Archbishop Tobin follows God's call on long and winding vocational path

By Sean Gallagher

The path that Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin has followed in his journey to respond to God’s call has been long and winding. It began in his family home in Detroit and later took him to Wisconsin, Missouri, New York, back to his home parish, then far away to Rome and various locales around the world. It has now brought him to Indianapolis, where he serves as the shepherd of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

At times, the path was level with a beautiful horizon in front of him. At other times, it was a steep climb in a shadowy forest. But through it all, Archbishop Tobin kept to that path, even when he felt like it was impossible to follow. In those instances, he followed the example of St. Peter, who was able to walk on the stormy Sea of Galilee as long as he focused on Christ.

“That image of keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus allows you to walk where you think you couldn’t,” Archbishop Tobin said in an interview with The Criterion on the day after his Dec. 3 installation Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Not only did he think he couldn’t walk on the path laid before him, at times he also didn’t want to be on that path in the first place.

“Fairly early on, I made a connection between these wonderful experiences that God had given me and the vow of obedience—because I never would have chosen those paths,” Archbishop Tobin said. “Sometimes I’m just consumed with gratitude as I sit before the Lord.”


ALT="Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, center, speaks during a Mass on Oct. 18 at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. Later that day, he was introduced as the sixth archbishop of Indianapolis. Assisting Archbishop Tobin are, left, seminarians Timothy DeCrane, a member of Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, and Anthony Stange, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg.

It’s All Good

Columnist Patti Lamb reflects on enriching our faith during the ‘Catholic New Year.’

40 years after Roe v. Wade, pro-life movement strengthens its resolve

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Forty years after the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion, the pro-life movement hasn’t stepped back in its resolve to see the decision reversed.

Each year near Jan. 22, the anniversary day of the Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions on abortion, tens of thousands of protesters march in Washington and San Francisco and also take part in local events across the country hoping to change abortion laws.

This year will be no exception.

The annual March for Life in Washington will take place on Friday, Jan. 25—instead of Jan. 22—to accommodate participants because the anniversary date is the day after public ceremonies for the presidential inauguration, which would have made it difficult to secure enough hotel rooms for the thousands expected to descend on the nation’s capital.

Jeanne Monahan, new president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund, which organizes and runs the rally and march each year in Washington, told Catholic News Service that hotels reserved for march participants filled a month earlier than usual, serving as just one indication that this year’s event will draw record crowds.

She said she expects a bigger turnout this year because of the “huge pro-life loss during the election,” and the “somber reality” of the 40-year anniversary of the Supreme Court’s decisions.

“These are people who I think are very, very passionate about this issue,” she said. “It’s not a game to them. It’s very serious.”

Monahan likened the march to a somber but energetic event, focused on the fact that “at least 55 million abortions have been performed” in the past 40 years, but fueled by the overwhelming number of young people in attendance.

“There is a positive energy and even a resolve,” she said.

The pope’s speech gave special attention to “that privileged region in God’s plan, the Middle East,” reiterating earlier calls for a cease-fire and peace talks in Syria, where he said the almost two-year civil war “will know no victors but only vanquish if it continues, leaving behind it nothing but a field of ruins.” He urged foreign governments to provide “essential humanitarian aid” in response to the “grave humanitarian situation” in Syria.

Pope Benedict also reiterated the Vatican’s support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Alluding to Egypt’s new Islamist constitution, which has drawn opposition from liberals and religious minorities, the pope assured “all Egyptians of my closeness and my prayers at this time when new institutions are being set in place.”


Peacemaking is impossible without openness to God, pope tells diplomats in annual address

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Deploring war, civil conflict and poverty around the world, Pope Benedict XVI told foreign ambassadors assembled at the Vatican that peace-building requires charity, religious liberty, a proper understanding of human rights and openness to divine love.

Pope Benedict made his remarks on Jan. 7 in his annual address to members of the Vatican’s diplomatic corps, presenting a survey of global troubles including “endless slaughter” in civil war-torn Syria, terrorist attacks on Christians in Nigeria and the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the East Coast of the United States. He also warned about the international spread of legalized abortion and growing inequality between rich and poor.

“Peace is not simply the fruit of human effort, but a participation in the very love of God,” Pope Benedict told the envoys. “Without openness to the transcendent, human beings easily become prey to relativism and find it difficult to act justly and to work for peace.”

The pope pointedly distinguished true religion, which he said aims at “reconciling men and women with God” and hence with each other, from a “bafﬂing religious fanaticism which, again in 2012, reaped victims in some countries represented here.”

He particularly condemned recent attacks on Christian churches in Nigeria, including the “barbarous” killings of a dozen people by gunmen during services at Christmas.

God's Call

continued from page 1

The path starts at home

The roots of Archbishop Tobin's positive embrace of God's call in his life began through the marriage of his parents, Joseph and Marie Tobin.

"I wasn't running from anything in responding to this vocation," Archbishop Tobin said. "I knew the beauty of married life. And I knew the wonder of the embrace of God's call in his life began through the marriage of his parents, Joseph and Marie Tobin."

He also learned to pray, especially for vocations. "During Sunday Mass, our most common prayer experience was the family rosary," Archbishop Tobin said. "We always ended with a prayer for vocations. So I think it taught all of us that we were praying for something good. It was also a witness to us kids that this was something that our parents, if God was calling us, would support." And they supported Archbishop Tobin in his discernment without putting pressure on him. His father said, "My dad said, "If you believe it's God's plan for you to be a religious and a priest, you should do it." But you don't have to do it. I'll love you and I'll support you in any way that you think you're doing God's will.""

Archbishop Tobin recalled the call to the Redemptorists

"The call to the Redemptorists was an awakening of a call to life as a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, commonly known as the Redemptorists. "We became members of that order while he served as Archbishop of Indianapolis, IN."

Redemptorist Father Joseph Flanagan in particular was a good model of the charism of that order while he served as Archbishop Tobin's spiritual director.

"He was a real people priest—he could relate to people—and he was a scholar," Archbishop Tobin said. "He was a fellow that read five or six languages fluently. He taught me the first declaration in Latin when I called for him." Archbishop Tobin entered a Redemptorist high school seminary in Wisconsin, and became a novice in the order after his second year in college.

During that novitiate year, he was faced with the challenge of learning how to enter into contemplative prayer.

"In my younger days, I always thought of myself as a man of action," Archbishop Tobin said. "I always think that the novitiate is one of the most difficult journeys anybody makes because it's a journey within yourself, looking at yourself." Archbishop Tobin also looks back on his time as a novice and concludes that his conviction that God was truly calling him to the Redemptorists emerged then.

"The path starts at home," Archbishop Tobin continued. "God formulates classmatess who were assigned to minister in Brazil. And the order was spread across dozens of developing countries—prime missionary regions."

But when Archbishop Tobin received his assignment at the time of his ordination, he saw that it was to his home parish, Most Holy Redeemer in Detroit, to minister to its growing Hispanic community.

"I went back to where I had been formed because after all of those years—13 years of formation—it was like, 'Go to jail. Do not pass 'Go.' Do not collect $200. Go back to where you started from,'" Archbishop Tobin said. "I had the notion of being a missionary. In my horizon at that time, being a missionary didn't mean going back to where you started."

"I should have known that Jesus went back to Nazareth and talked to his own people," he said. Looking back nearly 35 years after returning to Holy Redeemer, Archbishop Tobin is able to describe it as "an absolutely fabulous experience of poverty." The neighborhood around the parish in which he grew up had changed greatly. While he knew Spanish, he did not know the culture of the Hispanic parishioners that makes one truly fluent in the language.

"If I could paint a picture while preaching in English, it would be a little nuances and colors, in Spanish I just took a bucket of paint and threw it on the wall," Archbishop Tobin recalled. "I hoped something would stick. It was humiliating to make so many [linguistic] mistakes."

Called to Rome … and to be a bishop

Several years later when Archbishop Tobin was ministering in a largely Hispanic parish in Chicago, he learned that he might be sent to Rome to serve in leadership in his order.

"When they called me, … I had a hot dog in one hand, a Spanish Bible in the other and I was thinking that I was going to be playing hockey that night," Archbishop Tobin recalled. "So all I said to the provincial was, 'I can guarantee in Rome that I can play hockey, eat hot dogs and teach Spanish Bible circles, then I'm your guy.' I figured that wasn't possible.

"It wasn't possible, but he was sent to Rome anyway."

"I went there in a really bad humor," said Archbishop Tobin of his move to Italy in 1991. "The [superior] general then really helped me. He said that I had to see what we did [in Rome] as missionaries. If I was going to think that we were administrators, I was going to go crazy and drive him crazy."

Archbishop Tobin took that advice to heart and, like a missionary, traveled to serve his order and the Church in dozens of countries around the world, including for 13 years as his order's superior general.

That willingness to follow God's call around the world and the pastoral leadership he showed over the years, in part, led to Pope Benedict XVI appointing Archbishop Tobin in 2010 as secretary of the vatican's Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which helps guide the life and ministry of more than 1 million men and women religious in the Church.

That appointment resulted in him being ordained an archbishop on Oct. 9, 2010, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

"Probably of all the stages of my vocation story, the one that was the most difficult was the episcopal one," Archbishop Tobin said. "I was a missionary … I was absolutely convinced that [religious life] was my vocation." Then, as he laid prostrate on the floor of St. Peter's Basilica during his episcopal ordination, he was given a broader perspective on this new stage in his vocational journey.

