses this unobstructed view of what actually is.

Finally, the reading reveals the place of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit will give glory to God in bestowing divine wisdom upon the Apostles. Jesus foretold the coming of the Spirit. God sends the Spirit. Guided and strengthened by the Spirit, the Apostles continue Christ’s works of salvation.

The Father sent Jesus. Jesus sends the Spirit. The Father, Son and Spirit are one.

### Reflection

The Church teaches that the Holy Trinity is a profound revelation of God. As such, the Church presents this teaching in its pronouncements, in prayer and on this great feast. This teaching is at the root of Catholic belief.

From the moment that Catholic parents teach toddlers the sign of the cross, through extensive studies at the highest levels of institutional education, Catholics hear of the Trinity.

Still, even for those who believe, even for the devout, it can be an abstract statement of a reality seemingly ethereal and remote.

On the contrary, it is supremely relevant to all that we are and to everything that we do. It explains human life, the critical need to love all others, salvation and the very identity of God. It explains who and what we are, and what our purpose in life is.

God is love. God is good. God loves us. We belong to God.

**The Criterion will not have an issue next week due to its summer schedule. The reflection of Msgr. Campion for Sunday, June 22, will be posted at [www.archindy.org/campion](http://www.archindy.org/campion). †**

## Daily Readings

**Monday, June 16**  
2 Corinthians 6:1-10  
Psalms 98:1-4  
Matthew 5:38-42

**Tuesday, June 17**  
2 Corinthians 8:1-9  
Psalm 146:2, 5-9a  
Matthew 5:43-48

**Wednesday, June 18**  
2 Corinthians 9:6-11  
Psalm 112:1b-4, 9  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

**Thursday, June 19**  
St. Romuald, abbot  
2 Corinthians 11:1-11  
Psalm 111:1b-4, 7-8  
Matthew 6:7-15

**Friday, June 20**  
2 Corinthians 11:18, 21-30  
Psalm 34:2-7  
Matthew 6:19-23

**Saturday, June 21**  
St. Aloysius Gonzaga, religious  
2 Corinthians 12:1-10  
Psalm 34:8-13  
Matthew 6:24-34

**Sunday, June 22**  
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*)  
Genesis 14:18-20  
Psalm 110:1-4  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
Luke 9:11b-17

**Monday, June 23**  
Genesis 12:1-9  
Psalm 33:12-13, 18-20, 22  
Matthew 7:1-5

Vigil Mass of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist  
Jeremiah 1:4-10  
Psalm 71:1-4a, 5-6b, 15ab, 17  
1 Peter 1:8-12  
Luke 1:5-17

**Tuesday, June 24**  
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist  
Isaiah 49:1-6  
Psalm 139:1b-3, 13-15  
Acts 13:22-26  
Luke 1:57-66, 80

**Wednesday, June 25**  
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18  
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9  
Matthew 7:15-20

See READINGS, page 18

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

## Belief in the permanence of marriage is a key aspect of valid marriages

**Q**In a recent column, you quoted the *Code of Canon Law* for what constitutes a valid non-sacramental marriage. I’m not sure if you know this, but the Jewish marriage document—the *ketubah*—is essentially a prenuptial agreement that outlines the protections the spouses are to receive should either one initiate divorce proceedings.



This means there is nothing essentially lifelong about the agreement that two Jews enter into when they get married. Does that mean that Jews are not validly married in the Church’s eyes? I’m not trying to pick on anyone here. I’m just trying to understand the Church’s teaching on valid non-sacramental marriages better, and the Jewish case is the one I’m most familiar with.

**A**I am familiar with the concept of the *ketubah* or Jewish marriage contract. But the short answer is that, for many reasons, the existence of this custom does not mean that Jewish marriages are invalid in the eyes of the Catholic Church. From our Catholic perspective, a Jewish marriage—like other natural marriages among the unbaptized—would be considered valid until proven otherwise.

For context, it is important to note that Judaism encompasses a wide range of beliefs and practices—similar to how Christianity is a big category that includes Protestants, Catholics, Orthodox, Evangelicals and even more unique groups like the Amish.

Speaking in very generalized terms, Orthodox Jews strive to follow the biblical laws set out in the Old Testament (such as kosher laws) more or less literally as they are written, whereas Reform Jews seek to adapt the spirit of the law to modern life.

