

The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



New mission

Pope appoints monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey as bishop of Belleville, Ill., page 3.

CriterionOnline.com

March 20, 2026

Vol. LXVI, No. 23



Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove shares a smile with Margo Pierle, a kindergarten student at Christ the King School in Indianapolis. Margo holds a framed artwork she created that helped raise \$1,547 that the kindergarten students donated to the sisters at the monastery. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Kindergarteners' gift to religious sisters touches hearts and connects generations

By John Shaughnessy

The best moments in life sometimes happen when the past and the present come together in a special way.

And it's even better when such a moment also offers a glimpse of a hopeful future.

Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones experienced that combination of realities recently when she opened a weekly e-mail newsletter from Christ the King School in Indianapolis and discovered a notice that brought her so much joy.

Every time Sister Mary Luke receives the newsletter, it returns her in a small way to a wonderful time in her life—

when she served as the principal of Christ the King School from 1977 to 1986, and when nine other Benedictine sisters from Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove taught there, too.

Those years are among a long-gone era in Catholic education in the archdiocese and across the United States—a time when religious sisters shared their talents, their faith and their love with children in every Catholic school.

Nearly every Catholic school graduate older than 50 has memories of a sister's influence.

Sister Mary Luke has her own memories.

See SISTERS, page 8

Pope Leo XIV calls for Middle East ceasefire

(OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV called for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East and condemned the “atrocious violence” of the U.S.-Israeli-led war on

Iran, which has spread across the region.



Pope Leo XIV

After praying the *Angelus* with pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square on March 15, the pope expressed his alarm about the deteriorating situation in Lebanon and called for “lasting solutions to the serious

ongoing crisis for the common good of all Lebanese people.”

“In the name of the Christians of the Middle East and of all women and men of goodwill, I appeal to those responsible for this conflict: Cease fire! Let the paths of dialogue be reopened,” he said.

As the conflict entered its third week, Tehran accused the United States of launching attacks from the United Arab Emirates, further escalating tensions that have sent global oil prices into a volatile spiral.

According to a March 15 report by The Associated Press, President Donald J. Trump confirmed the U.S. “obliterated” military sites on Iran's Kharg Island and warned that the country's oil infrastructure could be the next target if interference with shipping in the Strait of Hormuz continues.

In response, Iran threatened to retaliate against U.S.-linked energy assets across the region, while Trump has called on international allies to deploy warships to secure the vital waterway, through which one-fifth of the world's oil supply is shipped.

Pope Leo's appeal for peace, particularly in Lebanon, comes after the recent death of Lebanese Maronite Catholic priest Father Pierre al-Rahi, who was killed on March 9 after sustaining wounds from Israeli tank fire on a house in Qlayaa, a village in southern Lebanon.

See CEASEFIRE, page 10

New St. Vincent de Paul thrift store in Richmond 'is a place where God dwells'

By Natalie Hoefler

The goal started simply enough: find a building to store furniture donated to the Tri-County Good Samaritan St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVdP) conference.

But the end result is so much more.

On March 21, the conference will open the doors to its new Good Samaritan Center thrift store in Richmond, where the public can shop for furniture, clothing and more, and those assisted by SVdP can use “credit” for items based on need.

“How it panned out was really divine,” conference president Tony Talbert says of the store.

See THRIFT STORE, page 10

Elizabeth Daoud, left, McKenzie McDonald, Kaydence Burkhardt and Lillian Thomas, all seniors at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, help prepare Good Samaritan Center in Richmond for its opening on March 21. (Submitted photo by Dan Reichley)



Transitional deacons make ‘priesthood promises’ during March 15 Vespers liturgy

Criterion staff report

Three transitional deacons who will be ordained priests for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in June made public declarations as part of their final preparations for ordination during a Vespers liturgy on March 15 in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Deacon Samuel Hansen, Deacon Timothy Khuishing and Deacon Khaing Thu took part in what is called “priesthood promises” during the liturgy. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, who presided over the Vespers liturgy, will ordain them on June 6 in the cathedral.

The deacons declared that they are freely seeking ordination as priests, made a profession of faith and swore an oath of fidelity to the Church and its shepherds.

(For more information on the archdiocese’s seminarians and on a vocation to the priesthood in the archdiocese, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †



Placing his right hand on a Book of the Gospels, Deacon Timothy Khuishing, left, completes an oath of fidelity to the Church and its shepherds during a Vespers liturgy on March 15 in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Also taking part in the liturgy is Father Eric Augenstein. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)



With Archbishop Charles C. Thompson looking on during a Vespers liturgy on March 15 in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, Deacon Samuel Hansen, left, Deacon Timothy Khuishing and Deacon Khaing Thu declare that they are freely seeking ordination as priests. The three transitional deacons will be ordained priests on June 6 in the cathedral.

Readers of all ages: we want to hear from you!

Thanks to everyone who has completed *The Criterion’s* readership survey—including one especially observant 12-year-old parishioner who alerted us to an oversight in our questionnaire.

Because the original survey restricted responses to those ages 18 and older, younger readers were unable to be heard.

We’ve fixed that issue, so all readers, regardless of age, can participate.

If you haven’t yet filled out the

survey, there’s still time—and we genuinely want to hear from you.

Your feedback helps us understand what you value in *The Criterion*, what you’d like to see more of, and how we can better serve our readers across central and southern Indiana.

Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts before Friday,

April 3. Go to www.archindy.org/ReadershipSurvey or scan the QR code. †



Phone Numbers:

Main office..... 317-236-1570
Advertising..... 317-236-1585
Circulation / Subscriptions ... 317-236-1425

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

Postmaster:
Send address changes to *The Criterion*,
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2025 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

NEWS FROM YOU!

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in *The Criterion*?

E-mail us: criterion@archindy.org

Staff:

Editor: Mike Krokos
Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy
Reporter: Sean Gallagher
Reporter: Natalie Hoefler
Graphic Designer / Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans
Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

March 20–31, 2026

March 20 – 2 p.m.
Virtual National Eucharistic Congress
Board of Directors meeting

March 21 – 4 p.m.
Mass followed by dinner at
St. Augustine Parish, Jeffersonville

March 24 – 1 p.m.
Council of Priests meeting at
Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara
Catholic Center, Indianapolis

March 25 – 11 a.m.
Mass and visit at Indiana Women’s
Prison, Indianapolis

March 26 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at
Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara
Catholic Center

March 26 – 3 p.m.
Finance Council meeting at Archbishop
Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

March 28 – 10 a.m.
Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting
at St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus

March 29 – 10 a.m.
Palm Sunday Mass at SS. Peter and
Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

March 31 – 2 p.m.
Chrism Mass at SS. Peter and Paul
Cathedral followed by reception at
Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara
Catholic Center

Pope Leo to receive Liberty Medal for promoting religious liberty, human dignity

PHILADELPHIA (OSV News)—As the U.S. marks its 250th anniversary, Pope Leo XIV will be honored in the nation’s former capital of Philadelphia for his efforts to promote religious liberty as well as freedom of expression and conscience.



Pope Leo XIV

The National Constitution Center will bestow its Liberty Medal on Pope Leo on July 3 during a public ceremony outside its location at Independence Mall in Philadelphia, part of Independence National Historical Park, home to several sites of historical significance in the nation’s founding.

Following the ratification of the Constitution, Philadelphia was the nation’s capital from 1790 until 1800, when that designation was transferred to Washington.

Established in 1988 to mark the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, and hosted by the center since 2006, the Liberty Medal honors both individuals and organizations “who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe,” said the National Constitution Center in its press release.

The center—a private nonprofit that promotes constitutional education and civic debate—announced its decision on March 16, noting that the ceremony will take place amid the Independence Week events set to commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The pope is set to deliver live acceptance remarks from the Vatican, which will be livestreamed to in-person attendees and online.

Vince Stango, the center’s interim president and CEO, described Pope Leo as a “consistent advocate for religious liberty, freedom of conscience and human dignity.”

“In formal Vatican statements and public addresses, His Holiness has affirmed that peace cannot exist without freedom of religion, freedom of thought, and freedom of expression, principles that closely align with constitutional protections guaranteed by the First Amendment,” Stango said in a statement.

In its release, the center also noted that since his May 2025 election, the pope “has made interfaith and ecumenical dialogue a defining priority of his pontificate, engaging leaders from Jewish, Muslim, Christian and other religious communities to promote mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.”

“His outreach reflects a broader moral vision that frames religious liberty not as an abstract right, but as a lived expression of human dignity, particularly for marginalized communities, including religious minorities and those affected by conflict,” said the center.

Pope Leo is only the second religious leader to receive the award, preceded by 2015 recipient the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet.

The Liberty Medal is typically accompanied by a prize sponsored by philanthropists Ira Lubert and Pamela Estadt, with contributions from corporations, foundations and individuals.

In a statement to OSV News, the center confirmed that the medal “traditionally includes a \$100,000 prize,” adding that “the Holy See has not yet indicated how it may be used.” †



03/20/26

Moving?

We’ll be there waiting if you give us two weeks’ notice!
Use the form below or at archindy.org/moving.

Name _____
E-mail _____
New Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____
New Parish _____
Effective Date _____

Note: If you are receiving duplicate copies please send both labels.

The Criterion • 1400 N. Meridian St. • Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June-Aug.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-236-1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2025

Criterion Press Inc.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
Criterion Press Inc.
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Pope appoints monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey as bishop of Belleville, Ill.

VATICAN CITY (OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV has named Benedictine Father Godfrey Mullen, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, as the new bishop of Belleville, Ill.



Bishop-designate Godfrey Mullen

The Vatican announced the appointment of Bishop-designate Mullen on March 13. The Diocese of Belleville has been without a shepherd since its former bishop, now-Archbishop Michael G. McGovern, was installed as archbishop of Omaha, Neb., in May 2025. Bishop-designate Mullen, 60, is currently the administrator of the Diocese of Belleville.

The diocese issued a statement about the appointment, noting that “with great joy and gratitude” it welcomed the announcement of its new bishop-designate.

Bishop-designate Mullen’s episcopal ordination and installation as Belleville’s 10th bishop is scheduled for May 1.

Wearing his black Benedictine habit, with a pectoral cross over its scapular, he said during a March 13 press conference in Belleville, “My sincere thanks to our brother from Illinois, the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, for his confidence in calling me to shepherd this beautiful flock.

“I accept this mission in the Church, this service to his people, as God’s plan. ... I have accepted many assignments from abbots and bishops under whom I have served and have nearly always grown to love those assignments. I trust that pattern will continue.”

Bishop-designate Mullen grew up in the Belleville Diocese, his family moving there when he was 9 months old.

He began his formation for ordained ministry as a seminarian at the former Saint Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in history in 1988.

Bishop-designate Mullen was received as a novice of Saint Meinrad Archabbey later that same year, professed temporary vows as a monk on Aug. 6, 1989, and solemn vows on Aug. 15, 1992.

He continued his priestly formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, earning a master of divinity degree in 1994. Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein ordained Bishop-designate Mullen on June 5, 1994, in the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad.

In 2003, he earned a doctorate in liturgical studies from The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Bishop-designate Mullen previously was a professor of liturgy at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology and held various administrative offices there.

In 2012, he began ministry in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., serving as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Huntingburg, Ind., from 2012-13 and as rector of St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville from 2013-22.

Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson noted that Bishop-designate Mullen “evidenced keen administrative skills and a pastoral heart” in his time of ministry in the Evansville Diocese.

“He is a wonderful liturgist, homilist and teacher,” said Archbishop Thompson, who served as bishop of Evansville from 2011-17. “He is a great choice to be the next bishop of Belleville.”

In the 172-year history of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Bishop-designate Mullen is the third of its monks to be appointed as a bishop. He follows Bishop Martin Marty, Saint Meinrad’s first abbot who was appointed a bishop in 1879 and served in the then-Dakota Territory and later as bishop of Saint Cloud, Minn., until his death at 62 in 1896.

The second was Archbishop Buechlein, who served as bishop of Memphis, Tenn., from 1987-92, and as archbishop of Indianapolis from 1992-2011.

Benedictine Archabbot Kurt Stasiak said the appointment of Bishop-designate Mullen “reflects his proven competence and obvious dedication to and love for the Church.”

“It is an honor for him and an honor to our monastery,” Archabbot Kurt said, “although, we will miss Father Godfrey’s wonderful spirit and energetic presence among us. He is a person who gives life and energy to whatever group or individual he is with.”

During the press conference, Bishop-designate Mullen thanked his confreres at Saint Meinrad “who have

tolerated this extrovert in their midst these past 38 years and taught me the invaluable rhythm of prayer and work.”

Bishop-designate Mullen described how he had learned of his appointment in a phone call from then-apostolic nuncio Cardinal Christoph Pierre on March 6.

When he asked if he needed the permission of the archabbot to accept, he said Cardinal Pierre told him that “your obedience now is to the Holy Father.”

He then recalled how Cardinal Pierre went on to tell him to “continue being a monk. Be a man of prayer, and a man of community. And be a man of caring for the flock of Christ.”

Nonetheless, Bishop-designate Mullen said that later that day he “had a very strong feeling of dread for a couple of hours. And I couldn’t explain that dread, until it hit me that those words meant that on May 1, I am no longer a monk of Saint Meinrad. It will be the first time in 38 years that Saint Meinrad will not be my primary community.”

Bishop-designate Mullen then described a reassuring phone call with Archabbot Kurt the following day.

“I expressed my fear of not being a monk of Saint Meinrad anymore,” he recalled. “And he said, ‘Father Godfrey, while canonically you will not be a monk of Saint Meinrad, in our hearts, you always belong to this community.’ And that was very comforting.”

Bishop-designate Mullen began ministry in the Diocese of Belleville in 2022, serving as the rector of its Cathedral of St. Peter and as pastor of Blessed Sacrament and Queen of Peace parishes, all three in Belleville, as well as moderator of the curia and director of the diocese’s office of worship.

In 2025, he was appointed as the diocese’s vicar general shortly before Archbishop McGovern was appointed to lead the Archdiocese of Omaha.

Bishop-designate Mullen was then elected diocesan administrator by the diocese’s college of consultors.

In a statement about his appointment, he said that, since he was a child, “I have always been fascinated by the way Christ is present in his wonderful people in southern Illinois. ... All my life, I have loved you.”

(Criterion reporter Sean Gallagher contributed to this article.) †

Archdiocesan chrism Mass to be celebrated on March 31 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral



Keri Carroll, executive assistant at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis, helps bottle chrism oil on March 16. The oil will be distributed to all archdiocesan parishes during the annual chrism Mass at the cathedral on March 31. (Photo by Emily Mastronicola)

The annual archdiocesan chrism Mass will be celebrated at 2 p.m. on March 31 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. Catholics from across central and southern Indiana are invited to take part in the liturgy.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will be the principal celebrant and homilist at the Mass that will take place on Tuesday of Holy Week.