"There was this awareness that, in the litany of the saints, it's the whole Church praying, Archbishop Tobin said. "It's the Church on Earth. It's the Church in heaven. I suppose the really ecclesial dimension of the Church is more important to me than anything else."

"… Even though you're called and you answer as an individual, you live it ecclesiastically. You're standing on the shoulders of giants. You're enlivened by new generations."
joy” at the march because most participants are younger than 25, noted Monahan, a 40-year-old who attends St. Patrick Parish in Washington.

Across the country, the ninth annual Walk for Life West Coast will take place on Jan. 26. Eva Muntean, a walk co-founder and organizer, said the event—which drew 40,000 participants last year—was inspired by Washington’s annual march.

It starts with a rally featuring several speakers at a San Francisco plaza and then a two-mile walk through the heart of the city to a large waterfront plaza. This year, the West Coast will take place on Jan. 26. Eva Muntean, a walk co-founder and organizer, said the event—which drew 40,000 participants last year—was inspired by Washington’s annual march.

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Helping fund religious vocations

The Catholic Church in the United States will celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week on Jan. 13-19. In preparation for it, we invite you to read an anniversary supplement on pages 7-14.

Many Catholics don’t realize that seminaries and religious orders don’t feel that the average college loan debt these young people have completed their college educations. And that often presents a problem.

Many Catholics don’t realize that seminaries and religious orders don’t feel that the average college loan debt these young people have to wait for years to come here illegally because they cannot legally. We must ensure that families have to wait for years to come here illegally because they cannot legally. We must ensure that families

Imigration reform is needed

This week, Jan. 6-12, the Catholic Church observes National Migration Week. The Church teaches that the right to migrate is rooted in the theological truth that all human beings are made in the image of God. Throughout the Old Testament, God commanded his people to welcome the stranger and the alien.

We hope that, with no national elections this year, both the legislative and executive branches of the national government will get serious about immigration reform.

Even aside from religious teachings, we should be able to see that reform will be good for our country. In particular, we should increase the number of visas available for those who literally have little or nothing to lose by their hands to come here illegally because they cannot do so legally.

It should be obvious that our country will benefit if visas are increased for foreigners with advanced graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The House of Representatives recently passed such a measure.

At the other end of the education spectrum, though, our country also will benefit by making it possible for farmers to bring in workers to do jobs that American citizens refuse to do.

We need to speed up the process of obtaining visas so that families don’t have to wait for years to come here legally. We must ensure that families are not torn apart by the deportation of a family member. One of the bishops’ priorities is to ensure that “family reunification remains the cornerstone of our nation’s immigration policy.” We must provide a path to citizenship for foreigners who are here. Otherwise, we will be in danger of creating a permanent underclass where certain parts of our population do not have the rights that others do.

This should be the year for immigration reform. President Barack Obama has said that it is one of his priorities, and there are political reasons for Republicans, too, to want to tackle this divisive issue.

—John F. Fink

Letters to the Editor

Where is the outcry for the slaughter of the unborn?

Where is the outcry? I have heard the outcry from every national news agency about the mass murder in Connecticut. The outcry was beyond description. But it occurred to me that there is a huge number of equally horrendous atrocities going on all over America in abortion clinics. These babies will not only never celebrate a birthday, they will never feel the warm hug of a mother or the pat on the back of a father. They will never hear a bird sing, see a flower bloom or a sun rise or a snow fall. Where is the outcry for these babies?

Paul Frey

Naples, Fla.

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Commissive e Progressionis 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be brief, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and community standards of spelling and grammar. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of sources, letters writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are preferred.

Send letters to: “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

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WASHINGTON (CNS)—The 113th Congress includes some slight shifts in religious makeup over the previous session, with a few more Catholics, the first Buddhist in the Senate and the first Hindu to serve in either chamber.

It is a historic high for the number of Catholics in Congress, with 163, although that’s just two more seats than the previous high point, when there were 161 Catholics in the 111th Congress of 2009-10.

That’s an increase of seven seats over the 156 that Catholics had in the 112th Congress.

Since at least the 1960s, Catholics have been the single largest denomination in Congress. Although when Protestant denominations are counted together, they still constitute the largest number of members, at 56 percent.

Another analysis finds that alumni of Jesuit colleges and universities account for nearly 10 percent of all members of Congress.

According to data compiled by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Catholics now make up slightly below 31 percent of Congress, while they account for about 22 percent of the U.S. population.

The Pew data notes that Catholics, Protestants and Jews are disproportionately represented in Congress in comparison to their percentage of the overall adult population.

But even with fewer than five members in Congress, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus and Orthodox are represented in about equal proportion to their number in the country. The same goes for Mormons, who have 15 members in Congress, just under 3 percent, and represent about 2 percent of the U.S. population.

Data compiled by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities counted nearly 10 percent of Congress as having attended Jesuit higher education institutions. That includes 11 senators and 41 members of the House, who collectively attended 14 different Jesuit schools.

Georgetown University has the most alumni in Congress, with 21, followed by Boston College with seven and Fordham University with five, the College of the Holy Cross with four and Creighton University with three, the association reported. Loyola University Chicago, St. Peter’s University and University of Detroit Mercy each has two alumni in Congress. Loyola Marymount University, Marquette University, St. Joseph’s University, Santa Clara University, Wheeling Jesuit University and Xavier University each has one.

Nine Jesuit alumni were elected in 2012, including Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, who is the first Buddhist elected to the Senate (she served as a member of the House since 2007), and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., a Baptist, who both hold advanced degrees from Georgetown.

Catholics still largest Congress denomination; 10 percent Jesuit grads

Faith and the 113th Congress

The majority of members adhere to faith groups in the Protestant tradition.

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What was in the news on Jan. 11, 1963? Protestant monks aid cause of church unity, and Detroit interfaith leaders work to eliminate bias in housing

By Brandon A. Evans

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

Here are some of the items found in the Jan. 11, 1963, issue of The Criterion.

**Protestant monks in France are aiding the cause of church unity.**

“TAIZE, France.—A cluster of unity-minded Protestant monks, the Brotherhood of Taize, France, is fast being recognized in Catholic and Protestant circles as one of the brightest signs of viable Christian unity on the international horizon. Their purpose? Reconciliation—between separated Christians, between husband and wife, between unbelievers and the church, between mankind and the challenges of an industrialized world. Their method? To pray and live together at Taize as a monastic community dedicated to God, and to work ‘in the world’ as men having secular occupations, but dedicated to Christian service.”

**Interfaith leaders in Detroit open drive to eliminate bias in housing.**

“DETROIT—Participants in this city’s first interreligious conference on racial discrimination in housing adopted a statement recommending specific ways in which churches and synagogues can fight bias in housing. Admitting that religious groups have failed to do enough in this area, the statement urged congregations to set up committees on racial equality and recommended the formation of interreligious committees in each legislative district to work for ‘appropriate state open-occupancy legislation.’”

**Netherlands bishop: Refuses to move priest who criticized Curia.**

“Greater generosity to missions urged. Marian lectures to offer a look at Hoosier politics.‘Catholic Family of the Year’ boasts four in religion.**

“‘Catholic Family of the Year’ boasts four in religion.**

**Battle looming: Aid-to-education is seen as major Congress issue.**


Read all of these stories from our Jan. 11, 1963, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com.
**Events Calendar**

**January 12**
St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 3605 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 1 p.m; age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-2407.

**January 14**
St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus. Concentus series, "Nunc Zangus," The Minst Piano Duo Diarebelva and Bogdan Minut, 7 p.m. Information: 812-379-9353, ext. 237, or bmusicf2y@yahoo.com.

**January 15-15**

**January 16**

St. Malachy Parish, 9353 E. County Road 750 N., Brownsburg. "Catholics Returning Home" program, six weeks, session two, 7 p.m. Information: 317-650-5731.

**January 17**

St. Susanna Parish, 1210 E. Main St. Plainfield. Speaker series, "Pie with a Priest," Father John Hollowell, presenter, 6:30 p.m. Information: 812-290-5066 or dmeyer@hixson-inc.com.

**January 18**

Richter of Columbus, 542 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg. Batesville Deanery Vocation diner, 6 p.m., farewell offering. Information: 812-290-5066 or dmeyer@hixson-inc.com.

**January 21**
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. "Helpers of God's Precious Infants, pro-life." Mass, Father Glenn O'Connor, celebrant, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archbishop Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1569.

Closed Community of Richmond, 701 N. "A" St., Richmond. "Charismatic prayer group, 7 p.m. Information: richmondcharismatic.com.

**January 23**

**January 30**

**January 31**

**February 6**
Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. No members welcome. 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-370-1189.

**February 9**
Holy Family Parish, 815 W. Main St., Richmond, 6th Annual Chocolate Fest, 6-9 p.m., $12 adults; $5 children 6-12 years old, children 5 and under no charge. Information: 765-969-4919 or louise66@hotmail.com

**National Catholic Youth Choir seeking applicants for summer camp and tour**

The National Catholic Choir (NCYC), sponsored by Saint John’s School of Theology-Seminary in Collegeville, Minn., is seeking Catholic students entering grades 10, 11 or 12 in the fall of 2013 for its 2013 camp and multi-state concert tour. To apply online or to learn more about the choir, log on to wwwNCYC.org or call 800-322-8285.