But there are many groups and sub-categories within these categories, so there could be some differences in their respective theologies of marriage among different Jewish communities.

However, in general, Judaism as a religion is very pro-marriage and pro-family. The fact that divorce is a theoretical possibility for observant Jews does not

change the fact that the vast majority of Jewish brides and grooms—like most brides and grooms of any and every religion (or even lack thereof)—do, at the time of their wedding, intend their own union specifically to be a binding and permanent one.

In our Catholic framework, there are a few ways in which accepting the possibility of divorce might make a marriage invalid. One could be in error about the essential nature of marriage (Canon 1099). But even in our highly secularized society, it’s only in rare situations that someone would hold the sincere misunderstanding that marriage was somehow meant to be a fundamentally dissolvable or merely temporary union.

Another reason is called, in canon law terminology, “partial simulation against the good of permanence,” where a person consciously reserves to themselves the right to leave the union. (See Canon 1101, 2.) Or in other words, a person enters into the union with the direct and explicit intention that they in particular are free to leave their specific marriage whenever they want. But once again, this is a relatively rare scenario.

Most couples, even if they acknowledge divorce as a possibility in the abstract, enter their own marriage with the intention or at least the hope that their own marriage will last. This seems especially true if they are devoutly practicing their faith as Christians or Jews.

Regarding the nature of the *ketubah* as a contract, we as Catholics would not have a problem with this in principle. Although we might tend to use different vocabulary in pastoral contexts, as Catholics we believe that marriage is at its core an exchange of consent, which is indeed a “contract” in the broad sense of the term.

Traditionally, a *ketubah* would outline a groom’s obligations to his bride, spelling out the ways that he would care for her within what is envisioned and intended as a lifelong marital union. So, it would not be parallel to the popular conception of a “prenup.” That is, it’s not a document that sets the groundwork for a foreseen future divorce.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to [CatholicQA@osv.com](mailto:CatholicQA@osv.com).) †

## My Journey to God

# Vocation

By Benedictine Sister Susan Lindstrom

God calls and asks that we respond, our life now in God’s hands, willing to be God’s instrument, and open to God’s plans

Some God asks to live a life of solitude or prayer, to walk with God a special path, with all their gifts to share.

Receptive to God’s boundless love vocations are embraced. Sisters, brothers, deacons, priests, all touched by God’s grace.

(Benedictine Sister Susan Lindstrom is a professed religious of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. Photo: Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually lays his hands on then-transitional Deacon Jack Wright in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral on June 2, 2023, during the Mass in which the young man was ordained to the priesthood.) (File photo by Sean Gallagher)









# Eagle Scout projects benefit parishes, help youths grow in their faith

By Sean Gallagher

Young people involved in Scouting have to complete a significant community project as part of the process for them to earn the highest rank in the organization: Eagle Scout.

During the past several months, two young men in the archdiocese earned that rank by assisting their parishes.

Andrew Hostetler, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, raised funds and took part in the work to create a large outdoor grotto featuring a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary (which had previously belonged to the former Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis) on the campus of the Indianapolis West Deanery faith community.

Michael Dexter, a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, worked to create a new stable for an outdoor Nativity set for his faith community.

On Dec. 8 last year, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Andrew was amazed to see so many St. Malachy parishioners gather for a blessing of the new Marian grotto.

“Witnessing all of those people there definitely had an impact on me, especially knowing that I had such an integral role in the grotto,” he said.

Although Andrew spearheaded the creation of the grotto at St. Malachy, many parishioners helped him by donating \$39,000 to make the construction of the grotto possible.

To solicit their support, Andrew spoke about it in the parish and made sure that parish communications—including its bulletin—shared information about the project with its nearly 1,900 households.

“I was the main spokesperson,” Andrew said. “I did advertising and spoke before a couple of Masses.”

He also worked on an application that resulted in the awarding of a \$15,000 grant from the Queen and Divine Mercy Fund, which is managed by the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation.

A lot of times in Eagle Scout projects, the young person does much of the manual labor to complete it. Andrew did, assisting contractors who performed the work nearly every day that they were at the parish working on the grotto.

But he also learned a lot in his project about the necessary behind-the-scenes tasks to make a project like the building of the grotto possible, such as fundraising, communicating with potential donors and through the challenges that can come in working with multiple contractors on a complex initiative.