The liturgy will feature the blessing of

oils used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the anointing of the sick, in priestly ordinations and in the dedication of churches and altars. Representatives from parishes and religious communities across central and southern Indiana will be present to receive the blessed oils.

Priests serving in the archdiocese will also renew their ordination promises during the chrism Mass. †



O'RILEY BRANSON
FUNERAL SERVICE & CREMATORY

6107 South East Street
Indianapolis, IN 46227
(317) 787-8224



Honoring Catholic Traditions Since 1971

Scan to request your FREE Planning Information

ORileyBranson.com



Catholic Owned and Operated by Chris and Mary Beth Branson



MARIAN UNIVERSITY
Preparatory School
POWERED BY K12

NOW ENROLLING STUDENTS FOR 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

- FAITH-FOCUSED ONLINE EDUCATION ROOTED IN CATHOLIC VALUES
- SMALL, LIVE CLASSES FOR GRADES K-12
- A STRONG SCHOOL COMMUNITY WHERE STUDENTS CONNECT AND GROW
- EARN COLLEGE CREDIT WITH DUAL ENROLLMENT

Scan the QR code to Learn More & Enroll Today!!



muprep.k12.com



MCNULTY
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

Tom McNulty
BROKER/ATTORNEY
317.507.0688 • mcnultyre@gmail.com

Patrick McNulty
BROKER

Brian Candlish
BROKER

Jamy Brase
BROKER

Andy Barnett
BROKER

Steve Hullett
BROKER

Experience counts... Let us share ours with you!

Serving our friends and customers for over 35 years in Central Indiana. Specializing in Brokerage, Legal, and Investment Services for all types of real estate transactions.

MCNULTYRE.COM



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*

Editorial



Pope Leo XIV leads the *Angelus* prayer from the window of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican on March 1. (OSV News/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

Peacemakers must be active, not passive

Let us pray together that harmony may prevail in all conflicts throughout the world. Only peace, a gift of God, can heal the wounds between peoples. (Pope Leo XIV, *Angelus*, March 1)

In response to “what is happening in the Middle East and in Iran during this tumultuous time,” and to the “troubling news” about “clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan,” Pope Leo XIV used his March 1 Sunday *Angelus* message to remind all concerned that, “Stability and peace are not achieved through mutual threats, nor through the use of weapons, which sow destruction, suffering and death, but only through reasonable, sincere and responsible dialogue.”

Peacemaking is a virtue that requires serenity, courage and wisdom. It also demands extraordinary patience and the willingness to trust that the Holy Spirit is at work even in situations that seem hopeless.

In his address to members of the Vatican’s diplomatic corps on Jan. 9, the Holy Father strongly expressed his concerns about the increasing tendency among nations to replace dialogue with a diplomacy based on coercion or force:

In our time, the weakness of multilateralism is a particular cause for concern at the international level. A diplomacy that promotes dialogue and seeks consensus among all parties is being replaced by a diplomacy based on force, by either individuals or groups of allies.

War is back in vogue and a zeal for war is spreading. The principle established after the Second World War, which prohibited nations from using force to violate the borders of others, has been completely undermined. Peace is no longer sought as a gift and a desirable good in itself, or in the pursuit of “the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God, with a more perfect form of justice among men and women” [a quote from St. Paul VI’s March 1967 encyclical letter “Populorum Progressio”]. Instead, peace is sought through weapons as a condition for asserting one’s own dominion. This gravely threatens the rule of law, which is the foundation of all peaceful civil coexistence.

Efforts by individual nations or groups of allies to intervene in the affairs of sovereign states by force is not peacemaking.

While it may seem effective to those who have the means to enforce their will (however virtuous) on others, accomplishing peace by force is not building a just and lasting peace. It is,

at best, an attempt to achieve the kind of stability that supports the dominance of one nation and its allies over weaker nations.

Pope Leo said in the same Jan. 9 address: “At the heart of many of the situations I have mentioned, we can see something that Augustine himself pointed out, namely the persistent idea that peace is only possible through the use of force and deterrence.”

“While war is content with destruction,” he said, “peace requires continuous and patient efforts of construction as well as constant vigilance. Such efforts are required of everyone, starting with the countries that possess nuclear arsenals.”

True peacemaking must be active, not passive. It requires that people actively listen to one another and that they commit to working together to achieve “the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God, with a more perfect form of justice among men and women.”

Above all, there is no place in genuine peacemaking for what Pope Leo calls “a zeal for war.”

As followers of Jesus Christ, we can have no tolerance for the idea that peace can be achieved through violence and the weapons of war. We believe that only nonviolence, which is the way of Jesus, can build a lasting peace.

Pope Leo went on to say in his Jan. 9 address, “During our pilgrimage on this Earth, peacemaking requires humility and courage. The humility to live truthfully and the courage to forgive. In the Christian life, we see these virtues reflected at Christmas, when Truth, the eternal Word of God, becomes humble flesh, and at Easter, when the condemned Righteous One forgives his persecutors and grants them his life as the Risen One.”

Our Church strongly supports what Pope Leo identified in his address to the Vatican diplomatic corps as a multilateral approach to peacemaking.

“Peace is more than just a goal,” the Holy Father said. “It is a presence and a journey. Even when it is endangered within us and around us, like a small flame threatened by a storm, we must protect it, never forgetting the names and stories of those who have borne witness to it.”

Peacemaking demands more from us than passive acceptance. It demands that we pray fervently for peace among nations and that we work tirelessly to build a just and lasting peace.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Dr. Tina Reichley

Catholic Medical Association enriches faith, fellowship of health care professionals

My name is Tina Reichley. My husband Dan and I have been married 33 years and have raised four children in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond and its schools.



I am also a family physician in Richmond. I have worked in the inpatient and outpatient world of family medicine for

the last 30 years—and I am excited to share that I have been named the new Indiana state director of the Catholic Medical Association (CMA).

The CMA is the best kept secret in the field of medicine. It is the largest association of Catholic physicians and health care professionals in the United States. It was established in the early 1900s to bring together Catholic physicians and other health care professionals to strengthen members’ faith, to promote fellowship and to support the Church.

I first heard about the CMA around 2013. I was searching for something to replenish my spirit in medicine. Dan was surfing the internet and found the CMA website. God works with perfection. During the last 12 years, I have met amazing physicians with values parallel to mine, professionals committed to justice and the dignity of life from conception to natural death.

The CMA has opportunities for fellowship, spiritual growth and

education at its annual conference held in September, this year in Arizona. Indiana is blessed with having some local guilds that provide local fellowship, education and opportunities to serve the Church and the public. These guilds can be a base for medical students and residents to find guidance and are essential for providing education, mutual support, service and witness across the United States. Guilds in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis include the St. Raphael Catholic Medical Guild of Indianapolis (president: Dr. Jason Kippenbrock) and the Southwest Indiana Catholic Medical Guild (president: Dr. Gary Keepes).

I believe one part of my job with the CMA is to connect medical professionals to spiritual growth, trusted resources and one another. We are blessed with extraordinary talent within our Catholic medical community both locally and nationally. We do not need to reinvent; we need to connect and allow God’s work to unfold.

If you are a medical professional, I invite you to consider becoming a member of the Catholic Medical Association, joining a local guild, attending Zoom guild meetings, attending the annual conference and/or attending the White Mass for medical professionals that will be held this year at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 30.

You will not be disappointed—there is a place for you. You can learn more at cathmed.org/membership.

We also invite anyone who feels called to support this mission to donate at cathmed.org. †

Be Our Guest/Effie Caldarola

Recharging Lent

At Mass on Ash Wednesday, the holy Communion line was down to its last person. Suddenly, a young woman hurried down the aisle just as the priest was turning back to the altar.



Obviously, a latecomer. And then she briefly spoke to the priest. I couldn’t hear her words, but it was clear she was asking to receive ashes after Mass, having not

arrived when they were distributed.

Ashes are very important to many Catholics. They’re a great witness, both for us and for those that see them on us.

Ashes are sacramentals, which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says are “sacred signs instituted by the Church” to prepare us to receive the fruit of the sacraments. They serve as reminders of our faith (#1677). I love sacramentals—candles, rosaries and what my husband laughingly says is my tendency to bring holy water home from every shrine we visit. Thank you, Our Lady of Knock.

But I’ve never understood why often more Catholics show up for ashes than attend the deeply moving and important liturgies of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Sacramentals are not the sacraments. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, and if we have the choice between receiving the Eucharist or receiving ashes—well, that’s no choice at all.

Sometimes I wonder if, now that Lent is moving along, we feel a bit disappointed in our Lent. Maybe on Ash Wednesday we’re determined to “do” Lent well, and as the days progress, we lose heart in our efforts.

Were our ashes the big impetus for action, and by Holy Week we think we didn’t live up to our expectations?

Hopefully that’s not the case, but if it is, we should never get discouraged. As a kid, I thought God was a stern taskmaster, and Lent was somehow a punishment for my sins. As I grew in faith and understanding, I saw the God that Jesus showed us—the God who is love (1 Jn 4:8), the God who is the prodigal’s father, always waiting with open arms, the God who doesn’t impose suffering, but suffers with us.

Lent is not punishment, it’s invitation: invitation to growth, to conversion, to Christ. The door remains open.

Discouraged with your Lent? Then begin again. And forget the trap I sometimes fall into—thinking of Lent as New Year’s resolutions on steroids, things I’ll “do,” sometimes with a nod toward my own goals—maybe losing a couple of pounds would be nice?

Sure, if giving up chocolate helps you remember Lent, then go for it. Pray, give alms, fast. But all those things should be with a focus on Christ.

I remember the words of Pope Benedict XVI: “Christian faith is ... above all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is an encounter with the Son of God that gives new energy to the whole of our existence.”

And when we are discouraged by our sinfulness? Julian of Norwich, the 14th century English mystic, said, “First the fall, and then the recovery from the fall, and both are the mercy of God.”

So you’ve fallen? That’s the acknowledgement of Lent. We’re all sinners. But the biggest gift of Lent is God’s overwhelming and enduring love for us. So welcome to the rest of Lent, which beckons with many graces.

(Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master’s degree in pastoral studies from Seattle University.) †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Let God's spirit dwell in us and lead us to eternal life

[Jesus] cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go." (Jn 11:43-44)

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in him, even if he dies, will live. This is a great mystery. Each of us will die. There is no escaping this essential truth. And yet, our faith assures us that, as St. Paul says in the second reading for the Fifth Sunday of Lent (Rom 8:8-11), if the Spirit of God's dwells in us, we will live forever.

We are made in God's image and likeness, and we are both flesh and spirit. We have in us the capacity for life eternal. We profess this belief every time we recite the Nicene Creed and say, "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

The great miracle worked by Jesus in the town of Bethany, the home of his friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus, illustrates the truth of Jesus' profound, but provocative, statement: "I am the

resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live" (Jn 11:25).

Death exists, but it has lost its power. The Triune God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) has far more power than death does. The story of Lazarus, which is related in the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of Lent (Jn 11:1-45), gives us some insights into this truth.

When he first learns about Lazarus' condition, Jesus says, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (Jn 11:4). This is true of every illness and every form of human suffering. God's glory supersedes every evil, including the tragedy of death.

The Gospel tells us that Lazarus does indeed succumb to death. In fact, by the time Jesus arrives four days later, his friend has already been embalmed, tied hands and feet with burial bonds, and wrapped in a shroud. By all earthly standards, Lazarus is dead and will never rise again.

But Jesus is not bound by the laws of human nature. His compassion as

a man, and a friend, is boundless, and his power as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity transcends all suffering and death. St. John describes the intense exchange between Jesus and his friend Martha:

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." (Jn 11:20-27)

Jesus is consistent. Lazarus will rise—and not simply "on the last day." In order to give glory to God, and to affirm Jesus' identity as the Son of God, the brother of Martha and Mary will

be released from the bonds of death, not permanently, but for now. For the rest of his earthly life, Lazarus will be a sign that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and that anyone who believes in him will live.

Jesus performs this great miracle in communion with his heavenly Father. When he stands before his friend's tomb, his eyes wet with tears, he cries out: "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me" (Jn 11:41-42).

All of Jesus' miracles are performed to give glory to God and to increase our faith. That's why St. John's Gospel concludes: "Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him" (Jn 11:45).

Lent is a time to prepare ourselves once again for the greatest miracle of all—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. May we use this holy season to increase our faith in the power of God to overcome suffering and death and to bring us all to life everlasting. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Que el Espíritu de Dios habite en nosotros y nos conduzca a la vida eterna

[Jesús] gritó con fuerte voz: "¡Lázaro, sal afuera!" El muerto salió, atado de pies y manos con vendas y envuelto el rostro en un sudario. Jesús les dijo: "Desatadlo y dejadle andar." (Jn 11:43-44)

Jesús es la resurrección y la vida. Quien crea en él, aunque muera, vivirá. Este es un gran misterio: cada uno de nosotros morirá. No podemos escapar de esta verdad esencial. Y, sin embargo, nuestra fe nos asegura que, como afirma san Pablo en la segunda lectura del quinto domingo de Cuaresma (Rom 8:8-11), si el Espíritu de Dios habita en nosotros, viviremos para siempre.

Estamos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios; somos a la vez carne y espíritu. Llevamos en nosotros la capacidad de la vida eterna. Profesamos esta creencia cada vez que recitamos el Credo y decimos: "Espero la resurrección de los muertos y la vida del mundo futuro."

El gran milagro que obró Jesús en Betania, el hogar de sus amigos María, Marta y Lázaro, ilustra la verdad de esta profunda y a la vez desafiante afirmación de Jesús: "Yo soy la

resurrección. El que cree en mí, aunque muera, vivirá" (Jn 11:25).

La muerte existe, pero ha perdido su poder. El Dios Trino—Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo—es infinitamente más poderoso que la muerte. El relato de Lázaro, que se proclama en el Evangelio del quinto domingo de Cuaresma (Jn 11:1-45), nos ilumina sobre esta verdad.

Cuando se entera por primera vez del estado de Lázaro, Jesús dice: "Esta enfermedad no es de muerte; es para la gloria de Dios, para que el Hijo de Dios sea glorificado por ella" (Jn 11:4). Esto se aplica a todas las enfermedades y a todas las formas de sufrimiento humano. La gloria de Dios supera todo mal, incluida la tragedia de la muerte.