**Vehicle donation program continues to use proceeds as direct aid to poor**

The vehicle donation program at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Parish conference that is closest to the donor’s home. Vehicles do not have to be in running order when donated. According to Bernice Wietkamp, coordinator of the program for the Indianapolis council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, money earned from local vehicle donations totaled more than $28,000. To donate or find out more information on the program, log on to www叙利亚cars.com or call 800-322-8285.

**Retreats and Programs**

**January 11-13**
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Tobit Weekend, marriage preparation retreat, registration required. Information: www.archiony.org/Tobit.


**January 13**
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries, Pre Cana Conference for engaged couples, 7-8:30 p.m., $45 per couple. Registration: www.archiony.org/Fatima.

**January 12-13**
Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis. Sophomore retreat, "Divin’ In," $85 per person, registration deadline Jan. 4. Information: 812-945-2000 or simply@aduouthy.org.

**January 14**
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. "Come Away and Rest Awhile-Silent Guided Day of Reflection," 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681, ext. 14, or www.archiony.org/Fatima.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. "Men’s Night!" Father Carl Havre. presenter, 7-8:30 p.m., free with offering. Information: 812-933-6437 or oldenburg-franciscan.org.

**January 16**

**January 19**

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. "Self Images," Franciscan Sister Doris Holohan, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $45 per person includes lunch. Information: 812-933-6437 or oldenburg-franciscan.org.

**January 20**

**January 25-26**

**January 26**
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. "Understanding the Beatitudes," Franciscan Sister Sharona Sheridan, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $45 per person includes lunch. Information: 812-933-6437 or oldenburg-franciscan.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. "Sacraments of Initiation—Series 1 of 6," Angela Roessler and Jennifer Proffit, presenters, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m., $90 per person for six sessions. Information: 812-933-6437 or oldenburg-franciscan.org.

**February 3**
Mount Saint Francis Center, Collegeville, Minn., is seeking Catholic students entering grades 10, 11 or 12 in the fall of 2013 for its 2013 camp and multi-state concert tour. The camp and tour runs from Jan. 7 to July 2, and is headquartered on the grounds of Saint John’s Abbey and University in Collegeville. The cost is $900, which includes meals, lodging and tour expenses. Scholarships are also available. Applications are due by March 18. In addition to completing an online form, applicants are required to provide two recommendations and a vocal recording. To apply online or to learn more about the choir, log on to wwwNCYC.org. While online applications are preferred, the on-line form may be printed from the site and mailed to Dorothy Kantor. NCYC P.O. Box 7288, Collegeville, MN 56321.

**March 26**
Charles E. "Bud" Hackett, 72, of Indianapolis, a retired FedEx executive, died March 25 in his home after a brief illness. He was born March 26, 1940, in Columbus, Ind., to the late Edward L. "Lon" and Marie Hackett. He completed his 51st marathon in Hawaii. For each marathon, Porter solicited donations for the Hollis Adams Foundation, which provides quality social experiences to adults with intellectual and development disabilities. Porter has raised more than $1,000 for the organization so far. For more information on the Hollis Adams Foundation, call 317-641-1231 or visit www.hollisadams.org.

Retirement celebration

In December, Charles Gardner retired after more than 40 years in ministry to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He served for many years as archdiocesan executive director for spiritual life and worship and director of liturgical music. Prior to that, he was music director at St. Therese’s of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. He and his wife, Diane, enjoy a moment at his farewell reception on Dec. 11 at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.
By Fr. Eric Johnson

“Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water” (Mt 14:28).

These words of St. Peter are spoken to Jesus in the midst of a storm-tossed sea. The disciples had earlier been dismissed by Jesus while he went off to a deserted place to pray. Now, they have caught sight of him coming to them across the water. We read initially that the disciples were terrified. Jesus, however, reassures them and tells them to not be afraid. Then Peter responds with his request: “Lord, if it is you …” (Mt 14:28).

What strikes me about Peter’s statement is that it reveals a real desire for faith, a desire to be with Jesus, a desire to trust in his presence. To be sure, there is a note of uncertainty in his request. He is still aware of the storm and still has doubt, but he wants to trust in that relationship.

Jesus’ response to Peter’s request is simply to say “Come” (Mt 14:29). Peter, in the face of his doubts and fears, chooses to trust in the person of Jesus and steps out onto the water. For a moment, he walks across the waves, moving towards the One who invited him.

As long as he keeps his eyes on Jesus, Peter weathered the storm that is around him. It is only when he loses sight of Jesus, fixing his eyes on the water beneath his feet, his distance from the safety of the boat and the roaring of the waves, that Peter sinks back into his fears and down into the water.

Like Peter, I think most all of us desire faith. We want to be close to Jesus and to trust in his care for us. We want Jesus to be there and, like St. Paul, we want to walk by faith and not by sight. We want to be able to say with Peter, “Lord, if it is you …”

Our lives, however, are full. There are so many obligations, demands and things that bring us anxiety. Between work, home and the many other commitments that tug at us, it is easy for us to simply focus on what is immediately in front of us and lose sight of Christ who calls us.

We can also come to see Christ’s invitation to come as just one of a number of voices that compete for our attention. Our world can be filled with noise, with the voices of doubt, fear, expectations and worry. All of this can lead us to take our eyes off of Christ. We let go of silence, prayer and nurturing our relationship with the person that invites us and saves us.

Priests, deacons and those in consecrated life offer us their simple witness to faith. In the face of their own doubts, questions and fears, they have chosen in faith to trust the invitation of Jesus. They have stepped out to teach us, console us, walk with us, lead us and to embrace a life of service to the Church. Behind their ministry is a striving to live out their faith in Jesus and to share that relationship with others.

This perhaps is one of their greatest gifts to us. In their life and ministry, priests, consecrated men and women and permanent deacons remind us that there is something more than what is immediately in front of us, more than simply what this world has to offer. They stand as a sign—a reminder—of Christ’s invitation to us to trust, to follow, to step out.

This annual Religious Vocations Supplement contains some of their stories. Each is unique, representing a wide range of responses and ministries. They are stories of vocation, generosity, compassion and joy. They are stories of faith.

May we find in them a witness that leads us deeper into the mystery of Christ’s call to each one of us. May they inspire us to a greater courage in keeping our hearts fixed on the person of Christ.

(Father Eric Johnson is the outgoing archdiocesan vocations director. Later this month, Father Eric Augeinstein will succeed him in this ministry.)
By John Shaughnessy

In 2006, Adam Ahern was a sergeant in the U.S. Army, working in communications in the White House Situation Room, the place where the president meets with top advisors and often makes decisions that send members of the military into harm’s way. Ahern had the highest security clearance.

Anything that the president could see, he could see.

He had trained for this kind of work since entering the Army in 1999, days after graduating from Batesville High School in Batesville.

“I was living the mission,” said Ahern, a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris. “I was watching and listening to top-secret security briefings in the mornings. It was very fulfilling. It exceeded my expectations of what my job was going to be.”

But during that same year, Ahern realized there was still something missing in his life that this mission couldn’t fill.

“It was trying to fit an octagon peg into a round hole,” Ahern said. “It just didn’t quite fit. It fit pretty good, but it just didn’t quite fill up everything.”

That was when he started considering in prayer that God might be calling him to the priesthood.

Over the next year, Ahern became convinced enough about this possible call that he decided to become a seminarian and not re-enlist in the Army.

He soon went from walking halls that buzzed with political power in the White House to the quiet corridors of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, a powerhouse of prayer and priestly formation that is housed in a former Carmelite monastery.

Discernment deferred

Ahern had actually thought about a possible call to the priesthood earlier in life.

While in high school, he was in the beginning stages of applying to enter the Legion of Christ religious order when the community turned him down.

Ahern was disappointed and felt in response that God wasn’t calling him to be a priest.

“It was like I tried it, and it didn’t work out,” he said. “Obviously, it’s not what God wants me to do. So let’s go somewhere else.” That somewhere else was the Army.

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, happened about two years into Ahern’s first stint in the Army. On that day, he was with a unit finishing a training exercise in Argentina.

“When [we learned that] the Pentagon got hit, it was like, ‘Get the weapons back out,’” he said. “For the rest of that week, I was doing armed guard [duty].” A year later, he was deployed to Afghanistan.

“On New Year’s Eve in 2000, I was in Indiana with my family,” Ahern said. “Then, two years later on New Year’s Eve, I’m on a rooftop in Afghanistan with night vision goggles doing security. It was different.”

While deployed, he learned that the White House was interested in him working in communications in the Situation Room. A year and a half earlier, he had attended a briefing in which he expressed interest in the job and was able to show basic qualifications for it.

The White House spent the next 18 months doing a security background check that involved Federal Bureau of Investigation agents interviewing relatives and friends of Ahern in person. As long as the process was, Ahern said it had actually been expedited because of the 9/11 attacks.

He began working for the White House in 2003 as, in his words, a “presidential roadie.” He traveled across the country and around the world setting up communications networks wherever the president planned to visit.

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By Sean Gallagher

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Monks of varying ages help each other grow in holiness

By Br. Francis Wagner, O.S.B.
Special to the Criterion

“Do not aspire to be called holy. Rather, I advise you to be called good. Men have not been called good within my order for three thousand years. Do not be afraid of that. I want you to be called good,” the abbot once said. By Br. Francis Wagner, O.S.B.