Andrew said that when he sought the approval of the project from Father Sean Danda, St. Malachy’s pastor, he “didn’t really know what to expect” regarding all the work that would come with it.

“I realized it more during the project,” Andrew said. “I don’t think I saw the value [in that work] then like I can now see it in retrospect.”

As the project approached completion, Andrew was grateful for the help of his parents, Joe and Dawn Hostetler, whom, he said, “put just as much, if not more, time helping me with this project than I did.”

He also appreciated that his fellow St. Malachy parishioners “could come together and create a project like that.”

Now that he has reached the pinnacle of his involvement in Scouting, Andrew hopes that his work at St. Malachy will have a lasting legacy.

“I hope that my project can set an example for not only other Scouts that are doing Eagle projects, but also for other



Andrew Hostetler, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, poses by a Marian grotto on the grounds of the Indianapolis West Deanery faith community. He oversaw the planning and fundraising for the project and took part in the manual labor of constructing it as part of an Eagle Scout project he completed. (Submitted photo)

people around my age in the parish,” Andrew said. “They can know that they can take an active role in the parish.”

For his part, Michael was glad to serve his home parish as well.

“It holds a special significance [for me],” he said. “I usher at some of the Masses, and I feel that here I am surrounded by people I know and love. I feel that my project was a great way to give back to everyone who has been there for me pretty much all my life.”

Michael got the idea for his Eagle Scout project from the work he and other Scouts did annually to set up his faith community’s outdoor Nativity set during Advent.

“The old stable was extremely heavy and took just about every Scout that we had to set it up and take it down,” said Michael, who recently graduated from Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

After speaking with Father Eric Augenstein, Nativity’s pastor, Michael made plans to construct a new, more lightweight stable. He also did landscaping work around the parish’s rectory as part of his Eagle Scout project.

He oversaw the work of more than a dozen people on the project who put in more than 150 hours of work through four days.

“My main goal with the new design

was to make the whole stable lighter, so it would not be as difficult to take up and tear down,” Michael said. “As of now, a group of three Scouts can easily set up the entire stable, compared to a previous average of about 10 people.”

He said that taking part in outdoor events like camping in Scouting in the past has helped him feel “connected with God, particularly in nature.” In his Eagle Scout project, the connections he had with his parish helped him to give back to it.

“I already knew everyone I needed to talk to about getting my project in motion, so I was pretty comfortable in presenting my ideas and plan,” Michael said.

He previously earned with his brother Scouts the Pope Pius XII religious emblem. It involved, he said, “a lot of time reflecting on our faith and hosting a canned food drive” for a local food pantry.

While overseeing all the work involved in his Eagle Scout project, Michael was focused on the work itself and the reward he would receive.

Now that it’s complete, he has an appreciation of the effect that his project will have.

“It’s pretty cool to think that the work I’ve done will affect others for years to come,” Michael said. †



Michael Dexter, a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, poses by his faith community’s outdoor Nativity set. He created a new lightweight stable for it as part of an Eagle Scout project he completed. (Submitted photo)

## Employment

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For immediate consideration, please send resume to [tsteele@archindy.org](mailto:tsteele@archindy.org).

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## Employment

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2025 Goal is \$6.3 million



# SUMMER BREAK ISN'T A BREAK FOR EVERYONE

For many, summer is a break. For others, it's a burden we're called to share.

**School's out for summer**—but for some families in our community, that doesn't mean freedom or fun.

For children who rely on school for breakfast and lunch, **summer means going hungry**. For working parents without access to affordable childcare, it means **choosing between a paycheck and their children's safety**. For those without a home, it means **seeking relief from dangerous heat without even the refuge of air conditioning**.

These challenges are real. And they're happening right here in central and southern Indiana—maybe closer than you think.

The United Catholic Appeal supports Catholic Charities and many other ministries that are present where the need is greatest. From food and housing assistance to mental health support, family services, and more, your gift helps us serve anyone in need, regardless of faith, age, or circumstance. Whether it's a gift of \$5 or \$500, the impact of your gift is equally as great.

Because when school lets out, our ministries step in.

Support the United Catholic Appeal today. Help us be there—this summer and always.



A very sincere **THANK YOU** to those who have already given in support of these vital ministries. God bless you.