El Evangelio nos dice que, efectivamente, Lázaro sucumbe a la muerte. Cuando Jesús llega, cuatro días después, su amigo ya ha sido amortajado, atado de pies y manos con vendas funerarias y envuelto en un sudario. Según toda lógica terrenal, Lázaro está muerto y no volverá a la vida.

Pero Jesús no se rige por las leyes de la naturaleza humana. Su compasión como hombre y como amigo es

ilimitada, y su poder como Segunda Persona de la Santísima Trinidad trasciende todo sufrimiento y toda muerte. San Juan describe el intenso intercambio entre Jesús y su amiga Marta:

Cuando Marta supo que había venido Jesús, le salió al encuentro, mientras María se quedó en casa. Dijo Marta a Jesús: "Señor, si hubieras estado aquí, no habría muerto mi hermano. Pero aun ahora yo sé que Dios te concederá cuanto le pidas." Jesús replicó: "Tu hermano resucitará." Le respondió Marta: "Ya sé que resucitará en la resurrección, el último día." Jesús le respondió: "Yo soy la resurrección. El que cree en mí, aunque muera, vivirá; y todo el que vive y cree en mí no morirá jamás. ¿Crees esto?" Respondió ella: "Sí, Señor, yo creo que tú eres el Cristo, el Hijo de Dios, el que iba a venir al mundo." (Jn 11:20-27)

Jesús es coherente. Lázaro resucitará, y no simplemente en "el último día." Para dar gloria a Dios y reafirmar la identidad de Jesús como Hijo de Dios, el hermano de Marta y María será liberado de las ataduras de la muerte; no de manera permanente,

sino temporal. Durante el resto de su vida terrenal, Lázaro será un signo vivo de que Jesús es la resurrección y la vida, y de que todo el que cree en él vivirá.

Jesús realiza este gran milagro en comunión con su Padre celestial. De pie ante la tumba de su amigo, con los ojos bañados en lágrimas, exclama: "Padre, te doy gracias por haberme escuchado. Bien sé que tú siempre me escuchas; pero lo he dicho por éstos que me rodean, para que crean que tú me has enviado" (Jn 11:41-42).

Todos los milagros de Jesús se realizan para dar gloria a Dios y fortalecer nuestra fe. Por eso concluye el Evangelio de san Juan: "Muchos de los judíos que habían venido a casa de María, viendo lo que había hecho, creyeron en él" (Jn 11:45).

La Cuaresma es un tiempo para prepararnos una vez más para el mayor milagro de todos: la resurrección de Jesús de entre los muertos. Aprovechemos este tiempo santo para fortalecer nuestra fe en el poder de Dios, que vence el sufrimiento y la muerte y nos conduce a todos a la vida eterna. †

Events Calendar

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

Every Wednesday:

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery Support Group**, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

March 27-28

Planned Parenthood, 8590 N. Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **Indiana Knights of Columbus Overnight prayer Vigil**, Fri. 6 p.m.-Sat. 6 a.m., rosary 6 p.m., join for a few minutes, an hour or longer. Information: 317-223-4892.

March 27-29

Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Come and See Retreat**, 4 p.m. Fri.-2 p.m. Sun., for single Catholic women ages 18-42 wanting to explore religious life, free, meals and housing provided. Information, registration: 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org, ComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org.

March 28

St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St., Huntington (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend). **Ava's Grace Healing Retreat**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., for couples and individuals who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or infant loss, witness talks, couple conversation, small group discussion, eucharistic adoration, pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady on the retreat center grounds, lunch, free. Information: leverett@diocesefwsb.org. Registration: diocesefwsb.org/avas-grace.

March 30

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Leave the Light On**, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation, no appointment needed. Information: 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

April 1

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—age 50 and older, new members welcome, Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul president

Paul Ainsley presenting, also call about regular Friday 1 p.m. lunch events. Information: 317-796-8605.

April 2

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Simple Soup and Bread Luncheon**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., fundraiser for Catholic Charities Crisis Office, \$15, register online or pay cash at the door. Information, registration: 317-236-1411, cbush@archindy.org, tinyurl.com/ccsouplebread26.

April 3

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence., Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Way of the Cross for Justice**, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Information: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

April 5

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, O'Shaughnessy Dining Hall, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Easter Buffet Breakfast or Lunch**, 9:30 a.m.-

12:30 p.m. breakfast, 12:30-2:30 p.m. lunch, \$30 ages 11 and older, \$15 ages 3-10, ages 2 and younger free, purchase tickets in advance by March 27. Information, registration: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2946, lrobinette@spsmw.org.

April 11

Avon United Methodist Church, 6850 E US Highway 36, Avon. **Stephen Ministries 50th Anniversary Celebration and Learning Event**, 8-4 p.m., \$15 includes light breakfast and snacks, additional box lunch is \$12. Information, registration: stephenministries.org/celebrateIND.

St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Parish Life Center, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Euchre Tournament**, doors open at 5:30 p.m., games start 6:30 p.m., must be 21 or older, cash prizes, 50/50, food and beverages available for purchase, \$10, register by April 4. Information, registration: tinyurl.com/stmichaeleuchre26, events@saintmichaelindy.org.

April 14

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-

the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information, livestream link: Taize.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952.

April 16

The Galt House, 140 N 4th St, Louisville, Ky. **St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities of New Albany "Giving Hope-Changing Lives" Annual Gala Fundraiser**, 5:30 p.m. doors open, dinner 7 p.m., client testimonials, live auction. Information, RSVP: 812-949-7305, info@stcharities.org.

April 17

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, presenter TBD, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. April 14. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

April 18

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Called to Community Women's**

Breakfast, 7:30-11 a.m., sponsored by Confraternity of Christian Mothers, Mass at 7:30 a.m. followed by hot catered breakfast and full espresso bar, speaker and craft activity, \$15, register by April 4. Information, registration: 317-752-5172.

Sisters of Providence grounds, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Earth Day Festival**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., nature shows, craft activities, face-painting, hayrides, nature trail hikes, alpaca yoga spinning, weaving and felting demonstrations, alpaca visits, food vendors, live entertainment, free admission but donations accepted. Information: 812-535-2946, Events.SistersofProvidence.org, lrobinette@spsmw.org.

April 19

Crane Bay Event Center, 551 W. Merrill St., Indianapolis. **Light in the City Gala**, 4-9 p.m., dinner and silent auction event benefitting Lumen Christi Catholic School, includes cocktail hour, dessert dash, raffle, speaker, award presentation, \$125. Information: 317-632-3174, cdillon@lumenchristischool.org. †

Retreats and Programs

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

April 8-10

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Praise and Worship in the Fine Arts**, Benedictine Father Michael Reyes presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

April 17

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual

direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

April 17-19

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Young Adult Retreat**, Benedictine Father Simon Herrmann presenting, for ages 18-35, \$50 single, \$100 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

April 20-24

Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Priest Retreat: Faith Stories from the Gospel of Matthew**, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, \$625. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

April 25

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Why We're Catholic**, 9 a.m.-5:15 p.m. Catholic Answers apologist Trent Horn presenting, \$65,

includes lunch. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

May 1-3

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Women Carrying the Light of Christ: Past and Present**, women's retreat, Dr. Kimberly Baker presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 12

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St.,

Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$55, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$42, dinner additional \$14.40. Registration: ftm_retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

May 13

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Our Lady of Fatima Feast Day Evening of Reflection**, 5-8 p.m., spiritual director at the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Seminary and

Fatima expert Jesuit Father James Kubick presenting, freewill donations accepted. Registration: 317-545-7681, ftm_retreatportal.com/events, lcoons@archindy.org.

May 16

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **The Broken Mary Project**, 9 a.m.-5:15 p.m., former radio broadcaster Kevin Matthew presenting, \$65, includes lunch. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com. †

Retreat focusing on Divine Mercy will be held on April 10-12

A weekend retreat titled "Into the Ocean of Mercy" will be held at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Dr. in St. Meinrad, on April 10 through April 12.

Benedictine Father Kolbe Wolniakowski will lead this retreat that draws from the metaphor St. Faustina Kowlaska used to describe the vastness and depth of God's forgiveness and love.

The retreat will offer participants time to step aside from the pace of daily life and enter a space of stillness where the gentle, healing presence of God's mercy can be experienced in

new and personal ways. Retreatants will reflect on the ways God's mercy is revealed in their lives and in the world around them and consider how they are called to extend that mercy to others.

Check-in time on April 10 is 2 p.m. CT with Vespers in the Archabbey Church at 5 p.m. The retreat begins at 7:30 p.m. The retreat ends after lunch on Sunday.

The cost is \$350 for a single room or \$550 for a double, both of which include meals.

For more information or to register, go to saintmeinrad.org/retreats or call 812-357-6611. †

Wedding Anniversaries

ALVA AND MARILYN (BICKERS) DUNCAN, members of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 27.

The couple was married in the former St. Michael Church in Madison on March 27, 1976.

They have two children: Melinda Gammons and Scott Duncan.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



FRED AND CATHY (HAUTMAN) MUND, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 27.

The couple was married in St. Jude Church in Cincinnati on March 27, 1976.

They have two children: Sarah Giegold and Steve Mund.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



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

Archbishop Thompson to lead Way of the Cross with Knights of Columbus on April 3

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will join the Indiana Knights of Columbus in leading the 89th Annual Way of the Cross at University Park, 325 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at noon on Good Friday, April 3.

The public is invited to take part.

Attendees are asked to assemble on East Vermont Street across from the Indiana War Memorial for the start of event.

For more information, contact Greg Bendel at 317-893-6547 or e-mail insulationfirestop@yahoo.com. †

In illo uno unum (In the One Christ we are one)

One in Christ/Daniel Conway

Color the world with care and respect for children

On Feb. 3, 2025, Pope Francis convened an International Summit on Children's Rights, a gathering of Church and civic leaders concerned about the protection of children internationally.

In his opening address, Pope Francis said:

Even today, too often the lives of millions of children are marked by poverty, war, lack of schooling, injustice and exploitation. Children and adolescents in poorer countries, or those torn apart by tragic conflicts, are forced to endure terrible trials. Nor is the more resource-rich world immune from injustice. Where, thank God, people do not suffer from war or hunger, there are problematic peripheries, where little ones are not infrequently vulnerable and suffer from problems that we cannot underestimate.

In fact, to a much greater extent than in the past, schools and health services have to deal with children already tested by many difficulties, with anxious or depressed youngsters, and adolescents drawn to forms of aggression or self-harm. Moreover, a culture of efficiency looks upon childhood itself, like old age, as a "periphery" of existence.

In his address, Pope Francis emphasized the importance of listening to both the spoken and unspoken words of children, "for we need to realize that young children understand, remember and speak to us. And with their looks and their silences, too, they speak to us. So let us listen to them!"

A year later, on Feb. 5, Pope Leo XVI shared his predecessor's concern for caring for the vulnerable children of the world.

In his address to the organizing committee of the initiative "From Crisis to Care: Catholic Action for Children," Pope Leo said:

It is indeed a tragedy that the children and youth of our world, the ones Jesus wanted to come to him, are so often deprived of care and access to the basic necessities of life. Likewise, they frequently have few opportunities for achieving their God-given potential. Regrettably, I see that the situation of children today has not improved during the past year, and it is also of deep concern to learn of the lack of progress in protecting children from danger.

One must question whether global commitments for sustainable development have been cast aside when we see in our global human family that so many children

still live in extreme poverty, suffer abuse and are forcibly displaced, not to mention that they lack proper education and are isolated or separated from their families.

The Holy Father advocated for a profound vision of life as a gift to be cherished, and of the family as its responsible guardian, considering it deplorable that public resources are allocated to suppress life rather than being invested to support mothers and families.

Pope Leo welcomed the attendees' commitment to developing effective ways to address the concerns raised at the Summit on Children's Rights.

He asked that they keep in mind two important points:

First, you are speaking on behalf of those who have no voice. This is a truly noble task. Keep that in mind when the temptation to be discouraged arises because of failed initiatives, seeming lack of interest from others or the sense that the situation is not improving. Let the good you know you are doing carry you forward.

The second point concerns the need to focus on the transversal needs of children, which can easily go unnoticed when care is focused on just one area of need. In this sense, I realize that the particular way in which each of you is addressing the needs of children is in conformity with your specific charisms and specializations within your local Church structures, religious congregations and Catholic-inspired organizations.

The Holy Father went on to ask that the diverse organizations and groups represented on the organizing committee "find ways to work together in greater harmony so that children receive care that is well balanced, taking into consideration their physical, psychological and spiritual welfare."

Pope Leo concluded his address with a quote from the letter presented to Pope Francis by the children who attended the previous year's Summit on Children's Rights: "Together with you, we want to cleanse the world of bad things, color it with friendship and respect, and help you build a beautiful future for everyone!"

Through the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, the Holy Father asked for God's blessing on all who work to safeguard the rights of children in today's world.

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion's editorial committee.) †



Uno en Cristo/Daniel Conway

Coloreemos el mundo con atención y respeto hacia los niños

El 3 de febrero de 2025, el papa Francisco convocó una Cumbre Internacional sobre los Derechos del Niño, una reunión de líderes eclesiales y civiles comprometidos con la protección de los niños a nivel internacional.

En su discurso inaugural, el papa Francisco expresó:

Aún hoy, la vida de millones de niños está marcada por la pobreza, la guerra, la privación escolar, la injusticia y la explotación. Los niños y adolescentes de los países más pobres, o los desgarrados por trágicos conflictos, se ven obligados a enfrentarse a terribles pruebas. Ni siquiera el mundo más rico es inmune a las injusticias. Allí donde, gracias a Dios, la gente no sufre guerras ni hambre, existen sin embargo las periferias difíciles, donde los más pequeños son a menudo víctimas de fragilidades y problemas que no podemos subestimar.

De hecho, en mucha mayor medida que en el pasado, las escuelas y los servicios sanitarios tienen que contar con niños ya probados por tantas dificultades, con jóvenes ansiosos o deprimidos, con adolescentes que toman los caminos de la agresividad o la autolesión. Además, según la cultura eficientista, la misma infancia, como la vejez, es una «periferia» de la existencia.

En su discurso, el papa Francisco destacó la importancia de escuchar tanto

las palabras como los silencios de los niños, porque "debemos darnos cuenta de que los niños pequeños observan, comprenden y recuerdan. Y con sus miradas y sus silencios nos hablan. ¡Escuchémoslos!"

Un año después, el 5 de febrero de 2026, el papa León XVI compartió la preocupación de su predecesor por el cuidado de los niños vulnerables del mundo.