The abbot’s wisdom, which seeks holiness in ordinary life, has guided those seeking God as Benedictine monks and nuns throughout the Western world since the sixth century. They live through the very human dynamics of our everyday patterns and relationships.

Benedictine Archabbott Justin DuVall of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, a Benedictine monastery that is home to 90 monks.

Few, if any of them, aspire to be called holy. However, each monk has been called by God from different places, backgrounds and generations to Saint Meinrad Archabbey to become holy through a common life. They work on the Rule of St. Benedict. Striving for holiness as a monk is a lifelong calling.

“We have been drawn to Benedictine monasticism over many different paths and circumstances,” says Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, O.S.B. “It enables people to belong to a community that called them to become.”

This is accomplished together by monks, in ordinary circumstances, among a group of men with differing places of birth, perils of life, thoughts, interests, education levels and life experiences. They’re also diverse in terms of age; the oldest is 94, while the youngest is 29.

All monks are called by the God of the Rule, either one another or as brothers. Each monk, as Benedictine Father Richard Studzinski, 69, who has researched Benedictine life, says, points out, chooses to “live in a religious community patterned on a family model of living under an abbot and among brethren who likewise are pursuing union with God.”

As with any family, living together in a monastery presents challenges that are opportunities for growth in holiness.

“The fact that we have all ended up together in this place, and that so many different people have persevered for decades in our house, convinces me that God has called us here,” says Benedictine Father Thomas Gricsics, 32. “Only God could be creative enough and trusting enough to bring us all together. Thus, I believe that each of my brothers is here for me to teach, if I only am humble enough to listen and observe with a generous heart.”

In all of their diversity, each Benedictine monk is called to a particular monastery to seek God with the other monks living there. Holiness means being attentive to God and seeking him for conversion of heart over the course of a lifetime, a process that is inextricably linked with the rest of the community.

Monks from across a broad range of ages, background, the same thing, albeit in different ways, through seeking sanctity. For them, holiness is honored through the diversity of their confreres, each one of whom is at a different point on the path of holiness.

As former novice master, Benedictine Father Harry Hagan, O.S.B., put it, “There is not just one way to live as a monk, whether young or old. Moreover, everyone seeks holiness in a different way and for an appropriate time in their life. Holiness is not just one thing.”

Benedictine Brother Raymond Studzinski, 69, who has researched and written about living in an intergenerational community, concur.

“Holiness is not an end state so much as a process of growing in it, of letting go and letting God direct and transform us,” he says. “Seeking God and pursuing holiness are not things you focus on as individual projects, but really are the product of community endeavors to which we all contribute in different ways. My growth and development impacts the community, as the growth and development of confreres impacts me.”

Benedictine Father Adrian Burke, 48, ties the common life of seeking God in prayer and work to growth in acceptance, compassion and service. “Living with others whom we did not choose but found here demands more in terms of charity than living alone, and the ‘one-ness’ of being chosen, and a ready openness to receive those others as they are.”

Committing to such a process can be difficult, but it is also immensely rewarding, says Father Raymond. It is a sentiment echoed by a number of monks.

The monastery, they say, offers an advantage rarely found in the contemporary Western world—the opportunity to live under one roof with a large number of people of a variety of ages.

Such a mode of living “shows us the nature present,” says Benedictine Brother Pedrus Foneka, OSB. “We challenge each other on the growth of our persons.”

The community is a mirror, and I see myself through this mirror for who I am and who I may be,” says Benedictine Brother Adrian Burke.

“In the monastery, I’ve seen things that I could not see. In addition, the monks are to reverence and accept,” he says. “Seeking God and pursuing holiness are not things you focus on as individual projects, but really are the product of community endeavors to which we all contribute in different ways. My growth and development impacts the community, as the growth and development of confreres impacts me.”

Benedictine Father Paul Keesler, 70, observes that “Our culture is in denial about the fact of aging, of living and ultimately of dying,” he says. “In most traditional societies, aging is associated with wisdom. The diminished physical ability of aging is accompanied by a growth in spiritual ability. In the ancient monastic tradition, those who aspired to be monks always sought out an elder to be their guide. "From my perspective, it is a great opportunity to live in an ‘age community’ to learn from the wisdom and experience of those who have gone before, to fully appreciate the art of aging and dying with grace instead of resistance.”

(For more information about Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, log on to www.saintmeinrad.org)

Archdiocesan priest ministered around the world as Navy chaplain

By Mary Ann Garber

Blinking back tears, comedian Bob Hope told those assembled at a memorial service for Father John Wright, a young Navy chaplain from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis stationed with a medical battalion at a field hospital near Da Nang to minister to injured members of the First Marine Division in South Vietnam for emergency surgery.

Father Wright administered the sacrament of the sick and prayed with the infants and adults while serving Catholic enlisted men and women during the Vietnam War, Msgr. Wright said during a recent interview. He was airlifted to a remote field hospital in South Vietnam for emergency surgery.

One hot day, Dennis Wright came home to his apartment in Alexandria, Va. from his post in Da Nang to minister to injured members of the First Marine Division in South Vietnam for emergency surgery.

But it was more than a chance meeting, he said. Wright was stationed with a medical battalion at a field hospital near Da Nang on the border of South Vietnam and took the opportunity to minister to Catholic enlisted men and women during the Vietnam War. He credits his time in the military with letting him “letting go and letting God direct and transform us,” he says. “Seeking God and pursuing holiness are not things you focus on as individual projects, but really are the product of community endeavors to which we all contribute in different ways. My growth and development impacts the community, as the growth and development of confreres impacts me.”

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I’m thankful for 30 years in the military (as a chaplain), and I’m thankful, above all, for the priesthood and 50 years of ministry.

—Msgr. John Wright

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He was baptised at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in 1949.

After two years at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and one at St. Meinrad Archabbey in southern Indiana, he entered the military.

“God knows,” Msgr. Wright said with a smile when asked why he decided to begin his seminary studies at the former St. Meinrad Archabbey.

“One hot day, Dennis Wright came home to his apartment in Alexandria, Va. from his post in Da Nang to minister to injured members of the First Marine Division in South Vietnam for emergency surgery.

He was born on Sept. 23, 1936, in Huntington, Ind., and lived on a farm near Huntington, Ind., and lived on a farm near St. Mary’s church in 1949.

His first assignments on May 28, 1962, were to Camp Pendleton, Calif., and St. Mary’s church in 1949. He was ordained on June 16, 1965, and named associate pastor of Holy Spirit Parish and religion teacher at Father Thomas Seccia Memorial High School, both in Indianapolis.

Two years later, Father Wright and Father Paul Richart were summoned to the chancery by Archbishop Joseph M. Tobin to tell him that the Military Archdiocese needed their service as chaplains.

“I was surprised,” he recalled about his May 23, 1967, appointment. “I had a brother with a military career in the Navy so I said I’d like to go into the military.”

During the course of many assignments over three decades, Father Wright traveled around the world, including overseas service on the U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt, an aircraft carrier deployed in the Mediterranean Sea. “It was a great duty,” he said. “It was a tremendous experience.”

That assignment took him from Spain to many points in between.

In route to the home, the ship got caught in a

See WRIGHT, page 12

Msgr. John Wright
Franciscan sister leads interfaith retreat center in Montana

By Sr. Judith Warner, O.S.F.
Special to The Criterion

“Our God is full of surprises,” said Franciscan Sister Deborah Campbell, of Fairview, S.D., as she recounted her vocation story. She was affiliated with the Prayer Lodge in Busby, Mont. when she was later asked to come to St. Theresa’s in Busby.

St. Theresa’s was born and raised outside of Charlestown, Ind., and was the daughter of Henry and Margaret Waller. She was not Catholic, and he said, “God could not be more happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy. I have good role models in the faith to work toward. I am truly happy.
Parish priest leads people to Christ in many ways

By Sean Gallagher

COLUMBUS and FRANKLIN—Leading a parish of more than 1,600 households means that most of Father Clement Davis’ days are busy with various tasks, from early in the morning until late in the evening.

But the pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus is usually focused in all of them on leading his parishioners closer to Christ. That might happen through celebrating Mass, hearing confessions or anointing and giving spiritual comfort to the sick. The priest also does this through his interactions with the staff members of his parish, and in attending ministry meetings at his Seymour Deanery faith community.

The following photo essay shows some of the ways that Father Davis leads many people to Christ in his day-to-day ministry.

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.HearGodsCall.com.)

Top photo: Father Clement Davis, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, elevates the Eucharist during a Dec. 6 Mass in the Seymour Deanery faith community’s church.

Father Clement Davis receives offertory gifts from Mauricio Juarez, second from right, and Clara Romero during a Dec. 6, 2012, Mass. Mauricio and Clara are both first-grade students at St. Bartholomew School in Columbus. Father Davis is assisted by altar servers Matt Boldry, left, and Emily Thompson, both seventh-grade students at St. Bartholomew School.

Father Clement Davis talks with Margaret Janes, secretary at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, where Father Davis ministers as pastor, on Dec. 6.

Father Clement Davis celebrates the sacrament of the anointing of the sick with Frances Schultz at Columbus Regional Hospital in Columbus on Dec. 6. Schultz is a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. Father Davis is pastor of the Seymour Deanery faith community.

Sitting in a confessional at St. Rose of Lima Church in Franklin, Father Clement Davis prepares to hear the confession of a student at St. Rose of Lima School during an Advent penance service on Dec. 6.