En su intervención ante el comité organizador de la iniciativa *From Crisis to Care: Catholic Action for Children* (De la crisis al cuidado: Acción católica por la infancia), el papa León señaló:

Es realmente una tragedia que los niños y los jóvenes de nuestro mundo, aquellos que Jesús quería que fuesen a Él, se vean tan a menudo privados de cuidados y del acceso a los bienes de primera necesidad. Además, con frecuencia tienen pocas oportunidades de realizar el potencial que Dios les ha dado. Lamentablemente, veo que la situación actual de los niños no ha mejorado en este último año; asimismo, es profundamente preocupante saber que no se han hecho progresos en la protección de los niños contra el peligro.

Cuando vemos que en nuestra familia humana global tantos niños viven aún en extrema pobreza, sufren abusos y son desplazados forzadamente, por no hablar del hecho de que no tienen una educación

adecuada y son aislados o separados de sus familias, uno se pregunta si los compromisos para el desarrollo sostenible han sido abandonados.

El Santo Padre abogó por una visión profunda de la vida como un don que hay que atesorar, y de la familia como su guardiana responsable, considerando deplorable que los recursos públicos se destinen a suprimir la vida, en lugar de invertirse en apoyar a las madres y a las familias.

El papa León acogió con satisfacción el compromiso de los asistentes de desarrollar formas eficaces de abordar las preocupaciones planteadas en la Cumbre sobre los Derechos del Niño, a quienes pidió que tuvieran en cuenta dos puntos importantes:

En primer lugar, ustedes hablan en nombre de quienes no tienen voz. Es una labor verdaderamente noble. Acuérdense de esto cuando llegue la tentación de sentirse desanimados a causa de iniciativas fallidas, de la falta de interés por parte de otros o de la sensación de que la situación no está mejorando. Dejen que el bien que saben que están haciendo los impulse a seguir adelante.

El segundo punto se refiere a la necesidad de concentrarse en las necesidades transversales de los niños, que pueden pasar inadvertidas fácilmente cuando el cuidado se centra solamente

en el ámbito de una necesidad. En este sentido, soy consciente de que el modo particular en el que cada uno de ustedes está afrontando las necesidades de los niños está en conformidad con sus carismas específicos y sus especializaciones dentro de sus estructuras eclesiales locales, congregaciones religiosas y organizaciones de inspiración católica.

El Santo Padre continuó pidiendo que las diversas organizaciones y grupos representados en el comité organizador encuentren "modalidades para trabajar juntos con mayor armonía, a fin de que los niños reciban una asistencia equilibrada que tenga en cuenta su bienestar físico, psicológico y espiritual."

El Papa León concluyó su discurso con una cita de la carta que presentaron al papa Francisco los niños que asistieron a la Cumbre sobre los Derechos del Niño del año anterior: "Junto a ti, queremos limpiar el mundo de cosas malas, colorearlo con amistad y respeto, y ayudarte a construir un futuro maravilloso para todos."

Por intercesión de María, Madre de la Iglesia, el Santo Padre pidió la bendición de Dios para todos los que trabajan para salvaguardar los derechos de los niños en el mundo actual.

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

In illo uno unum (En el único Cristo somos uno)

SISTERS

continued from page 1

“Oh, my gosh, I loved being principal of Christ the King,” she gushed. “There were 10 of us sisters living in the convent, which was right there on the property. We also staffed Bishop Chatard High School.

“I had nine wonderful years there. We had a terrific staff and a great camaraderie. And I knew the name of every child in the school, and I knew their families. We had wonderful support from the families and the parish.”

Her every word is touched with joy. At the same time, 40 years have passed since her time there, and while the memories last, there is also the tendency to lose sight of the remarkable difference that religious sisters made to generations of Catholic school children and their families.

That’s why Sister Mary Luke was surprised and delighted when she saw the notice in the weekly e-mail newsletter from Christ the King School.

‘This is so wonderful’

The notice shared the news that the 43 kindergarten students at Christ the King had created faith-filled artwork that had been put up for sale in a silent auction at the parish.

The notice also shared that the annual auction had raised \$1,547.

As Sister Mary Luke read those details, she smiled. But it was what she saw next that surprised and delighted her even more.

The notice mentioned that the money would be donated this year to the Benedictine Sisters at Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

“I thought, ‘This is so wonderful, but I don’t know anything about it,’” Sister Mary Luke recalled. “I’m not in development work anymore, but I work closely with Sister Susan Reuber who is. I asked her if she knew anything about it. She didn’t. I called Christ the King because we needed to thank somebody.”

She connected with one of the kindergarten teachers, Janis (Dobson) Macey, who was a student at Christ the King School when Sister Mary Luke was principal there. Macey was also taught by Benedictine Sister Bernardine Ludwig in the first grade and Benedictine Sister Angela Jarvoe in the sixth grade.

Macey and her fellow kindergarten teacher Rachel Campbell-Maher had hoped to keep the donation a surprise until they could deliver it in person to the sisters at the monastery.

“There are several sisters living at the monastery who have a connection to the school,” Macey said. “Rachel and I talked about that. Looking on their website, they have their ‘Love Thy Neighbor’ campaign. We thought it would be fun to give back to the sisters who gave so much to the school.”

As for the planned surprise, Macey now knows she should have remembered from her grade school days that religious sisters who teach are always at least three steps ahead of you when it comes to learning things about you.

“Some of my fondest memories are of Sister Bernardine,” Macey said, recalling the market that her first-grade teacher set up every Friday. “If you were good, you could earn ‘money’ to spend there. If you chose to make bad decisions, you could lose your money. I was that child who talked a lot and lost a lot of money. I frequently was broke.”

She laughed and added, “I was kind of a wild child and did encounter Sister Mary Luke in the office several times.”

When Macey and Campbell-Maher decided who the auction money would benefit, they also wanted to teach their kindergarten children about the sisters. Even

more, they hoped to make a connection—and maybe even some memories—with them.

‘It’s for the nuns!’

“Our kids become so close to us, and we know them so well,” Campbell-Maher said. “Some of our kids don’t know what a nun is. Being able to develop relationships with nuns is something we’re missing in our classrooms.

“The more they know about them and the more they have relationships with people like that, the more they understand that’s an option for their own vocation when they grow up.”

Macey nodded as she talked about the impact the sisters made at Christ the King in her days as a student.

“The sisters were in it 100%,” she said. “That was the life they lived. They taught, they lived on campus, and they cared. As an adult, I look back and see, ‘Wow, they were really trying to form me, not only as a person but as a faith-filled person.’”

In their own way, the two kindergarten teachers are doing the same with their students, just as many lay teachers across the archdiocese and the country are doing today.

Creating the faith-related artwork is part of that approach for Macey and Campbell-Maher, who also praise the help of their kindergarten aides, Leah Sears and Erin Bischoff.

“For the auction, we encourage religious-themed art,” Campbell-Maher said. “We talked about different symbols that mean different things in the Church. We made sure they weren’t all doing the same thing. We used some videos of how to draw. We did some practice ones in pencil.”

Macey added, “It’s amazing what 5- and 6-year-olds can do on their own.”

So was the response to the silent auction, with all bids starting at \$5.

“We had some that went for \$75, \$100,” Macey said. “And it wasn’t just parents buying their own kid’s art. We actually had parishioners outbidding parents.

“We had one parishioner who donated \$200 to cover any art that didn’t have bids. I contacted him and told him that all of the art had bids. He said, ‘I’m still going to give you a check for \$200.’ People were really into it.”

So were the kindergarten artists when they heard how much money was raised.

“When we told them they raised \$1,500, they were through the roof. They were jumping,” said Campbell-Maher, who also notes that a kindergartener figures you can buy a Ferrari for that amount. “We would say to them, ‘What is it for? Is it for you to take home?’ And they’d say, ‘No, it’s for the nuns! The nuns are going to use it to help people!’

“It was really cute.”

So was the interaction on March 7 when 11 of the kindergarten children, their moms and their teachers came to Our Lady of Grace Monastery to meet with some of the sisters and share their donation.



When some kindergarten students of Christ the King School in Indianapolis visited with the Benedictine sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, it led to a touching reunion between kindergarten teacher Janis Macey and the sister who was her first-grade teacher at Christ the King during the 1981-82 school year, Sister Bernardine Ludwig. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)

Tears, smiles and ice cream treats

That Saturday afternoon was rain-soaked outside, but the scene inside the monastery felt like a burst of sunshine as the children came together with the sisters.

Sister Mary Luke greeted the children and led them, their moms and their teachers into the chapel first, telling them, “The chapel is the heart of our home.”

“We pray for you, for ourselves and for everyone in the world—the people of God,” Sister Mary Luke told the children, adding that the sisters pray every day of the year together in the chapel. “It never gets cancelled. We believe it’s such a privilege.”

From the chapel, she led the Christ the King contingent into the sisters’ dining area where a kid-friendly lunch of hot dogs, macaroni-and-cheese, lemonade and ice cream treats awaited, with each of the children sharing a table with at least one of the 40 sisters who live at the monastery.

There, a touching, emotional scene unfolded when Macey saw her first-grade teacher Sister Bernardine. With tears filling her eyes, Macey hugged her former teacher. And when their embrace ended, Sister Bernardine showed Macey one of her favorite keepsakes from her 14 years of teaching at Christ the King—a picture of her first-grade class from the 1981-82 school year, the year Macey was in that class.

“It’s amazing to see someone who was so impactful,” Macey said. “She was strict, but she also loved us.”

When Sister Bernardine was told that Macey described herself as often getting into trouble that year, the sister smiled and sincerely said, “She was good. All of the children I taught were good.”

It was also that kind of day for the children and the sisters, a day touched with shy smiles, many photos and the shared joy that came when the two kindergarten teachers gave the children’s donation to the sisters, along with some framed pictures of the children’s artwork.

And when the ice cream treats appeared near the end of lunch, it was hard to tell who enjoyed them more—the children or the sisters. In that moment, it almost seemed that the years washed away for many of the sisters, taking them back to the years when they were children, back to the years when they taught children.

Later that afternoon, most of the sisters would get their first look inside the new \$24 million monastery that will become their home in mid-April.

“We have about half a million to raise yet,” Sister Mary Luke said, joyfully noting the generosity of people who have contributed to the sisters’ new home. “Our Lady of Grace is blessed with so many friends. We know that some people are able to make very substantial gifts, and God bless them. And there are others who make gifts that are substantial for them. And God bless them. We are so very grateful for those who support us.”

In comparison to \$24 million, \$1,547 may seem such a small number to some people. The Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace know and feel otherwise.

As Macey talked about making this connection an annual visit between the kindergarten students and the sisters, Sister Mary Luke recalled the first phone conversation she had with Macey—the one that led the sisters to want to share this lunch with the children.

“Honest to goodness, if she had called me and said we’ve raised \$15, we would have responded in the same way,” Sister Mary Luke said.

A touch of emotion filled her as she savored the scene of the sisters and the children together.

“The money helps,” she said. “But what’s even better is it’s another way of showing how people care about the sisters.”



Eleven kindergarten children from Christ the King School in Indianapolis and their two teachers share a lunch with the Benedictine sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove on March 7. In the back row are Sister Julie Sewell, left, Sister Mary Luke Jones, and kindergarten teachers Janis Macey and Rachel Campbell-Maher. Sister Bernardine Ludwig is in the front row by the students.

(For more information about Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove and the construction of its new monastery, visit benedictine.com.) †

Catholic men at annual E6 conference implored to let the light of the Gospel shine through them

By Sean Gallagher

ST. LEON—All Saints Parish in Dearborn County has been hosting its annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference for 10 years.

The event regularly fills the 1,500-seat auditorium of East Central High School in St. Leon with men from across Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and beyond.

So, after a decade of such success, perhaps the organizers of the conference couldn't be blamed if they rested on their laurels a bit.

But right at the start of the 11th E6 conference held on Feb. 21, Father Jonathan Meyer, who serves All Saints and the other three parishes of Dearborn County, put that idea to rest.

"We're here for one reason, and that is to encounter the Lord Jesus and to have our lives radically changed," he said on the stage to the men who filled the auditorium. "That is the only reason that we are here. ... If you came here today thinking that this was just going to be a nice day, just pack up and leave right now.

"I hope that today is uncomfortable. I hope that today challenges you in ways you've never been challenged before. In

this 11th E6 Catholic Men's Conference, that is my prayer."

The "E6" in the conference title refers to the sixth chapter of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians in which the Apostle calls believers to take up "the armor of God" in the spiritual fight against the devil (Eph 6:11).

As in past conferences, this year's event included presentations given by speakers from across the country, the celebration of the Mass, eucharistic adoration, the praying of the rosary and fellowship shared between sessions and at lunch.

Throughout the day, participants also had the opportunity to take part in the sacrament of reconciliation. From the start of the conference, there was a steady line of men snaking up an aisle to the top of the auditorium, all of them waiting to go to confession with one of the several priests on hand for the sacrament.

Off to the side of the auditorium, standing over the entrance to the rooms where men were going for the sacrament was a tote board showing the number of confessions heard during the day—with the final number standing at 426.

At the start of the conference, Father Meyer told the participants that many



Father Jonathan Meyer leads some 1,500 men in praying the rosary on Feb. 21 in the auditorium of East Central High School in St. Leon during the 11th annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference organized by All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

of them would be changed "by you humbling yourself and getting in this line and encountering Jesus' divine mercy" in the sacrament.

'Four pillars for Godly men'

The four presentations given during the daylong conference focused on what were called the "four pillars for Godly men": faith, integrity, witness and sacrifice.

In the morning were talks by Catholic author and speaker Tim Francis and Catholic businessman Ryan Olohan.

Francis, speaking about faith, shared how as a young adult he abandoned his Catholic faith and dove into a party lifestyle that led him into drug addiction. Then he shared how it was the faith and prayers of his mother that ultimately led him back to the Church.

Olohan, a husband and father of seven, reflected on integrity, telling the story of how he climbed the corporate ladder at Google but was eventually fired for refusing to promote perspectives on sexuality and gender ideology that the company had embraced.

Olohan offered practical pieces of advice so that his listeners can be men

firm in integrity, such as getting up right when their alarm goes off in the morning.

"Don't hit snooze," he said. "Win the first battle of the day." Then, at the end of the day, Olohan suggested to his listeners "to look at yourself in the mirror and honestly ask yourself, 'Did I do my best today?' If you can say, 'Today, I did my best. Tomorrow, I'll do better,' imagine where you'll be in a year, or in two years."

In the afternoon, Devin Schadt, a Catholic author, speaker and co-host of the Catholic Gentleman podcast, encouraged his listeners to give witness to their faith in their daily lives by following the example of St. Joseph in practicing the virtues of silence, obedience and sacrifice.

"Plan your day around God," he told them, by making sure that they have three times each day when they spend silent time in prayer.

In being a leader in their marriage and family, Schadt called on the conference attendees to "set the pace in self-giving love," saying that this is "the path to glory in which we can carve the path for our family to their eternal homeland."

See E6, page 15



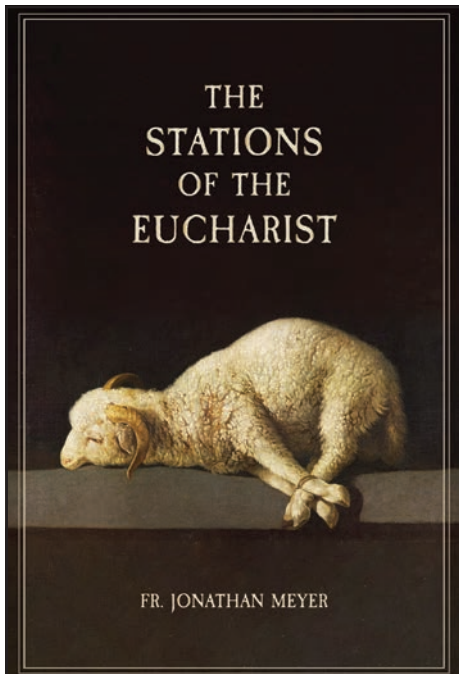
Men pray during a Mass celebrated during the 11th annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference on Feb. 21 at East Central High School in St. Leon.

Priest's book on the Mass as sacrifice is a fruit of the National Eucharistic Revival

By Sean Gallagher

Father Jonathan Meyer's experience of being a national eucharistic preacher during the 2021-25 National Eucharistic Revival has born fruit in a book he wrote that will be released during Holy Week this year.

The Stations of The Eucharist, published by Dynamic Catholic, is based



This is the cover of a book written by Father Jonathan Meyer, who serves in the four parishes of Dearborn County. Published by Dynamic Catholic, it will be released during Holy Week. (Submitted photo)

on presentations that Father Meyer, who serves in the four parishes of Dearborn County, gave across the country during the revival.

It focuses on understanding the Mass as Christ's sacrifice of himself on the cross and how worshippers can join themselves and all of the many crosses and blessings of their daily lives to him in the celebration of the Eucharist.

In an interview with *The Criterion*, Father Meyer confessed that he was lacking in this perspective on the Mass at the start of the revival.

"I really didn't have much understanding really, or the ability to preach on the Mass as sacrifice," he said. "And the more that I began to preach and teach, I realized that this wasn't just a 'me problem.' This was actually a huge struggle in the Church. The majority of people that I preached to did not understand the Mass as a sacrifice."

He hopes his book, which he described as "a journey from Genesis to Revelation, looking at how the Mass is a sacrifice," will be a way to help the revival continue to bear fruit in the lives of Catholics across the country.

"It begins by looking at the first sacrifice ever offered by a man to God, which was by Abel," Father Meyer said. "And then ultimately it ends with the sacrificial lamb in the Book of Revelation in the wedding feast. So, it takes you from Genesis to Revelation and ultimately just reveals the Mass as God's biblical and liturgical and spiritual gift to the Church."

He acknowledged that the revival and his ministry as a national eucharistic preacher bore fruit in his own priestly life and ministry.

"My being invited to be a preacher and what I have learned in the last five



Fr. Jonathan Meyer

years or so has deeply changed my priesthood," Father Meyer said. "I celebrate Mass differently. I enter into the Mass differently. I pray more deeply at Mass ..."

And he is convinced that lay Catholics can enter into the Mass just as deeply as him and his brother priests can because they have a share in the one priesthood of Christ by virtue of their baptism.

During the revival, Father Meyer frequently spoke about the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist by saying that "the Mass is Calvary."

"This concept of the Mass being Calvary is deeply important for the life of the lay faithful because it's how they live out their priesthood of the baptized, which they legitimately have," he said.

Father Meyer noted the importance of the words said by the celebrant at each Mass: "Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father."

"When the priest says that, if they don't understand the Mass as Calvary

being made present again," he said, "then they don't realize that they could be offering their whole lives, they can be offering their sicknesses, their struggles, their fallen-away children, and they can also be offering their joys and their gratitude."

The book has an introduction, then 14 chapters, much like the Stations of the Cross, and then a conclusion. Each of the chapters focuses on a virtue, offers an action step based on the chapter's topic and invites the reader to prayer.

"I myself am kind of blown away and taken back by the way that it's turned out to really be a deeply biblical, deeply spiritual book," said Father Meyer.

People interested in the prayerful aspects of *The Stations of the Eucharist* can take part in an online Holy Week retreat through viewing and praying with two videos posted online per day by Dynamic Catholic starting on Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord.

After Holy Week, all of the videos will be available for viewing and can be used by individuals or small groups who are reading or studying the book.

"It's not just a theological book," Father Meyer said. "I created it to be a conversion experience."

(For information about *The Stations of the Eucharist* by Father Jonathan Meyer, or to purchase it, visit cutt.ly/StationsBook. For information on the online Holy Week retreat tied to the book, visit cutt.ly/StationsRetreat.) †

THRIFT STORE

continued from page 1

From the building's location just a block from the conference's David's House outreach center in Richmond, to its size that "fits us like a glove," to raising the purchase amount in less than a week, Talbert says everything "just fell into place. It was meant to be."

The thrift store is a new addition to the many ways the conference—with members from St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Liberty, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond and St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville—helps those in need in Fayette, Union and Wayne counties.

Profits from the store will be used to support the conference's existing programs and, in time, provide funding for new programs.

The story begins with a multi-parish furniture ministry some 20 years ago before the conference existed.

'Something told me to look in the door'

The ministry was a combined outreach of the three Richmond parishes that were later merged to become St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in 2016. St. Elizabeth parishioner Dan Reichley joined the ministry about eight years ago.

"We would go out about every weekend to collect furniture that people or organizations told us they wanted to donate," he says. "We had people [in need] sign up to come in every other week and tried to match [items] with their needs. I had a feeling the ministry could become something more."

Reichley recalls one morning when Talbert, a member of St. Bridget, approached him about merging the furniture outreach with the Tri-County Good Samaritan SVdP conference.

"Once we joined with St. Vincent de Paul, it allowed [the ministry] to grow," he says.

At that time, the donated furniture was stored at the former Richmond State Hospital.

"The rent was free," says Reichley. "But the building was condemned, there were no bathrooms, no heat, no water, little light, and it was kind of far and inconvenient for people to get to."

A few years ago, the ministry moved, renting space in a building closer to

downtown Richmond. The new home base was short-lived.

"We were there about two years when a new tenant came along and we had to be out in 30 days," says Reichley. "We scattered our inventory over several places."

When the lease ended last summer, Talbert decided the conference needed to buy a building "so we don't have to move again."

There was a larger motive, too. "When we do home visits [with those who contact SVdP for assistance], we talk with them about sources of help so we can help them budget-wise," he explains. "We decided we really felt passionate about helping people help themselves, and a thrift store is our resource to do that."

Later last summer, Talbert walked by a church-run thrift store located a block from David's House.

"Something told me to look in the door," he recalls. "It was empty. I didn't know they closed."

He contacted the church that owned the 7,300-square-foot building and was told it was not for sale. When he explained the conference's mission and how the building would be used, the owner agreed to sell it.

"The price was too high, so I negotiated it down to \$280,000," says Talbert. "But we had no money."

The SVdP Indianapolis council offered to loan the money, he says.

As it turns out, the loan was not necessary.

'It's been an unbelievable blessing'

Shortly after Talbert struck a deal on the building, three priests visited David's House. Among them was Jesuit Father Joseph Kraemer, who grew up in the former St. Andrew Parish in Richmond—now a campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton—and serves in the order's West Province.

Talbert shared with the priests about the thrift store the conference dreamed of opening and the building it hoped to purchase.

"That weekend, Father Joe mentioned our plan when he preached at all three parishes" that make up the Tri-County Good Samaritan conference, he says.

"In six days, we had enough money to buy the building. By word of mouth, we ended up getting \$319,000, so we have money in reserve for an HVAC [system] and to buy fixtures for the thrift store.



Tri-County Good Samaritan St. Vincent de Paul Society conference volunteers Bennett Westjohn, left, and Dan Reichley pause for a photo in the conference's new Good Samaritan Center thrift store in Richmond as they ready the store for its grand opening on March 21. (Submitted photo)

"It's been an unbelievable blessing. We were [without a space for furniture] in July, and by about the first of September we had money and the building. We never had to borrow a penny. It floored me."

The furniture ministry resumed operations in its new home in October. Meanwhile, members from the SVdP Indianapolis council and its Mission 27 re-sale shops offered advice and ideas on thrift store operations.

As Talbert describes the store, top on his list are the spiritual aspects.

"The first thing people will see when they walk in is a large crucifix," says Talbert. "We'll have paper for people to write down prayer intentions and put them in a jar, and at the end of each day our volunteers will pray for those intentions."

The store will have a 20-by-20-foot corner for religious items like Bibles, books and rosaries—"not plastic ones but really nice ones"—made from classes taught at David's House by a St. Gabriel parishioner, says Talbert.

There is also a room set aside for a food store.

"We'll have homemade soup, jelly, spice mixes and bakery goods prepared by Seton [Catholic] High School students that go through a culinary program" taught in the commercial-grade kitchen at David's House, he adds.

"Now when our volunteers do home visits, we're going to give [those visited, referred to as 'neighbors'] credit to the thrift store depending on the size of the family and their need, so they can get clothes, furniture and, when we get the food side operating, they can get that as well."

Providing furniture, clothing and food might sound like a handout.

On the contrary, Talbert says the "concept of the thrift store is that it's one more program we offer to help people enhance their lives."

'It's a place where God dwells'

There are two types of charity, Talbert says, each with a different message.

"When people are just given things, the message we give is, 'You can't do this, so we're going to do it for you,'" he explains. "Our message is, 'You can do this, but we'll walk with you.' When a pair of our volunteers go on a home visit, they will offer to stick with the person or family to help them meet their short- and long-term goals."

If the offer is accepted, the volunteers connect them with classes. Some are

offered at David's House, such as a class teaching how to cook healthy meals on a budget. Parenting and budgeting classes are offered by partnering organizations in Richmond.

"Home visits, parenting classes, budgeting—any program a neighbor completes, they will receive additional shopping credit at our thrift store for kids' beds, clothing, housewares and so on," says Talbert.

Offering so many "hand-up, not hand-out" programs takes time and devotion from the Tri-County Good Samaritan conference's 30 volunteers, he notes.

"But the support we get from our pastors, parishes and the community is just mind-blowing," Talbert adds.

For instance, Father Sengole Gnanaraj, pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, blessed the Good Samaritan Center last December. And students from Seton Catholic High School—where Reichley teaches courses in math, science and theology—have helped move furniture into the building and volunteered getting the thrift store ready for its March 21 opening.

"It's not just a thrift store," Talbert clarifies. "It's a place where God dwells, where God is encountered in each person. That's what will distinguish us from every other thrift store, that it's a place not of shopping but of helping."

Reichley agrees, calling the Good Samaritan Center a place "where it's not just a transaction but an interaction. With interactions we can hopefully open up people's minds to higher things, not just material things."

"The mission of St. Vincent de Paul is to grow in holiness through works of charity," he explains. "We have to remember it's not about giving people material things but about seeking our holiness, and God asks us to seek holiness with others."

Initially, the Good Samaritan Center will be open each week from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, "and we'll expand from there," says Talbert.

"None of us has ever run a thrift store," he notes. "But we know this is God's plan. We trust in his guidance and know he'll take us where we need to go."

(The Good Samaritan Center is located at 440 S. 9th St. in Richmond. For more information on the programs offered by the Tri-County Good Samaritan St. Vincent de Paul conference, go to svdptricounty.us.) †



Father Sengole Gnanaraj, pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, offers prayers before blessing the Good Samaritan Center in Richmond on Dec. 7, 2025. To his left is Tony Talbert, president of the Tri-County Good Samaritan St. Vincent de Paul Society conference that established the thrift store. (Submitted photo)

CEASEFIRE

continued from page 1

"Thousands of innocent people have been killed, and many others forced to abandon their homes," the pope told the faithful. "I renew my prayerful closeness to all those who have lost their loved ones

in the attacks, which have struck schools, hospitals and residential areas."

Calling the escalating conflict in Lebanon "a matter of great concern," the pope appealed for an end to the war and for those involved to return to the negotiating table for the sake of the people.

"Violence can never lead to the justice, stability and peace that the

people await," Pope Leo said.

Before praying the *Angelus*, he said faith is an invitation to open one's eyes to see "the suffering of others and the afflictions of the world."

Given so many "questions of the human heart, as well as the tragic situations of injustice, violence and suffering that mark our time, it is essential that our faith be

alert, attentive and prophetic," Pope Leo said.

"It should likewise open our eyes to the darkness of the world and bring to others the light of the Gospel through our commitment to peace, justice and solidarity," he said. May the light of Christ "open the eyes of our hearts and enable us to bear witness to him with simplicity and courage." †

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

In passion, Jesus shows humanity of asking God the reason for suffering

By Fr. James Dominic Brent, O.P.

(OSV News)—The Gospel of St. Matthew tells us: “[About] three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” (Mt 27:46). This saying of the Lord raises the question of how the Lord inwardly related to the Father amid his suffering.

By implication, it raises the question of how you and I can relate to God amid our sufferings, too. What is the Christ-like way to suffer?

Pope St. John Paul II once said that one of the distinguishing characteristics of human suffering, as distinct from the suffering of animals, is that human beings question their suffering (cf. “*Salvifici Doloris*” #9). When we suffer, we ask God why we suffer. It is natural for us to ask the question of God because human beings naturally know God exists and naturally expect God to order the world well. Suffering seems to fly in the face of our natural understanding of the God who is all wisdom and love.

To ask God for the why of our suffering is not sinful in itself. To ask is not necessarily a sign of protest, doubt or mistrust in God. It can be an honest question. Honesty and vulnerability before God are always appropriate. To open our hearts and minds to God—and to share with him our actual thoughts, questions and afflictions—is a good thing. It can even be the doorway to a deeper relationship with God—especially amid suffering.

The Lord Jesus was fully human. He was like us in all things but sin. He suffered immensely on the cross, and he suffered in a human way. Therefore, he asked why. He raised the question to the Father. Would he have been fully human if, amid such great suffering, he had not asked why? By asking the question, Christ was “leaving you an example” (1 Pt 2:21). He revealed to us how right it is to ask God honestly why we suffer. His question was no rebellion or protest, but a certain turn of events in his prayer from the cross.