Fathers John Hall, left, Clement Davis and John Beitans share a lunch together on Dec. 6 at a Japanese restaurant in Franklin. Father Hall is pastor of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Martinsville, and administrator of Our Lady of the Springs Parish and Our Lord Jesus Christ the King Parish in Paoli. Father Beitans is pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh and St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin.

Father Clement Davis prays the Liturgy of the Hours on Dec. 6 at the rectory of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, where he serves as pastor.
Deacon seeks to give humble example of faith to parishioners

By Sean Gallagher

Russell Woodard was ordained a permanent deacon on Jan. 8, 2012, from the class of 15 other men.

After his ordination, he continued his role as parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish in New Castle and St. Rose of Lima Parish in Knightstown that he had begun in 2010.

In many respects, the journey that led to the momentous day of his ordination began when Deacon Woodard was a student studying electronics at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis in the early 1980s.

“About halfway through, every so often in the program we were talking about how much money they were going to make once they graduated and got out into the field,” he said. “I got to thinking about that and I thought, ‘Money is not what it’s all about’.”

He also realized that he wanted to work with people and not machines the rest of his life.

Relating a question about a possibly priestly vocation put to him by Father James Farrell while he was in high school, Deacon Woodard became a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis through his priestly formation at the former St. Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, graduating in 1985.

By the end of his time at St. Meinrad, however, Deacon Woodard had discerned that God was not calling him to the priesthood but that he should be a husband and father.

He was married in 1986, and he and his wife began raising three children together. Their marriage, however, didn’t endure. His wife left him, and their divorce was finalized in 2004.

“That kind of threw me for a loop, because as I’ve told other people, I expected to be married for life,” Deacon Woodard said.

His experiences as a husband and father, his divorce, but also his many years working and volunteering in the field of facilities management, in facilities management, and on various parish committees all contributed to his life and ministry as a deacon.

The sad experience of divorce has led him to assisting the deacon in his role as an example of strong married relationships he experienced a darkness in their lives, and it is a blessing to witness their encounters with Christ, the Light of the World,” Deacon Woodard said. “We are all failures, and these men have broken laws for which they are being punished. But Jesus offers to us his love and peace. He challenges each of us, me included, to live a better life every day. Working with these inmates helps me keep the focus on my own areas in need of improvement.”

Deacon Woodard hopes to provide a good example for all the people he leads, but he wants to remain humble. “I don’t want them to look at me as being a super saint,” he said. “I’m someone who struggles with the same things that they struggle with on a day-in and day-out basis. Why do people get sick? How does that affect our relationship with God? How do we respond to that?”

An important way that Deacon Woodard responds to life’s challenges is in a daily life of prayer. As a deacon, he prays the Liturgy of the Hours and joins parishioners in New Castle three days a week in praying Morning Prayer.

“It’s important that people see that I’m a prayerful person, and to understand that each of us is called to be prayerful and to make that a part of our daily lives as much as possible,” Deacon Woodard said. “Through homilies or articles in the bulletin, I remind people that we have to be with Christ daily. I want to help people to understand that faith isn’t something that you just do on Sunday morning for an hour. It’s something that has to be in every part of your life.”

(For more information about the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.archindy.org/deacon.)

Deacon Russell Woodard

• Age: 50
• Education: Perry Meridian High School in Indianapolis; Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis; St Meinrad College in St Meinrad
• Favorite Scripture passage: Mt 25:31-46
• Favorite saint: St. Stephen. “He was a deacon, I’m not necessarily wanting to emulate him, but he was also a martyr,” said Deacon Woodard with a laugh. “He was willing to die for his faith, I think that’s important.”
• Favorite spiritual author: Pope Benedict XVI in the three volumes of his Jesus of Nazareth
• Favorite prayer or devotion: The rosary and Divine Mercy chaplet
• Hobbies: Walking and bicycling

Deacon Russell Woodard, left, reads the general intercessions during the Dec. 3 installation Mass of Archbishop Joseph M. Tobin, right, as the sixth archbishop of Indianapolis in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Deacon Woodard is parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish in New Castle and St. Rose of Lima Parish in Knightstown. He also is involved in the ministry of charity at the New Castle Correctional Facility.

WRIGHT

Hurricane and 40-Foot Waves

By Sean Gallagher

“Hi, I’m Russell Woodard,” said the 45-year-old priest seated in front of a computer screen. “I am from Indianapolis, a graduate of St. Meinrad Seminary, and have lived a life dedicated to God, preaching and the example of Jesus Christ.”

“I am just so impressed by Deacon Woodard’s homilies,” Bill Hubbard, a member of St. Anne Parish in New Castle, said. “He has been impressed by Deacon Woodard’s homilies.

“He ties his homilies to the liturgy. And he has the skills to apply the homilies to his life,” Hubbard said.

“His homilies have caught my attention,” Hubbard said. “I get to thinking about that and I thought, ‘Money is not what it’s all about.’”

He also realized that he wanted to work with people and not machines the rest of his life.

Relating a question about a possibly priestly vocation put to him by Father James Farrell while he was in high school, Deacon Woodard became a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis through his priestly formation at the former St. Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, graduating in 1985.

By the end of his time at St. Meinrad, however, Deacon Woodard had discerned that God was not calling him to the priesthood but that he should be a husband and father.

He was married in 1986, and he and his wife began raising three children together. Their marriage, however, didn’t endure. His wife left him, and their divorce was finalized in 2004.

“That kind of threw me for a loop, because as I’ve told other people, I expected to be married for life,” Deacon Woodard said.

His experiences as a husband and father, his divorce, but also his many years working and volunteering in the field of facilities management, in facilities management, and on various parish committees all contributed to his life and ministry as a deacon.

The sad experience of divorce has led him to assisting the deacon in his role as an example of strong married relationships he experienced a darkness in their lives, and it is a blessing to witness their encounters with Christ, the Light of the World,” Deacon Woodard said. “We are all failures, and these men have broken laws for which they are being punished. But Jesus offers to us his love and peace. He challenges each of us, me included, to live a better life every day. Working with these inmates helps me keep the focus on my own areas in need of improvement.”

Deacon Woodard hopes to provide a good example for all the people he leads, but he wants to remain humble. “I don’t want them to look at me as being a super saint,” he said. “I’m someone who struggles with the same things that they struggle with on a day-in and day-out basis. Why do people get sick? How does that affect our relationship with God? How do we respond to that?”

An important way that Deacon Woodard responds to life’s challenges is in a daily life of prayer. As a deacon, he prays the Liturgy of the Hours and joins parishioners in New Castle three days a week in praying Morning Prayer.

“It’s important that people see that I’m a prayerful person, and to understand that each of us is called to be prayerful and to make that a part of our daily lives as much as possible,” Deacon Woodard said. “Through homilies or articles in the bulletin, I remind people that we have to be with Christ daily. I want to help people to understand that faith isn’t something that you just do on Sunday morning for an hour. It’s something that has to be in every part of your life.”

(For more information about the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.archindy.org/deacon.)

Deacon Russell Woodard

• Age: 50
• Education: Perry Meridian High School in Indianapolis; Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis; St Meinrad College in St Meinrad
• Favorite Scripture passage: Mt 25:31-46
• Favorite saint: St. Stephen. “He was a deacon, I’m not necessarily wanting to emulate him, but he was also a martyr,” said Deacon Woodard with a laugh. “He was willing to die for his faith, I think that’s important.”
• Favorite spiritual author: Pope Benedict XVI in the three volumes of his Jesus of Nazareth
• Favorite prayer or devotion: The rosary and Divine Mercy chaplet
• Hobbies: Walking and bicycling

Deacon Russell Woodard, left, reads the general intercessions during the Dec. 3 installation Mass of Archbishop Joseph M. Tobin, right, as the sixth archbishop of Indianapolis in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Deacon Woodard is parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish in New Castle and St. Rose of Lima Parish in Knightstown. He also is involved in the ministry of charity at the New Castle Correctional Facility.

WRIGHT

Hurricane and 40-Foot Waves
thinking about what I wanted to do. I started thinking about maybe what God wanted me to do.

“I just started praying about that. I asked for the intercession of Blessed John Paul II. And it just struck me that I should go into seminary.

Keeping the faith

Ahern was able in part to think about the priesthood again because he continued practicing the faith while in the Army. Early in his Army training, he decided not to go to Mass on a regular basis.

“It just never sat right with me,” Ahern said. “I always felt awkward about not having gone to Mass.

“And so, when I got to my first duty station in Afghanistan, it just became part of who I was and who I came known to be. That’s Adam. He’s the Catholic guy. He goes to Mass on Sunday.”

Ahern said he had no way of getting to Mass. Then, once when he was in the White House, he was actually on a plane going from Australia back to the states. He were on the plane for about 30 hours.”

In 2006, he began praying about the priesthood. Ahern found that it gave him peace.

“Going from Afghanistan with that kind of pressure to working at the White House with the constant need to have everything right all the time — there was a lot of pressure and stress on me,” he said. “And in prayer I found this peace and calm that was just completely wonderful.”

A Knights of Columbus council in Alexandria, Va., also helped him to put his faith into action.

“They helped me reconnect with my faith on a more active level,” Ahern said. “Being part of the council helped me be active in my faith in a different way, which also led into the decision to leave the Army.”

Living a different mission

Ahern was able to maintain his faith while in the Army, in part, because of the good foundation that was laid by his parents.