Jesus was in prayer, not only at the moment he expired, but also throughout his whole passion, beginning in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Experience tells us that there are twists and turns in our prayer. Our prayer changes from one moment to the next. So, too, in the prayer of Christ. In the garden, he prayed to the Father to take away the cup of suffering, if possible, but “your will be done” (Mt 26:42). In a later moment, he prays for his persecutors to be forgiven (cf. Lk 23:34).

Yet now, in another moment, he honestly acknowledges before God the full measure of affliction that is upon him. To do so, he draws from Israel’s treasure chest of prayer—the Psalms.

“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” is the first line of Psalm 22 (Ps 22:2). The Lord did not simply recite the line, but cried out the words. In so doing, he left us another example. Honest prayer is wholehearted. It engages the whole human being, body and soul. When prayer rises up from the depths of the soul, it often comes out through the body in a loud voice. “Out of the depths I call to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice” (Ps 130:1).



A Book of Psalms used by St. Theodora Guérin is on display at her shrine on the grounds of the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Dominican Father James Brent calls the psalms the “treasure chest of prayer” of the people of Israel. Jesus cried out the opening line of Psalm 22, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me” while on the cross. (CNS photo/Katie Breidenbach)

When the Lord cried out the first line of Psalm 22, he did so not only in prayer to the Father but also in proclamation to the people surrounding him. In the ancient world, Scripture was not yet divided numerically into chapters and verses.

The psalms were known and remembered, rather, according to their first line. By crying out the first line of Psalm 22, the Lord was calling everyone’s attention to that psalm to demonstrate how it was being fulfilled in their midst. Psalm 22, in fact, is an eerily accurate prediction of how Christ suffered: “scorned by men and despised by the people, all who see me mock at me” (Ps 22:7-8). We read later in the psalm: “[They] shake their heads at me: ‘He relied on the Lord—let him deliver him’” (Ps 22:8-9). The psalm also describes his actual physical sufferings: “all my bones are disjointed ... my tongue cleaves to my palate” (Ps 22:15-16). Most accurately of all, verse 19 predicts how “they divide my garments among them, for my clothing they cast lots” (Ps 22:19).

When Jesus cried out the first line of Psalm 22, he offered a sort of divine commentary on what was taking place. He interpreted everything in light of the word of God. Only when we read our lives in light of the word of God do we really understand the divine truth of things hidden in plain sight.

Yet, we might still ask: What was the measure of suffering that moved our Lord to pray “my God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” The full measure of his suffering is a mystery, but not simply unintelligible.

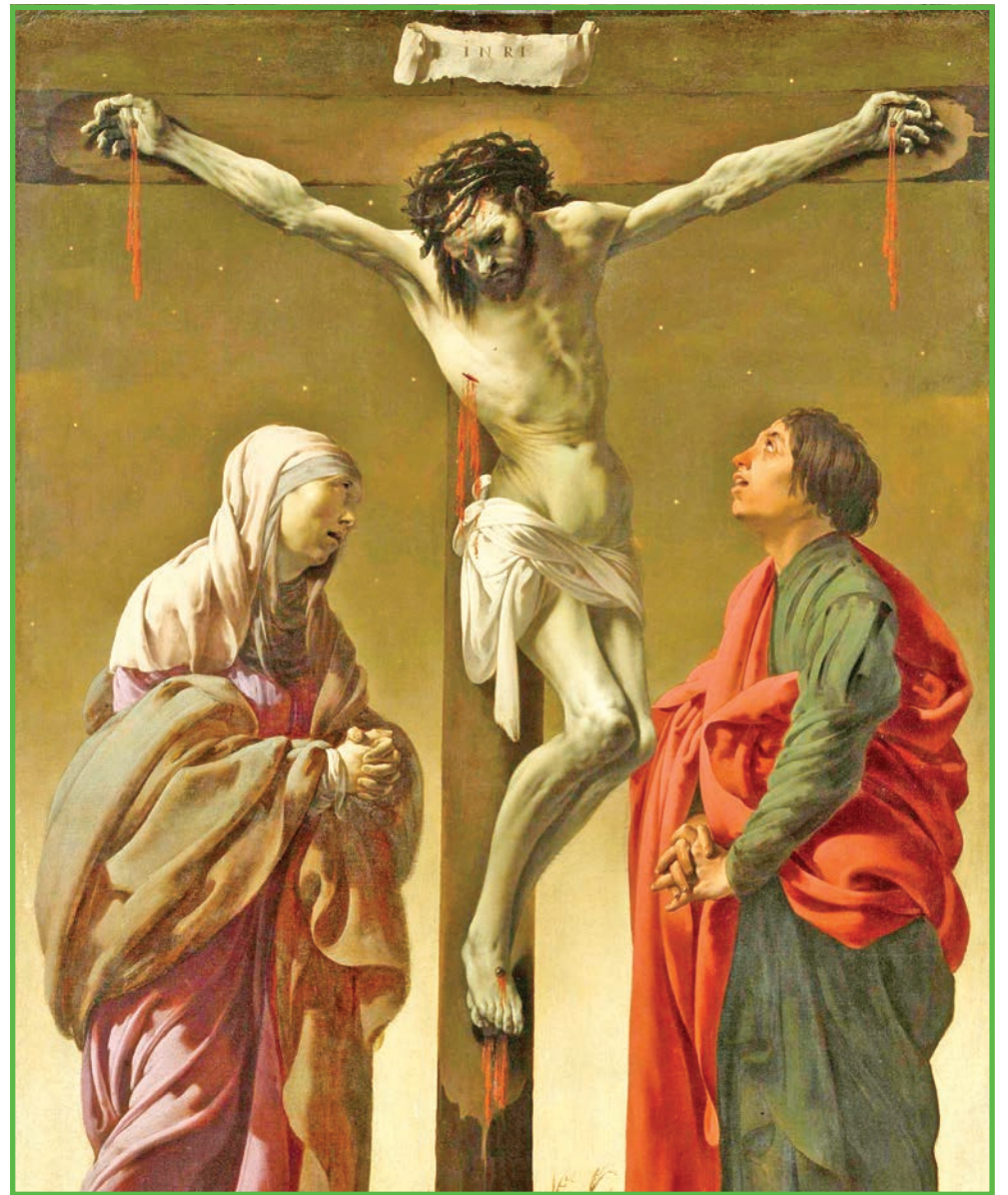
Following St. Paul, the Catholic understanding of the human person distinguishes between the “outer self” and the “inner self” (2 Cor 4:16). The outer man is a certain place within us, but not the deepest place. It is the place of sensations, images and passions—the place where physical and psychological experience flow. The inner man is a deeper place within each of us—the place of a higher and more enduring knowledge and love. More importantly, it is the place of one’s personal knowledge and love of God.

The inner self might also be called the deep heart, and the outer self might also be called the area around the heart. The deep heart has spiritual eyes all of its own—the eyes of the heart (cf. Eph 1:18). When the eyes of our hearts are illuminated by the light of grace, we know God in the depths of our hearts in a most inward, personal and familiar way. What is more, such knowledge of God in the depths of our hearts can endure through the most horrible of experiences, taking place in the area around our hearts.

Since the Lord Jesus was fully human, he, too, had in himself an inner man and an outer man—his deep heart and the area around his heart.

During his passion, Jesus was subjected to the cruelest of torments. He endured the blows of fists and scourges, the punctures of thorns and nails, the loss of blood and the deepest thirst. His disciple had betrayed him. His rivals had captured him. His friends had fled. His mother wept. There is no tongue on Earth able to tell the full measure of affliction that pierced the body and psyche of Jesus Christ. The area around his heart was overwhelmed.

During a general audience on Nov. 30, 1988, St. John Paul II explained that, in the outer man, in the area around his heart, Jesus in his passion “was reduced to a wasteland. He no longer felt the presence of the Father, but he underwent the tragic experience of the most complete desolation.”



Hendrick ter Brugghen’s 17th-century Dutch painting “The Crucifixion with the Virgin and St. John” is seen in this undated handout photo. On the cross, Jesus experienced the full measure of human suffering, including feeling abandoned by God. Yet, he still knew deep within that the Father was always with him. (OSV News photo/courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Public Domain)

When Jesus cried out his prayer from the cross, he was honestly acknowledging everything that was taking place in the area around his heart. Yet, the area around the heart is not the deepest thing within a human being, and it was not the deepest thing within Jesus Christ.

“Man has a deep heart,” it says in the Psalms (Ps 64:6 from the Douay-Rheims translation). So, too, did Jesus Christ. In his deep heart, Jesus Christ always remained in union with the Father. The light of the Father illuminated the eyes of his heart in a special way, and the heart of Jesus always remained a burning furnace of love for the Father.

Throughout the course of his passion, the knowledge and love of the Father sustained our Lord in the depths of his heart.

For this reason, St. John Paul II also said: “If Jesus felt abandoned by the Father, he knew however that that was not really so. ... Jesus had the clear vision of God and the certainty of his union with the Father dominant in his mind.”

Jesus suffered so much on the cross that a sense of abandonment by God knocked on the door of his deep heart, but in his deep heart, Jesus did not consent. He remained true to the Father of lights, for the Father did not hide his face from the eyes of our Lord’s heart. As Psalm 22:25 says, “[He] did not turn away from me, but has heard when he cried to him.” Just as the psalm was being fulfilled in outwardly observable events, so too it was being fulfilled in the inward and invisible depths of the heart of Jesus.

The light of grace shines in our hearts, too. It is called the light of faith. Amid suffering, we might go through a thousand emotions. We might well feel terrified or abandoned. It is proper to voice our sense of abandonment and our fears to God. In reality, however, God never abandons us. The key is to remember one thing: “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20).

(Dominican Father James Dominic Brent, an assistant professor of philosophy at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., is the author of *The Father’s House: Discovering Our Home in the Trinity*.) †

Evangelization Outreach/Anita Bardo

As evangelists, we are called to share the message of Christ with others

In Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation "*Evangelii Gaudium*" ("The Joy of the Gospel"), we are reminded that the Church must be "permanently in a state of mission."



Evangelization is not a ministry or a seasonal program; it is the reason why the Church exists. Through the sacrament of baptism, we must embrace our call to share the Good News with our families, workplace and in our communities; we cannot remain silent.

Therefore, how does one embrace their call and elevate their spiritual discipleship journey?

Your spiritual discipleship journey begins by having clear intentions in mind about what you seek.

Spend time in quiet reflection or meditative prayer to discern God's voice within you. Practicing kindness and compassion in your daily life helps deepen your understanding, which could bring awareness to your path and purpose.

As I reflect on my own spiritual journey, I often think about my growth and a deeper awareness of my personal challenges. As I learn to be honest about what I can and cannot handle, my faith becomes a guide for me to discern where God is calling me next. This process

for me involves taking time to pause, examine my experiences, and listen intentionally to my inner voice, God. Have you ever paused to reflect on your own path and asked yourself where your faith might be leading you?

During this Lenten season, we have an opportunity to reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross. What weighs us down, what crosses are we carrying? Each day our journey evolves, growing toward being grounded, patient and intentional. Each day is an opportunity to learn and unlearn and connect with others.

Additionally, in the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, I've encountered many beautiful people, whom I consider amazing friends, who have challenged me, prayed with and for me and encouraged me along the way.

Outside of the office, I've been afforded many opportunities to speak at various parishes and groups about my own journey. These opportunities are a way for me to step out in faith and share the good news of Jesus Christ. I want to tell people how he has changed my life for the better.

When I talk about my experiences, I feel hope and joy, and I believe it can help others, too. Each chance I get to speak and share is a blessing, and I am grateful for the chance to make a difference.

In an effort to be more intentional in providing

opportunities for parishes, laity and leaders in central and southern Indiana, the Office of Evangelization will hold an Evangelization Workshop titled "Elevate your Spiritual Discipleship Journey" from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. on Saturday, April 25, at Holy Spirit Parish, 7243 E. 10th St., in Indianapolis, where facilitator Meg Hunter-Kilmer will lead us in those intentional discussions, prayer and reflection. To sign up, go to tinyurl.com/Evang101-2026. The cost is \$30. Talk with your pastor about assessing the cost to the parish. The cost can also be covered by credit card.

At the end of the day, our main goal is clear: we want to share the message of Christ with others. This means taking time to talk with people in the pews, in our families and communities, and to intentionally build those friendships daily.

There are still many people who haven't heard about Christ or felt his love, so it's important for us to reach out to them. This mission is all about spreading kindness and hope to everyone we meet—hope for a joyful life on Earth and hope for the eternal joy of heaven, made possible by the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

(Anita Bardo is archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship. She can be reached at abardo@archindy.org.) †

Guest Column/André Escaleira

The much-needed lessons that I learned from my first month of daily Mass

It was a quiet afternoon. I found myself in a chapel, yelling at God, angry at him for calling a dear friend to move away.

Between tirades came a reply that echoed in the silence: "What if you loved me this much?"



Now, I wish I could say I piously realized the error of my ways, repented, cried tears of joy.

Even though I may not have responded well that day, the Lord's question haunted me in the weeks that followed.

What if I did love the Lord that much?

What if I did give him my all?

What would that look like?

As the month ended, I decided to give it a shot, to go "all in." I'd started praying the rosary daily a few weeks prior, so I committed to stepping it up by going to daily Mass.

After a 31-day Mass streak, God has shown me a ton.

—There will always be more work to do—take a break

I'll admit, I fell into the "I'm too busy to go to Mass" camp far too often. The length of my to-do list, the howl of deadlines and the chirp of e-mail notifications drowned out the call of God to spend time with him on most days.

No matter who you are, what job you have or what state of life you find yourself in, there will always be more work to do.

Now, 31 days later, I see the value of taking a break and a breath and turning to the Lord. And I'm grateful for the peace, clarity and stability that's given me.

—God wants a relationship with us

It's not just that Jesus came and dwelt among us. It's that he still comes and dwells among us—present tense. He does so in the Eucharist.

At any given moment, on any given altar, in any given place across the world, Jesus comes to meet his people. Heaven touches Earth. God is made food to nourish, sustain and bless his people.

In this month of attending Mass, the God of the universe has met little old me right where I'm at, every single day, and called me closer to him.

—God speaks to us every day

Well, if God wants a relationship with us, of course God would communicate with us! I realized that communication happens most often, most effectively and most powerfully through the Scriptures.

More often than not, I'd walk into Mass to piously prepare and forget to check out the day's readings. Then, when the lector would begin proclaiming the living word of God, my heart would be pierced.

It was as if God was speaking directly to me.

—Daily prayer isn't a talisman

Partway through the month, I was feeling good—close to God, holier, peaceful and maybe a bit more patient. Things were going well!

Then, the winds changed, and a storm came.

What was this all about? God, I'm praying more than I have in a while! I'm going to Mass every day! Why isn't everything going well?

Then it hit me. I was trying to "earn" goodness and grace by putting together an impressive spiritual résumé.

But prayer isn't a talisman. Just because we do a litany of laudable things doesn't mean we've earned comfort. In fact, Jesus promises us the exact opposite (see Jn 16:33).

I'm grateful for the reality check.

—Take the next right step

Whether you find yourself in shoes like mine or you're much holier than I, I'd invite you to consider taking the next step in your spiritual journey today.

It's worth it to enter into the discomfort, the inconvenience, and try to figure it out with God.

I say that not as a saint or a pillar of peaceful prayer, but as a guy who's still figuring this whole Christian life thing out.

But on only day 32 of daily Mass-going, I can tell you: There's peace, security and joy in the arms of the Father. It won't be easy. It won't always be fun. But it will be worth it.

(André Escaleira Jr. is managing editor of *Denver Catholic* and *El Pueblo Católico*.) †

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

When it comes to immigration strategy in the U.S., is our nation losing its soul?

U.S. bishops are speaking up about the treatment of immigrants and the deportation strategy and tactics of the current administration, and their messaging has grown increasingly urgent and concerned.



What they are seeing is not just a political clash that has pitted American against American. They are seeing something much more profound and troubling.

"The political crisis of our time is, at its root, a spiritual crisis," said Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore in his Feb. 9 pastoral letter "In Charity and Truth: Toward a

Renewed Political Culture." "While the symptoms appear in our discourse, our institutions, and our communities, the deeper fracture lies within the human heart."

"As a proud American, I have always lived by the belief that we are a nation of guiding values, a nation of noble virtues, a nation established on the rule of law and respectful of human rights," said Detroit Archbishop Edward J. Weisenburger in a Feb. 1 column. Increasingly, he said, "I find myself asking if our nation is losing its very soul."

"We're in a moment when it seems like many have lost faith in America's promise and her founders' vision," Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez said in a Feb. 4 homily. "And it is sad that this is happening this year,

when we are celebrating our nation's 250th anniversary. This should be a time for renewal, not a time of retreat."

The immediate crisis has been the mass deportation of undocumented immigrants, as well as the assault on Americans who are demonstrating their opposition to these deportation policies. Two American citizens have been killed, and many more have been injured or arrested.

The U.S. bishops have been remarkably consistent for years on the immigration crisis. They do not deny that a country has a right to protect its borders. At the same time, the Gospel imperative is to help the refugee and to extend aid to those in need.

In Pope Leo XIV's recent apostolic exhortation "*Dilexi Te*," he sums up this imperative by quoting Pope Francis: "Our [Catholic] response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate" (#75).

For the bishops, our nation's enforcement of immigration laws can start with limiting deportations to those guilty of serious offenses. That was the stated goal of the deportation campaign, but it has clearly extended far beyond that to include those who are not criminals, who have raised families and contributed to local communities for decades. Those threatened include the people who care for our children and our elderly. They work our fields and labor in construction, all the while dreaming of a better life for themselves and their children.

As Archbishop Gomez put it, "It serves no national interest to deport undocumented men and women who are contributing to the good of our society, it only leaves children without their parents. Surely, we can find another way to hold these men and women accountable for breaking our laws."

The real challenge, one that the bishops have consistently warned about for decades, is to address immigration reform, Archbishop Gomez wrote. "The root cause of the current crisis is the country's broken immigration system," he said. "Our leaders have done little in nearly 40 years to try to reform our immigration laws. Even today, with our cities in turmoil, no one in Washington is talking seriously about this."

The bishops have shown great courage in challenging this status quo of mass deportations. Recognizing the values of this country as a beacon of liberty, and recognizing the teachings of the Gospel regarding the human dignity of each person and our responsibility toward those in need, the bishops have seized a teaching moment.

The pushback they have received in some quarters suggests that those who most need to hear their message are members of their own flock.

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

Fifth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 22, 2026

- Ezekiel 37:12-14
- Romans 8:8-11
- John 11:1-45

The Book of Ezekiel provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. Even a quick reading of the history of ancient



Israel shows that there were precious few periods of prosperity and calm. Indeed, only the reigns of David and Solomon might properly be considered as truly good times.

Some of the times were more trying than others. Certainly,

generations endured miserable times in Babylon, confined in wretchedness, taunted and abused as a minority. Understandably, these Jewish exiles yearned for the day when they could return to their homeland.

Ezekiel built upon this theme of hope and expectation. As all the prophets did, he saw a release from Babylonian bondage not as an accident or a happy turn of events. For him, it was a result of God's mercy and of the people's fidelity to God. Thus, in this reading, the Lord speaks, promising to breathe new life into the defeated, dejected people.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. Rome was the political, economic and cultural heart in the Mediterranean in the first century, the center of a vast, powerful empire. It was a sophisticated city.

Rome's inhabitants came from everywhere, bringing with them a great variety of customs and beliefs.

Paul wrote to the Christians living in Rome, among whom eventually he would die as a martyr. Many of them would be martyred also.

This reading stresses two spiritual realities. The Christian has communion with God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. So, the Christian possesses a share in the life of God, a life that will never die.

For its third reading, the Church this weekend presents a passage from the Gospel of St. John. Jesus went to Bethany, then a separate community but now a part of greater Jerusalem. He was asked to come by Martha and Mary,

friends of the Lord who were anxious about their brother Lazarus who had died.

When Jesus at last arrived, Lazarus had been dead for several days. Putrefaction had begun. Responding to the sisters' faith, the Lord restores Lazarus to life.

Several important themes occur in the passage. First, of course, is the active, life-giving love of Jesus. In the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus feels and expresses human love. Secondly, the faith of Martha and Mary is unqualified.

The Evangelist sees a parallel between the resurrection of Jesus and the restoration of earthly life to Lazarus. In each account, mourning women are essential parts of the story. A stone closes the tomb. The body is dressed, and a face cloth, customary in Jewish burials of the time, covers the face. Finally, in each story, faith and human limitation have important roles.

Reflection

Next week, on Palm Sunday, the Church will invite us to learn and to worship in the most intense liturgical days of its year. Calling us to Christ, and with ancient drama and the most compelling symbolism, it will proclaim Jesus as Savior and as Risen Lord.

This weekend, the Church prepares us for this experience by giving us the beautiful and wondrous story of Lazarus.

Echoing the Lord's own resurrection, today's message is clear. If we are united with Jesus, as Lazarus and his sisters were united, then in God's power we will have everlasting life.

Eternal life will be given to us only if we seek Jesus, and if we seek Jesus with the faith uncompromisingly displayed by Martha. Only Jesus can give us life.

The other readings reinforce this theme. Life can be taxing for everyone. Death awaits us all. Ezekiel assures us that God will give us true life. It will be the life of holiness, the life that never ends.

St. Paul insisted that this divine life and peace in the present abides only in Jesus. So, as Lent anticipates its culmination, the Church calls us to Jesus, the Lord of life. †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 23

St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, bishop
Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62
or *Daniel 13:41c-62*
Psalm 23:1-6
John 8:1-11

Tuesday, March 24

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 102:2-3, 16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday, March 25

The Annunciation of the Lord
Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10
Psalm 40:7-11
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

Thursday, March 26

Genesis 17:3-9
Psalm 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday, March 27

Jeremiah 20:10-13
Psalm 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday, March 28

Ezekiel 37:21-28
(Response) *Jeremiah 31:10-12d, 13*
John 11:45-56

Sunday, March 29

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Matthew 21:1-11 (procession)
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14-27:66
or *Matthew 27:11-54*

Honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe



Pilgrims venerate a life-size traveling statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe on March 6 during its visit to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Champion, Wis. The statue is on a tour of seven cities in Wisconsin. (OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)

My Journey to God

Mary: The Lord's Servant

By Dave Charlesworth

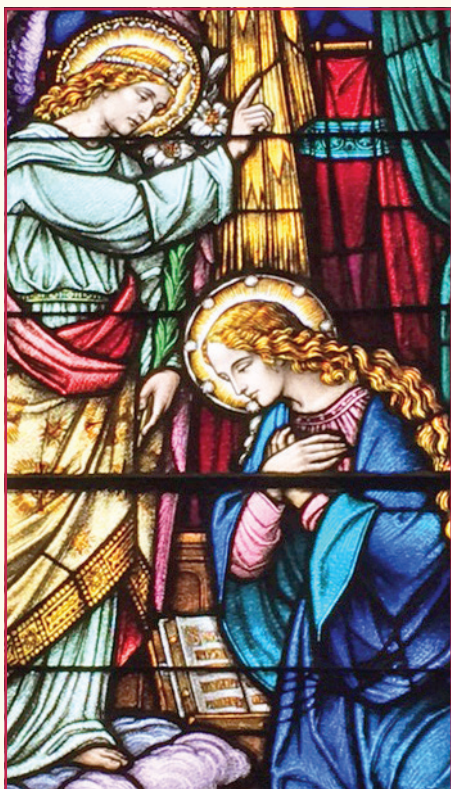
A young woman dwelling in Nazareth a lowly city of Galilee,
Was chosen by God to be
the Messiah's mother for eternity.

The possessor of God's grace
and gifted with strong faith,
She was fortified to receive
the words that Gabriel saith.

Greeted by Gabriel as "full of grace"
in the eyes of God,
She must have been surprised,
contemplative and awed.

No one in history had ever
been greeted like this before,
Answering, "I am the Lord's servant"
she opened the door.

(Dave Charlesworth is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. Photo: This stained-glass photo in St. Augustine Church in Jeffersonville depicts the Annunciation, which is honored annually as a feast day on March 25.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column. Submitted pieces should not exceed 30 80-character lines or 60 40-character lines.

E-mail submissions for consideration—including name, address, parish and a telephone number—to nhoefer@archindy.org.

Poems may also be mailed to "My Journey to God," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Please note, however, that mailed submissions will not receive a reply unless the piece is selected for publication. †

Rest in peace

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

BURRIS, Michelle, 61, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Feb. 26. Mother of Stephanie Koers and Zachary Burris. Sister of Deobrah Mullenix. Grandmother of five.

CLARK, Florence, 81, St. Mary, New Albany, Jan. 22. Wife of Robert Clark, Sr. Mother of Christine Cox, Robert, Jr., and William Clark.

CLARKE, Carol A., 78, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Feb. 28. Wife of Thomas Clarke. Mother of Michael and Thomas Clarke. Grandmother of two.

KRAUS, Wallace T., 84, All Saints, Dearborn County, March 1. Husband of Jackie Kraus. Father of Rachael Boland, Andrew and Martin Kraus. Brother of Maryjane Henning, Sandy Wagner, Carol Weldishofer, Albert, Denny, Leon, Mark and Tim Kraus. Grandfather of six.

KURKER, John, 88, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Feb. 25. Husband of Linda Kurker. Father of Chris, John and Tracy Kurker. Brother of Suzanne and Bill Kurker. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

LOYAL, James E., 79, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Feb. 23.

Baby pope



Pope Leo XIV smiles on March 11 as he greets a child dressed as the pope from the popemobile while riding around St. Peter's Square at the Vatican before his weekly general audience. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Husband of Carol Loyal. Father of Kenneth Loyal. Brother of Jennifer Gallas, Lori Holman and Dawn Shelton. Grandfather of 10.

NEWRATH, Sandra R. (Hudepohl), 70, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, March 2. Wife of David Newrath. Mother of Carissa Haneberg and David Newrath, Jr. Sister of Cheryl Fehring, Jennifer Morris, Donna Nenadov and Louis Hudepohl.

ROBERTS, Timothy, 56, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, March 6.

Husband of Cara Roberts. Father of Adrienne Meyer, Jack, Joe and Marc Roberts. Son of Marie Roberts. Brother of Annette Dorman and Steven Roberts. Grandfather of five.

SCHEIGERT, Pamela K., 72, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Aug. 2, 2025. Wife of Robert Scheigert. Mother of Lisa Denton, Melissa Winslow and Mark Scheigert. Grandmother of seven.

SHELL, Peggy, 90, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, March 5. Mother of Brenda Camp. Cathy

Schrank, Barbara and Jackie Schell, Lenny Alderman and Larry Schell. Sister of Cathy McLean. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 23. Great-great-grandmother of two.

SMITH, Carolyn L. (Winkel), 89, Prince of Peace, Madison, March 3. Mother of Jean Skirvin, Beverly Smith, Darvin Hysell, Keith and Mark Smith. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 13.

STIER, Donna, 93, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, March 5. Mother

of Denise Gray, Kim Laughlin and Ron Stier, Jr. Sister of Harold Foltz. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of two.

SWAIN, Linda N., 84, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Feb. 22. Wife of Deryl Swain. Mother of Scott Evans. Stepmother of Liz Rusche and Andy Swain. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of eight.

VOLZ, Carla M., 70, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 1. Wife of Gary Volz. Mother of Laura McGuiness, Brian,

Kevin and Troy Schlenz. Sister of Betty. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of one.

WOLSIFFER, Betty J., 95, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 4. Mother of Susan Crouch, Julie McCormick, David, James, Richard, Steven and Thomas Wolfsiffer. Grandmother of 20. Great-grandmother of 40. Great-great-grandmother of one.

YOST, Mark A., 72, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 1. Brother of James Yost II. Uncle and great-uncle of several. †

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

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

Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



Batesville Deanery

March 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
 March 24, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
 March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
 March 28, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
 April 1, 9-11 a.m. and 6:30-8:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery:

Fridays 11 a.m.-noon at St. John the Evangelist Church of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
 Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
 Saturdays after 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Nicholas, Ripley County, and 4-5 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan

Bloomington Deanery

March 26, 6-7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
 April 1, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center

Indianapolis North Deanery

March 30, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., no appointment needed

Indianapolis South Deanery

March 26, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
 March 28, 8:30-10 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher Parish, Indianapolis

New Albany Deanery

March 23, 7 p.m. for St. John the Baptist, Starlight, and St. Mary, Navilleton, at St. John the Baptist
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
 March 25, 7 p.m. for St. Michael, Charlestown, and St. Francis Xavier, Henryville, at St. Michael (confession available in English and Spanish)
 March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

Seymour Deanery

March 24, 6 p.m. at Holy Trinity, Edinburgh
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ambrose, Seymour; St. Patrick, Salem; and American Martyrs, Scottsburg, at St. Ambrose

Terre Haute Deanery

March 24, 6-8 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
 March 25, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute
 March 25, 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
 March 26, 6-8 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle †

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2** Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

E6

continued from page 9

The conference's last speaker was Catholic author Kevin Wells, who honed in on sacrifice even more. He called on the men to "do hard things for God," to "break patterns of comfort" in their lives and to offer all this to Christ for those in their lives who are far away from the Lord.