Going to Sunday Mass as a child and a teenager was non-negotiable in his home. “It kept me grounded,” Ahern said. “It kept me connected with the Church. Then, once when I was in the White House, I was actually on a plane going from Australia back to the states. We were on the plane for about 30 hours.”

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“They helped me reconnect with my faith on a more active level,” Ahern said. “Being part of the council helped me be active in my faith in a different way, which also led into the decision to leave the Army.”

And she is still happy five years later that her son continues in priestly formation.

“I keep pinching myself that I am so blessed,” Marian said. “I can’t even talk about it. It’s very emotional for me because it’s such an awesome thing…”

After a semester of living at Bishop Bratue, Ahern affiliated as a seminarian with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He is now in his second year of formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

“In that kind of like being deployed,” Ahern said with a laugh. “I had done quite a bit of training up to that point for parish ministry. And so I got to do some of it. I got to go and live the mission for a little while.

“It really helped confirm the decisions that I had been making and helped keep me in [the] seminary, keep me on the path that God put me on five years ago.”

What attracts him most to the priesthood, Ahern said, is “the idea of showing God’s love and bringing Christ to people in the many ways that a priest does it, and in the unique way that a priest does it,” especially in the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation.

“That’s the mission that I’m training for,” Ahern said. “And that’s the mission that I hope to do one day. It’s to bring Christ’s love to people.”

(Benigno A. Rizal October 30, 1941 August 11, 2012)

Adam Ahern sits on Nov. 27, 2012, in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Left, wearing his Army uniform, Adam Ahern, right, poses in 2008 in the White House with his father, Karl Ahern, left, and President George W. Bush. The photo was taken on the occasion of Adam’s leaving the Army. Prior to that, he had worked in communications for the White House for four and a half years.

A Nun Run is an annual event for the Sisters of Providence in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The event is open to the general public and offers an opportunity for women to learn more about religious life. The event includes talks, workshops, and tours of religious communities.

During the Nun Run, participants will meet members of the communities, share meals and pray with them. Participants will car pool from one community to another.

There is no cost for participants and all transportation, meals and overnight accommodations are provided. To register or for more information, call Daughters of Charity Sister Theresa Sullivan at 812-963-7565 or send her an e-mail at SisterTheresa.Sullivan@doc.org. A video about the upcoming “nun run” can be viewed at http://vimeo.com/55935266.
ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS SEMINARIANS

Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.

Matthew 14

Consider a Priestly Vocation
HEAR GOD’S CALL.COM
Catholics in cyberspace can build bridges for humanity

By David Gibson

If you want to know why so many people enjoy Skype, just ask grandparents who live a long distance from their family’s youngest members. "Skyping," which I define as "video chatting" or "telepresence," refers to live video chatting online that closes up the distances between us and far-away family members. It means talking with them, but also seeing them on our computer monitor, as if we were in the same room.

One of the strengths of cyberspace communication is its potential for putting people in contact with each other. No wonder the Church today, so intently focused on the demands of the new evangelization, takes cyberspace communication so seriously.

At their best, our new communications media can pass on respectively with people—listening to them and responding honestly and with care. This is what new evangelizers want to do.

Today, despite the physical distances between them, people of all kinds turn to the high-speed tools of cyberspace—from Twitter to texting, simple e-mail or social media such as Facebook—to convey new information, ask questions and sometimes seek help in resolving problems.

It is noteworthy that these new communications media can even facilitate conversations involving entire groups. I found it fascinating to witness the workings of a distance-university “classroom” with all its shared postings by students.

Some suggest that the promise of cyberspace is not only to keep people in touch with each other, but to facilitate dialogue among them and perhaps shone up their human bonds.

So, to be sure, citizens of the 21st century indeed have access to even facilitative communications terrain. It is far cry from the 1960s when the high cost of long-distance telephone service severely limited my calls home from college.

The new communications media can even this sense of being absent so much less about enriching fans’ lives than enlightening the famous person in question. A multitude of Internet sites also convey inaccurate information. Writing remains a major instrument of cybercommunications, but when it is boring, misleading or untrustworthy, a site’s visitors likely will continue their surfing elsewhere.

Still, you can see why the Church wants to extend its presence in cyberspace and to communicate more effectively there. First, cyberspace is where so many people, younger especially, spend large amounts of their time.

That is one reason Archbishop Claudio Celli, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, suggested in a September 2012 speech that the Church must be present in digital space or risk abandoning a great many people.

He was the archbishop’s conviction that “the most effective forms of digital discourse are those that engage people individually, that seek to respond to their specific questions and that attempt to dialogue.”

I wrote this article just as Pope Benedict tweeted the first message from his brand new and widely anticipated Twitter account in English, @Pontifex. He also debuted Twitter accounts in eight languages, including Spanish, French and Arabic.

“I am pleased to get in touch with you through Twitter,” he said on Dec. 12 to the more than 1 million people already following his Twitter accounts in various languages by 1:30 p.m. Rome time that day.

“Pontifex” is his Twitter handle in English. An ancient Latin term for “pope,” it literally means “bridge builder.” The other language accounts are an extension of the main handle. For example, the Spanish feed is @Pontifex_es.

A Vatican spokesperson said the “Pontifex” name suggests “reaching out” and fostering unity not just for Catholics but for “all men and women of good will.”

Cyberspace communications indeed have the potential to serve as bridge builders among members of the human community. The new evangelization intends to develop that potential as fully as possible.

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

Church leaders call Catholics to proclaim the Gospel on the Internet

By Rhina Guidos

In May of 2009, Pope Benedict XVI referred to cyberspace as the “digital continent” in a “World Day of Communications reflection.”

On Dec. 12, 2012, on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, he became its most famous citizen with the release of his brand new and widely anticipated Twitter account on Twitter and variations of it in eight languages.

The effort, said Mgr. Paul Tighe, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, is “to encourage all the other Catholics who are present and active online.”

Church officials see the move to the Internet as a natural progression and one that’s been made before. Just as the Church learned how to use the book and film to proclaim the Good News to the ends of the Earth, so today we must teach ourselves to learn these new tools to help people find the faith in their ordinary days and in their times of need,” said Salt Lake City Bishop John C. Wester in addressing the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops spring meeting in June 2012.

One aspect of what we’re being asked to do in the Year of Faith is to take up “the new evangelization with a renewed focus on resources that offer advice and encouragement for Catholics living their vocations in secular environments,” said Bishop Wester, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Communications.

Those secular environments now include Twitter, Facebook, Pintrest, Instagram and Foursquare where you can tell your friends—and strangers—who you are, who you’re with, what you’re doing or reading, or show them what you’re doing via photo, video or in real time using live-stream.

Pope Benedict has asked Catholics to embrace these tools to “promote human understanding and solidarity,” especially when it comes to using them for the benefit of “those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable.” He also urges young people to use new technologies to foster true friendship, a sense of community and “to bring the witness of their faith to the digital world.”

It’s not that hard to see how some have answered this call. Catholic Relief Services answered the call as they narrated, photographed and sent images of the plight of those affected by the destruction of Typhoon Bopha, which struck the Philippines on Dec. 4, 2012. In messages of 140 characters or less on Twitter, CRS told of a woman “whose brother was swept away during [the typhoon] and later picked up 45 miles downstream.”

“Roamin’ Catholic” used Pinterest to illustrate Luke 5:23 with an image of the healing of a paralyzed man as his friends took him on a stretcher to place him in the Lord’s presence.

With a few clicks on the website for Chicago’s National Shrine of St. Jude (shrineofstjude.claretians.org), you can request a Mass intention, send a prayer intention, “light” a vigil candle online or simply donate to the shrine.

Just as the Apostles and their disciples “brought the Good News of Jesus to the Greek and Roman world,” Pope Benedict said modern-day disciples can use these tools to portray a fruitful evangelization.

“I ask you to introduce into the culture of this new environment of communications and information technology the values on which you have built your lives,” he said.

(Rhina Guidos is an editor at Catholic News Service.)

FaithAlive

From the Emeritus Editor/John F. Fink

Year of Faith: Jesus claimed to be God

I often encounter people who will acknowledge that Jesus was a great man and a great moral teacher, but that he was God. They try to put him on a level with other great moral teachers.

But it is not the case that Catholics follow Christ just because he was a great man. He claimed to be God. He claimed to do things he had always existed. He told Nicodemus that God sent him into the world “that the world through him might be saved” (Jn 3:17). If Jesus wasn’t God, as he claimed, he was crazy to say such things. Some, though, say that Jesus never really said such things, that the Gospel writers wrote those things decades after Jesus. Some even hear that Jesus never claimed to be God.

Usually, though, these people acknowledge that Jesus claimed to forgive sins. He did this frequently.

It’s All Good/Patti Lamb

Living and enriching our faith during the ‘Catholic New Year’

Each year, my husband measures our children on their birthdays and marks their heights on the wall. When they step back to marvel at how much they’ve grown right before their eyes, I might have stretched earlier that evening at dinner. In my quest to get Margaret to eat more vegetables, I told her if she wallowed near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to immediately take her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown.

I started, I questioned my mad dash. It turns out that this “new beginning” is the serving of green beans she was given earlier that evening at dinner. In my quest to get Margaret to eat more vegetables, I told her if she wallowed near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to immediately take her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown. She immediately took her place against the wall near the “Margaret: 5 Years” line to see if she had grown.

Comucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Missing out on the amazing grace of new beginnings

Don’t get me started on how ridiculous I believe the phrase “new beginning” is. I think it’s redundant and unnecessary since both mean almost the same thing. Beginnings are always the same, aren’t they? And newness always implies the same thing. Beginnings are always the same, aren’t they? And newness always implies the same thing.

Still, as much as I dislike the phrase, this is indeed a time of new beginning. The New Year brings both a nostalgic look back, and a resolution to do something different, hopefully better, in the coming year.

This brings me to a discussion on a book discussion I heard on NPR. It was about a book by a man who had researched the attitudes of families, which included children with disabilities.

He talked about physically or mentally disabled children. Or those with behavioral issues or even criminal tendencies. He mentioned the difficulty experienced by heterosexual parents of a homosexual child. He studied parents’ feelings about what they gave up or what they gained by having such children.

He asked parents how their lives would have been different if their child had been “normal.” Would they have changed anything in their lives? Would they have aborted the child if they knew of the problem before birth? He asked how the children themselves felt about their situation.

It disturbed me that the author appeared to sympathetic with the Fry’s and the Fletchers, who had aborted in such cases, seeming to condone their actions as an understandable right. But then he went on to deny the validity of that choice, as has my own experience and that of many others I have known about the lives of children who have disabilities.

As he had asked his subjects to do, I reflected on what my life would have been different if our two sons with disabilities had never been born. If we had been told we wouldn’t have needed a baby sitter for an adult child. I could have worked full time. The other kids wouldn’t have been asked to stay home with him now and then or to miss out on things which conflicted with his needs. We wouldn’t have worried about who would care for him when we were gone.

On the other hand, we would have missed the funny things, like his “I made that!” and mixing up of the price tags under grocery shelves. Or his starting the neighbor lady when this boy didn’t knock dropped in uninvited and sat down with her kids to watch TV. We would never hear about neighbor children fighting over a toy. He would have been safe from bullying on the school bus.

If Peter had never been born, we would have worried about what our lives would have been like. If I had been forced to work, I could have forced Andy and Peter hadn’t lived. We all made sacrifices but, in the end, we all think we wouldn’t change it. And when they had taught us many lessons of selflessness, hope, and courage, God took them home.

How sad that the women who chose to abort such children will miss out on the amazing grace of new beginnings.

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

Twentieth Something/Christina Capacci

Say yes to new risks and new graces in 2013

Barbara Benson Keith’s wake-up call came while chasing and catching butterfly larvae in her garden as a kindergarten teacher at the end of a school day. The class was having a conversation about the beauty of nature. “I hope in 10 years I’m right here in this classroom talking about the same thing,” Barbara recalled. “And inside I was like, ‘Wow! I’m going to do that!’ That didn’t appeal to me at all.

In the spring of 2000, after 12 years of teaching, Barbara took a leave. She was ready to end the persistent stream of sickness that teaching had triggered and embark on her next adventure. “I thought, ‘You can be safe or you can take risks and live your life.’ ”

Barbara traveled to Pompeii, Italy, taking in colossal mosaics that left her slack-jawed. She immediately set to creating a mosaic, digging out leftover chunks from a community education stained glass class she had taken nearly a decade ago. She worked on a card table wedged beside the basement furnace, playing The Wiz and singing along with the “Wicked” soundtrack on her CD player. She had decided that the first bus of dozens of public art commissions that have kept pouring in, providing full-time work since 2007. She and her husband, Pete, moved to the country and built a home, starting with a large garden and, eventually, a 14-by-24-foot mosaic. Barbara decided the first bus of dozens of public art commissions that have kept pouring in, providing full-time work since 2007. She and her husband, Pete, moved to the country and built a home, starting with a large garden and, eventually, a 14-by-24-foot mosaic. She and her husband, Pete, moved to the country and built a home, starting with a large garden and, eventually, a 14-by-24-foot mosaic. She and her husband, Pete, moved to the country and built a home, starting with a large garden and, eventually, a 14-by-24-foot mosaic. She and her husband, Pete, moved to the country and built a home, starting with a large garden and, eventually, a 14-by-24-foot mosaic.

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Feast of the Baptism of the Lord/Mgr. Owen E. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 13, 2013

- Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

The feast of the Baptism of the Lord is very important to the Church’s process of bringing us to Christ. It reveals both the identity of the Lord, and begins the Gospel revelation of the Lord’s work of salvation. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—report this event. It is not recorded in John, although John’s Gospel alludes to John the Baptist’s baptism in the Jordan and, in John’s Gospel, John the Baptist gives Jesus the title, “Lamb of God.” The first reading is one of the four Suffering Servant Songs of Isaiah. These very poetic passages are prominent in the liturgies of Lent, and indeed of Good Friday. There is an ominous overtone. Who was this Suffering Servant? Was it the future Messiah? Was it one of the prophets? Was it the author? Was it a collective reference to the people of Israel? No one knows with certainty.

Regardless, the Christian liturgies over the centuries have seen Jesus in the Suffering Servant Songs. Certainly this is the message for this feast. In this passage, God reveals that a faithful and pure servant will come. This loyal servant will endure an outrageous fortune. Many will turn against him. Yet, he will be steadfast.

Supplying the second reading is the Acts of the Apostles. After Easter, almost every liturgy contains a reading from the Acts of the Apostles. But this source rarely furnishes readings at Mass in any other time, so the appearance of Acts on this weekend is unusual.

The reading is important. Peter speaks on behalf of all the Apostles. He speaks to Cornelius, a Roman officer, a foreigner and pagan. Peter proclaims Jesus, declaring that the saving ministry of Jesus began with the Lord’s baptism.

Peter’s own identity is revealed. He is chief among the Apostles. His message is the continuation of the Lord’s message.

St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading. Luke’s report of the baptism, as Mark’s, highlights the Lord’s divine identity and mission of salvation. In Luke, as in Mark, God announces that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is serving the plan of God. Certain images are important, with distant echoes of creation, salvation and redemption. Life comes from the water. Noah survived the deluge. John the Baptist emerges from the water to begin the mission of redemption. Looking ahead, it prefigures Christian baptism.

Another image is that of the sky. God speaks from the sky, an ancient image of divinity in the Old Testament.

Reflection

In Advent, the Church in its liturgies called us to renew our lives in holiness and peace. If we responded, then Christmas was much more than a commemoration of the Lord’s birth.

It was a personal event in which Christ was admitted into faithful hearts and souls, to restore, to heal, and to purify. With unbounded joy, the Church announced that the Lord has come.

Next week, in its great revelation of the Epiphany, the Church tells us more about Jesus. The son of Mary and therefore human, but the Lord also is God. The Magi recognized this fact.

Now, on this feast, the Church instructs us further about Jesus. He is the instrument of God’s love for us.

Doomed by our sins, we find another chance in Jesus. He is our Savior. It was, and is, God’s will that we be one with God. We achieve this union with God in and through Jesus. We must bond, completely, with Christ. He is God. God is love. God forgives us and restores us to eternal life.

The Lord now comes to us through Peter and the Apostles, the Lord’s students, commissioned by Jesus to further God’s plan of salvation.

As Catholics in our country are still uncertain as to the holy days of obligation, let’s lay it out once more. In the U.S., there are six holy days of obligation, i.e., feast days on which Catholics must attend Mass.

They are: the Mary Mother of God, on Jan. 1; Ascension of the Lord, 40 days after Easter; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Aug. 15; All Saints Day, on Nov. 1; Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Dec. 8; and Christmas, on Dec. 25.

Now comes the confounding part. In most areas of the country, the celebration of the Ascension has been transferred to the following Sunday, so there is no obligation in those dioceses to attend Mass on the previous Thursday.

One of the feasts—Jan. 1, Aug. 15 and Nov. 1—from the feast day occurs on a Saturday or a Monday, you get “two for one.” That is, the obligation to attend the feast Day Mass is lifted and attendance at a weekend Mass covers you both for the feast and for Sunday.

But, and this seems the hardest part for people to grasp, during two feasts, Catholics are still obliged to go to Mass whatever day they occur. Those feasts are Christmas—because of its centrality as the birthday of Christ—and the Immaculate Conception, in part, because it is the patronal feast of the United States.

For those two feasts, you can’t get “double credit” by attending one Mass as some people thought in the question you posed. Since I’ve now reviewed the rules in the simplest and shortest way I can and it’s still taken more than 200 words, confusion should now be less.

As for the scheduling of parish Masses on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2012. Since most parishes in the United States only have one priest, I can understand why you would have only one Mass on that Saturday morning, especially since the same priest had to celebrate the Sunday vigil Mass later that day—maybe even two vigil Masses. Since participation in the Church is the criterion, a scheduled a vigil Mass for the feast that Friday evening to make it easier for people to fulfill their obligation for the Marian holy day.

Q

Confusion exists over what feast days are holy days of obligation?

There was considerable confusion among my friends over the recent feast of the Immaculate Conception (on Saturday, Dec. 8). My own parish announced it as a holy day of obligation, but the church in the next town over simply called it a “holy day” of obligation. Both parishes had only one Mass on that Saturday morning, whereas in times past, churches used to have two or three morning Masses on a holy day of obligation and perhaps another one in the evening.