Wells said that Catholic masculinity isn't a group of men talking about the saints, it's "about becoming like them."

Saying that it could be "the greatest sacrifice" that they make, Wells challenged his listeners to give up "the thing that you cling to the most."

"Pick your poison," Wells said. "I don't care what it is. You know what it is. You've got a conscience. We've got to detach ourselves from the things that are not of God because we'll always be sort of half-in, half-out Catholic men if we don't work from detaching from ... what we cling to."

'People to lean on and depend on'

During breaks in the conference, attendees flowed back and forth in the hallway outside the auditorium, chatting with friends, making new ones and visiting booths of the vendors at the event.

Watching it all during one break was All Saints parishioner Mike DiMeglio. He had been at East Central for hours at that point, arriving before 6 a.m. to manage parking at the conference.

"It's fantastic," said DiMeglio of the large crowds it now attracts year after year. "We'd rather do the work than have the people not show up. I love seeing this many men, all the helpers, everybody coming together."

Dan Schwering of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg and his oldest son Henry were two of the people who walked by DiMeglio during a break. Dan has attended several E6 conferences. But with Henry now being 15, he was able to bring one of his children to the event for the first time.

"I really hope that this reaches him in ways that sometimes I can't with what I talk about at home," Dan said. "I'm really proud of him already and am hoping to be

proud of him for the rest of my life."

Henry, a student at Greensburg High School in Greensburg, said he appreciated spending time among "a lot of people who have the same views as you," adding that he was confident that the event would help him "spread what I've seen here with other people."

During lunch, Andrew Murrey, a member of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, spoke about how he was glad to bring his 11-year-old son Eric to E6. He brought an older son to an earlier conference.

"It's pretty awesome to feed them with something more than just what I'm trying to teach them," said Murrey. "It reinforces what we're teaching them at home and what they're hearing in faith formation classes, as well as how to be a good man."

Eric was enjoying the conference.

"It's a lot of fun," he said. "I get to be with God while still hanging out with my dad."

Murrey said that the 1,500 Catholic men at E6 "helps keep us all strong. We have people to lean on and depend on."

Justin Weberding, 22, newly married and a member of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg, was taking in the conference for the first time. He was invited to it by members of a Catholic men's group that he belongs to.

"It's been really cool seeing all these men here, all searching for the same thing, which is Christ," Weberding said. "It encourages me to become a better husband for my wife and to want to pursue a family more."

At the end of the conference, Jim Schneider, 68 and a member of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright, spoke about how he was glad to see so many young fathers with their sons sitting around him.

"It makes me happy and excited to see young people here," he said. "There's still hope. It's not all lost."

'Our world needs you'

Mass with eucharistic adoration followed by Benediction stood at the center of the day's events at E6.

The Gospel reading for the day (Lk 5:27-32) told the story of the conversion of the tax collector Levi and a banquet he had immediately after his conversion in



Brandon Hutchins, left, and Isaac Brown, both members of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, pray the rosary on Feb. 21 in the auditorium of East Central High School in St. Leon during the 11th annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

which he invited tax collectors and other sinners to spend time with Jesus.

Father Meyer saw in the story a challenge for him and all at the conference.

"He encountered the Lord," Father Meyer said of Levi. "The Lord called him. And then he went out and he threw parties just trying to get sinners to come to Jesus. Are you willing to do that?"

Too many Catholics, Father Meyer said, live a kind of "kindergarten Christianity" in which they believe that all they need to do to get to heaven is avoid sin and, if they do sin, to just go to confession.

But taking such a path ignores Christ's call to all his followers to proclaim the Gospel, Father Meyer said, even when "it's hard and it's awkward."

"Do you think it was awkward for Levi to invite all of his sinner friends," Father Meyer asked. "The Gospel and the mandate that has been given to you and to me is that we are not to take our light and

put it under a bushel basket. We are called to let our light shine."

And it needs to shine, he said, in a "world that is dark."

"Our world is dismal," Father Meyer said. "Our world is broken. Our world is addicted. And I'm just going to tell you, brothers, our world needs you."

As the 11th annual E6 conference came to an end later that day, Father Meyer invited the 1,500 men in the auditorium to offer their hearts to Christ and ask him to form and mold it.

"Gentlemen, in the depths of your heart, I want you to place the seed of truth that you heard today, the seed of conviction, the seed of hope ... and I want you to plant it into the soil of your heart," he said. "Come Holy Spirit, water that seed that it may blossom, grow and bear fruit."

(For more information on the E6 Catholic Men's Conference, visit e6catholicmensconference.com.) †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call (317) 236-1585.

For Sale

FOR SALE: Companion Plots for sale, our Lady of Peace Cemetery, Mt. Carmel section A, lots area 10, lots 3&4, Prime location near roundabout \$3000.00 apiece. Call Bonnie, 1-317-413-0183.

Employment

Chancellor Archdiocese of Indianapolis

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a faithful, mission focused Catholic leader to serve as Chancellor, a senior advisor to the Archbishop responsible for coordinating internal operations and supporting the work of the Curia.

Core Responsibilities

- Oversee canonical records and serve as ecclesiastical notary
- Support the Archbishop's leadership team and pastoral planning
- Supervise major directors and ministries
- Lead major projects and represent the archdiocese publicly
- Collaborate on budgeting and oversee sensitive administrative matters
- Approve job requisitions, professional development, and external speakers

Requirements

- Master's degree in theology, religious education, or related field
- 10+ years of leadership and administrative experience
- Practicing Catholic in good standing
- Strong communication, leadership, and problem solving skills

Additional Information

- Evening/weekend work and regular travel required
- Role involves handling confidential information

Interested candidates are invited to submit a cover letter, résumé, and three professional references in confidence to Andrea Wunnenberg at awunnenberg@archindy.org. The application deadline is March 31, 2026.

Medicare and Group Insurance

HEALTH INSURANCE PROFESSIONALS

2-50 Group Business let us quote!

New Chamber plans available with SIHO located in Columbus IN
Local carrier with local customer Service, Underwritten rates
True Connect Hospital network
Participation down to 50% with valid waivers

We can also quote your dental, vision, life, & disability receive better rates by bundling

As always we can assist with your Individual needs such as
Medicare, Major Medical, Life, Indemnity plans, Dental, and Vision

CALL US TODAY!!!
317-787-4638
DANSHEARHU@GMAIL.COM
Dan Shea & Jeni Wilson



Employment

Design, Layout and Editorial Assistant The Criterion

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis seeks a detail-oriented and creative Editorial Assistant to support the weekly production of its newspaper, The Criterion. The position resides within the Secretariat for Communications, supporting mission-driven storytelling across print and digital platforms.

This position is ideal for someone with basic layout/design skills (InDesign or similar), strong writing, proofreading, and attention to detail, ability to meet weekly deadlines and an interest in journalism, communications, or Catholic media.

For the Full Job Description and Qualifications, visit www.archindy.org/hr/jobs/2026-01-Editorial.html or scan the QR code.

To Apply: Send résumé, cover letter, and writing/design samples to Mike Krokos, editor, – mkrokos@archindy.org.



'Catholic Saints of America' event celebrates America's 250th birthday

(OSV News)—Drawing inspiration from St. Carlo Acutis, a national shrine in Wisconsin is inviting Catholics to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States this summer by joining in prayer and learning about the holy men and women of America.

"They founded schools, cared for the sick, served the poor, and witnessed to the Gospel through lives of sacrifice, service and unwavering love for Jesus Christ," said Father of Mercy Anthony Stephens, rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. "Their example shows us what it truly means to be a faithful Catholic and to be American."

Scheduled for July 1-9, "Catholic Saints of America" will feature a special novena, an exhibit honoring Americans who are saints or on the path to sainthood, and an opportunity to venerate their relics. The relics or remains of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Blessed Solanus Casey and Blessed Stanley Rother will be among those on display.

All this is taking place on the site of the only Church-approved Marian apparition site in the United States.

"First, through this novena and exhibit, we hope people will come to learn about the canonization process," Father Anthony told OSV News. "Next, we want to help people discover those who may one day be declared saints. Finally, we can help introduce people to a new devotion that inspires them to grow closer to Christ."

The novena prayer, which Father Anthony is writing, will seek Mary's intercession for unity, holiness and renewal nationwide. Alongside the novena, the exhibit will feature the stories of holy men and women of America. It will highlight their lives, virtues and legacy, organizers said.

Its format was inspired by a traveling eucharistic miracles exhibit, which was based on a website created by St. Carlo Acutis, an Italian teenager canonized last year.

"There are fewer than 15 American saints, and only a little more than 70 people whose causes [for sainthood] have been opened" in the U.S., Father Anthony said. "Each of these holy men and women has a beautiful story and powerful example, yet so few people know about them."

"We do not have saints from 2,000 years ago; we have saints of today," he added. "This shows that God is still at work, calling people to himself."

Americans who have been canonized are SS. Elizabeth Ann Seton, John Neumann, Marianne Cope, Katharine Drexel, Damien de Veuster of Molokai, Junípero Serra, Kateri Tekakwitha, Théodora Guérin, Frances Xavier Cabrini

and Rose Philippine Duchesne. St. Teresa of Calcutta was given honorary American citizenship in 1996, the year before she died.

Beatified Americans include Blesseds Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, Stanley Rother, Solanus Casey, Michael J. McGivney, Francis Xavier Seelos and Carlos Manuel Cecilio Rodríguez Santiago of Puerto Rico. Five Franciscan friars known as the Georgia martyrs will join them on Oct. 31, and the beatification of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen is also expected soon.

The shrine is in the process of inviting promoters of all U.S. causes to participate. So far, the promoters of more than 35 causes have confirmed they will collaborate in some way. Some will help create their respective exhibit displays, and many will attend in person, Father Anthony said.

While the novena and exhibit take place on July 1-9, many of the promoters and representatives of these causes will be present on July 3-5. For those days, guest speakers will also "engage with pilgrims, share the stories of these holy men and women, and provide opportunities to learn more about the path to sainthood in America," said Kim May, the shrine's event and volunteer coordinator.

Organizers expect that more than 15,000 pilgrims could attend, which would make this the largest event hosted by the shrine.

The exhibit will recognize in a special way the cause of Servant of God Adele Brice, a Belgian immigrant who reported seeing the Blessed Virgin Mary three times in 1859. She is buried at the shrine, which marks the site where they met. The cause for her sainthood opened in January.

Mary, as she appeared to Brice (sometimes also spelled "Brise"), is honored under the title of "Our Lady of Champion" for the nearby town of Champion, 15 miles northeast of Green Bay.

Father Anthony, who as the shrine's rector serves as the actor or promoter of Brice's cause, said the upcoming event will mark the 130th anniversary of the catechist's death on July 5.

The shrine plans to celebrate Mass that day at 11:30 a.m. local time to pray for Brice's cause for canonization and for her continued intercession, he said.

"The afternoon will include guest speakers representing sainthood causes and catechetical presentations, continuing



Adele Brice



Worshippers are pictured in a file photo praying during adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Champion, Wis. (OSV News file photo/Sam Lucero)

the mission Our Lady entrusted to Adele to teach the faith and lead souls to salvation," the priest said.

The shrine will also host a picnic that day. In addition to Mass and speakers, videos and educational presentations will highlight America's holy women and men.

The shrine, May said, is entrusting the event to the patronage of Mary under her titles of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas;

the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the United States; and Our Lady of Champion.

The all-age event will include interactive activities for families. The shrine will offer history scavenger hunts, children's activity pages and more.

"Our hope," May said, "is that families will come together to celebrate this historic moment, learn about the holy men and women who shaped our nation, and be inspired to grow in faith." †

Biannual grants awarded to parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies

Criterion staff report

During the Fall/Winter portion of fiscal year 2025-26, \$300,857 was awarded in grant monies to parishes, schools and agencies in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The grants, awarded twice a year, are made available through the St. Francis Xavier Home Mission Endowment Fund, the Growth and Expansion Endowment Fund, the Queen and Divine Mercy Fund and the James P. Scott Endowment Fund. These grants were made possible through the generosity of archdiocesan faithful, who set up the endowments.

The grant process is jointly administered by the archdiocesan Finance Office and the Office of Stewardship and Development.

Grant applications are due to the archdiocese for the two grant allocation periods on April 30 and on Oct. 31 each year.

The award period for Spring/Summer 2026 is open, with applications due no later than April 30.

The 2025 Fall/Winter grants awarded for fiscal year 2025-26 are as follows:

—Holy Angels, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; \$5,836 for church roof repairs.

—Holy Spirit, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$12,894 for classroom security cameras.

—St. Barnabas, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$22,500 for roof replacement.

—St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$9,000 for parking lot expansion costs.

—St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$7,000 for rectory window replacement.

—St. Monica, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$4,000 for food pantry ministry.

—St. Rita, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; \$4,750 for Wi-Fi/Internet upgrades.

—St. Michael, Brookville; Home Mission Fund; \$22,925 for security project for church doors.

—St. Anthony of Padua School, Clarksville; Home Mission Fund; \$13,737 for security and access projects for buildings.

—St. Joseph, Corydon; James P. Scott Fund; \$15,550 for parking lot repairs.

—Holy Trinity, Edinburgh; James P. Scott and Growth and Expansion funds; \$30,000 for window replacement in Parish Hall and parish sign/message board.

—St. Michael, Greenfield; James P. Scott Fund; \$4,861 for school security upgrades.

—St. Augustine, Jeffersonville; Home Mission Fund; \$35,000 for vestibule repairs.

—Prince of Peace, Madison; James P. Scott Fund; \$6,000 for preschool door replacement.

—Holy Family, Oldenburg; James P. Scott Fund;

\$15,000 for tuckpointing project for the church and school.

—St. John the Baptist, Osgood; Home Mission Fund; \$17,250 for church repair projects.

—St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County; James P. Scott Fund; \$11,054 for church sound and security systems.

—St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer; Home Mission Fund; \$15,000 for parish hall roof replacement.

—Catholic Charities Terre Haute; James P. Scott Fund; \$20,000 for elevator project at Ryves Hall.

—St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$6,000 for Holy Family statue.

—St. Louis, Batesville; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$9,000 for outdoor worship spaces and materials.

—St. Mary, Greensburg; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$3,000 for International Eucharistic Exhibit and activities.

—Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$6,500 for rosaries and shirts for school children.

—St. John Paul II, Sellersburg; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$4,000 for deanery-wide Divine Mercy celebration.

(For information on how to apply for the grants, go to archindy.org/finance/grant or contact Stacy Harris in the Finance Office at sharris@archindy.org or by phone at 317-236-1535.) †