But this time on Saturday evening, churches had only the vigil Mass for Sunday, and some people thought that by attending that they were covering both obligations. I thought that any holy day pertaining to the Blessed Mother was never done away with. Can you clear this up for us? (Somerset, N.J.)

Invitation

“My Journey to God

Dear Friend,

I’ll follow You, Lord,
Be My life’s partner
Invitation

Sung by the Voices of the Valley on 40 Hopewell St., Albany, NY 12208.

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(Questions to Father Doyle may be sent to
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or 40 Hopewell St., Albany, NY 12208.)

Daily Readings

Monday, Jan. 14
Hebrews 1:1-6
Psalm 97:1, 2b, 6, 7c, 9
Mark 1:14-20

Tuesday, Jan. 15
Hebrews 2:5-12
Psalm 8:2a, 5-9
Mark 1:21b-28

Wednesday, Jan. 16
Hebrews 2:14-18
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9
Mark 1:29-39

Thursday, Jan. 17
St. Anthony, abbot
Hebrews 3:7-14
Psalm 95:6-11
Mark 1:40-45

Friday, Jan. 18
Hebrews 4:5-11
Psalm 78:3, 4bc, 6c-8
Mark 2:1-12

Saturday, Jan. 19
Hebrews 4:12-16
Psalm 19:8-10, 16
Mark 2:13-17

Sunday, Jan. 20
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 96:1-3, 7-10
1 Corinthians 12:4-11
John 2:1-11

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Confusion exists over what feast days are holy days of obligation?

There was considerable confusion among my friends over the recent feast of the Immaculate Conception (on Saturday, Dec. 8). My own parish announced it as a holy day of obligation, but the church in the next town over simply called it a “holy day” of obligation. Both parishes had only one Mass on that Saturday morning, whereas in times past, churches used to have two or three morning Masses on a holy day of obligation and perhaps another one in the evening.

But this time on Saturday evening, churches had only the vigil Mass for Sunday, and some people thought that by attending that they were covering both obligations. I thought that any holy day pertaining to the Blessed Mother was never done away with. Can you clear this up for us? (Somerset, N.J.)

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Maryknoll Father J. David Sullivan was a missionary priest in the Philippines

Maryknoll Father J. David Sullivan died on Dec. 22, 2012, at Phelps Memorial Hospital in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. He was 79.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 27 at the Queen of Apostles Chapel at Maryknoll Center in Maryknoll, N.Y. Burial followed in the order’s cemetery.

Father David was born on March 24, 1933, and grew up as a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis.

After graduating from Little Flower School in 1947, he entered the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, known more commonly as Maryknoll in September of that year. He was ordained a priest in 1960.


At that time, Father David was assigned to be a chaplain at Maryknoll’s St. Teresa’s Residence, where members of the order live in retirement. A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 5 p.m. on Jan. 19 at Little Flower Church, 4720 E. 13th St., in Indianapolis. Visitation will begin at 4 p.m. at the church.

Surviving are his sister, Mary Jo Campbell of Indianapolis, and his brother, Hugh Sullivan of Carmel, Ind. †

Meeting the magi

Pope Benedict XVI accepts offerings from children dressed as the magi who came to Bethlehem to adore the Christ child during Mass on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Jan. 1.
Indianapolis deacon serves Christmas Eve Mass with pope

By Sean Gallagher

Transitional Deacon Martin Rodriguez received a special Christmas gift a few weeks before the celebration of Christ’s birth when he was invited to assist Pope Benedict XVI during a Christmas Eve night Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican.

Six deacons assisted at the Mass. Deacon Rodriguez, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, was one of two to remain at the pope’s side during the entire liturgy.

“The only interaction that I had with the pope was at the end of the Mass,” said Deacon Rodriguez, who is completing four years of priestly formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome this spring and being ordained to the priesthood on May 18. “I said, ‘Good to see you Holy Father.’ Then he said in Italian: ‘Where are you from?’ I said, ‘I am from Indianapolis, but I am originally from Mexico.’ Then he looked at me in the eye and said, ‘Oh, Indianapolis… ¡Felic Navidad!’

“I was ecstatic that he spoke Spanish to me. It was a great blessing to be one of the deacons for the successor of Peter. He made it even more special by [wishing me a merry Christmas] in my mother tongue.”

In an e-mail interview with The Criterion, he said that he never could have imagined when he became a seminarian eight years ago that he would eventually assist at a Christmas Eve Mass with the pope.

“It has certainly been an adventure, but that is what happens when we say ‘yes’ to God,” Rodriguez said. “My brother was very proud when I served with the pope, but he also reminded me of all the people that would be watching the Mass on TV.”

Serving alongside the pope made it special for him. So did a trip his brother, Victor, made to spend the holiday with the Holy Father, and knowing my brother was there and for me, he was a representative of my entire family. I knew he was going to be looking at his big brother serve with the pope, so he also reminded me of all the people that would be watching the Mass on TV.”

Among those who watched the Mass were his family in Indianapolis and fellow St. Mary parishioners.

“My family told me that many people were stopping them at church congratulating them for my ‘appearance’ with the Holy Father,” Deacon Rodriguez said. “They also felt overwhelmed and proud for so many good comments. Their happiness also brought me happiness, of course.”

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—Daniel Connors, Editor

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Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit is awe-inspiring for archdiocesan pilgrims

By Mary Ann Garber

CINCINNATI—Gazing at priceless fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls on display at the Cincinnati Museum Center, Auxiliary Bishop Christopher J. Coyne marveled at the miraculous survival of the more than 2,000-year-old leather and papyrus parchments that prove the birth of Christ.

The awe-inspiring exhibit of scrolls written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek include ancient manuscripts hidden in 11 remote caves near Khirbet Qumran on the desolate northern shores of the Dead Sea in Israel. They were found by Bedouin goat herders and archaeologists between 1947 and 1956.

Archdiocesan pilgrims traveled to the Cincinnati Museum Center on Dec. 12 to view fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls displayed in a "once-in-a-lifetime" traveling exhibit on loan from the Israel Antiquities Authority.

These pottery jars contained ancient religious documents for more than 2,000 years before they were discovered in 11 remote caves near Khirbet Qumran on the desolate northern shores of the Dead Sea in Israel. They were found by Bedouin goat herders and archaeologists between 1947 and 1956.

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Archaeologists carefully pieced together at least 100,000 parchment fragments into more than 900 documents that have become international treasures. A museum narrator told the pilgrims that the scrolls represent "our closest written connection to Abraham, Moses and Jesus," and the priceless Hebrew manuscripts "bring this long lost world to life."

This era was "the golden age of ancient Israel," the narrator explained, "when the Old Testament was taking shape in the days of the legendary first temple that King David’s son, Solomon, built to house the Ark of the Covenant almost 3,000 years ago."

It also was a time of conquest by the Babylonians and later the Romans. These invaders overwhelmed the land, and in turn destroyed the first and second temples, the narrator noted, so jars like those containing the scrolls were carried to safety and hidden in caves some 20 miles from the temple in Jerusalem.

Amazingly, the remote caves are located nearly 1,400 feet below sea level, the lowest elevation on Earth, and surrounded by a treacherous desert.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are recognized as "among the greatest archaeological treasures ever discovered," the exhibit literature explains, and are "the oldest known copies of … the Old Testament.”

Copies of the biblical Book of Psalms comprise the greatest number of scrolls found in the caves, the narrator explained.

One fragment on display is part of Psalm 119, the longest of the psalms. About 30 manuscripts from the Book of Genesis also were uncovered in the desolate Judean desert.

St. Susanna parishioners Leroy and Elizabeth Bateman of Plainfield said the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit was "fantastic." They had journeyed to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage with Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein in 2008.

"The condition that the scrolls are in is unbelievable," Elizabeth Bateman said. "It is really amazing. I thought the exhibit was fabulous. … It makes you stop and think about what you are reading in Scripture.”

Leroy Bateman said he enjoyed experiencing "more of the history that comes from that area.”

Their favorite memories of the Holy Land pilgrimage were time spent on a boat on the Sea of Galilee and the opportunity to wade in the Dead Sea.

"We saw where the Dead Sea Scrolls were actually found," he said, "and that made this [exhibit] even more meaningful.”

Lori Trimble, a member of SS. Philomena and Cecilia Parish in Oak Forest, said she was interested to view the scroll fragments up close "to see for myself if they are accurate, and see proof of God’s word.”

Before they visited the museum, Bishop Coyne celebrated Mass with the pilgrims at the historic and ornate St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Ky.

The Gothic cathedral’s facade resembles Notre Dame in Paris. Ornate woodworking and one of the largest stained-glass windows in the world grace the interior of the lofty, arched basilica.

"We are so blessed to be given the faith that we share," Bishop Coyne said in his homily, "and to be able to offer our prayers in union with the greatest of witnesses, the greatest of disciples, and our blessed Virgin Mary, on this Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.”

"For more information about the Dead Sea Scrolls traveling exhibit, log on to the Cincinnati Museum Center’s website at [www.cincinnati.org]."

Archdiocesan pilgrims admire a side altar at St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Ky., before Auxiliary Bishop Christopher J. Coyne celebrated Mass in the church on Dec. 12.

St. Luke the Evangelist parishioners Jean Trobirk, from left, Shirley Creamer and Jim Creamer of Indianapolis pray during a Dec. 12 Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Ky.

An ornate mosaic Statio of the Cross depicts Jesus being taken down from the Cross inside the historic St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Ky.