Pope’s resignation shows courage and humility

This year, Catholics begin the season of Lent with some surprise and, probably, some anxiety.

On Feb. 11—just two days before Ash Wednesday—our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, announced that he was stepping down from his ministry as the successor of the Apostle Peter. His resignation takes effect on Feb. 28 and, soon afterward, the voting members of the College of Cardinals will assemble to elect a new pope.

The announcement shocked many people since a pope had not resigned in nearly 600 years. While the Holy Father was not hiding the physical effects of aging, he sounded alert, and his homilies, letters and other writings had lost none of his customary clarity and spiritual depth.

Besides, the image of Blessed John Paul II’s valiant and faith-filled embrace of his suffering and death has left an indelible impression on millions of Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

I have known Pope Benedict XVI for 16 years and worked closely with him for two years prior to coming to the archdiocese. Like most people, I was surprised when the decision was announced, but not shocked.

On several occasions before his election and at least once during his papacy, the Holy Father had proposed that, under certain conditions, a pope could and, perhaps, should step down from his ministry. Pope John Paul II certainly foresaw that possibility.

The present Code of Canon Law, which was approved during the papacy of Pope John Paul II, provides that a pope could resign, provided that the decision was free and properly communicated to the College of Cardinals. (cf. canon 332, §2).

What is more, as early as 1980, Pope John Paul had prepared a letter of resignation to the Dean of the College of Cardinals, which said that he would resign from the papacy in one of two cases—if he had an incurable disease that would prevent him from exercising the apostolic ministry; or in case of a “severe and prolonged impairment” that would have kept him from carrying out the mission that God had entrusted to him.

Both popes knew firsthand the terrific burden of the papacy. Both felt its increasing weight after passing the milestone of their 80th year.

Left, Pope Benedict XVI waves to the crowd as he departs Yankee Stadium after celebrating Mass in New York on April 20, 2008.
Pope Benedict XVI greets then-Redemptorist Father Joseph ill health and find strength and consolation in his example. The apostolic constitution “Universi Dominici Gregis” confirms that as long as the Holy See is vacant, the universal Church is governed by the College of Cardinals, which cannot, however, make decisions normally reserved to the pope. Such matters must be postponed until the new pope is elected. Until then, there is a pope, the Roman Curia—the Vatican’s network of administrative offices—losts most of its cardinal supervisors and cannot handle any new business.

The College of Cardinals is to deal solely with “ordinary business and matters which cannot be postponed.” At present, there are 209 cardinals, and all of them are asked to meet in Rome to help administer the transition period.

The College of Cardinals does this through two structures—a general congregation, in which all the cardinals are to meet daily; and a particular four-member congregation, consisting of the chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, and a rotating team of three cardinal assistants. Only those cardinals under age 80 will be eligible to vote in the coming conclave. Cardinals who are age 80 or over by the time the “sede vacante” begins on Feb. 28 are excluded from the closed-door proceedings. There will be 117 cardinal-electors on that date.

As chamberlain, Cardinal Bertone is to administer the goods and temporal rights of the Holy See until the election of a new pope. Meanwhile, the dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, is charged with making preparations for a conclave to elect a new pope, and the cardinals must set the time for the conclave to start.

The word conclave comes from Latin, meaning literally “with key,” and reflects the previous tradition of locking the cardinals in an area where they would spend day and night until the new pope’s election. On the day set for entry into the conclave, the cardinal-electors assemble in St. Peter’s Basilica to attend morning Mass. In the afternoon, they walk in procession to the Sistine Chapel, located just to the north of St. Peter’s. The voting may begin that afternoon with one ballot. On following days, normally two ballots are held in the morning and two in the afternoon.

A pope is elected when he obtains a two-thirds majority, reflecting a change Pope Benedict XVI introduced in 2007 that effectively nullified a more flexible procedure introduced by Blessed John Paul. According to the new rule, the two-thirds-majority rule cannot be set aside even when cardinal-electors are at an express peer of his love for the Church. The use of the word “latest” is deliberate since I think that his acceptance of his election in April 2005 displayed his surrender to God’s will, and his readiness to suffer for the sake of the Body of Christ. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger had no desire to become pope. Already 78 years old, he had prepared to retire to his native Bavaria and employ his remaining years in the preparation of a legacy of more than 50 years of theological research. Indeed, he accepted his election and, in his homily at the inauguration of his pontificate, Benedict XVI affirmed, “My real program of government is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to gather together, with the whole Church, to the word and the will of the Lord, to be guided by him, so that he himself will lead the Church at this hour of history.”

Eight years later, I am convinced that the Holy Father reached his decision to resign only after “listening to the word and the will of the Lord,” which guided him that “at this hour of our history,” he should step down. He considered the special demands the successor of Peter must face today and saw that “both strength of mind and body … in the last few months has determi ned in to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me.”

There is profound sadness and heartfelt gratitude as we take leave of Pope Benedict XVI. I feel a personal loss, since he called me to episcopal service and entrusted to me the pastoral care of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. I will always be grateful to him for sending me here. I thank him for the example of unsellable love for the Church, which is nothing less than the love of the Good Shepherd, who “lays down his life for the sheep” (Jn 10:11).

My beloved predecessor, Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, showed that same love when he had no longer permit him to shepherd the archdiocese. May this man, who has entered retirement with our prayers and wishes, hear that these weeks are “an acceptable time … the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:2). The courage and humility of Pope Benedict XVI remind us that a crucial part of our vocation is “to listen to the word and the will of the Lord,” and change our lives as his guides us. May this “acceptable time” of Lent help us to live more humbly and courageously our lives as daughters and sons of God.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Local Church reflects on legacy of Pope Benedict XVI

By Sean Gallagher, Natalie Hoeter and John Shaughnessy

Like most people around the world, Catholics in the archdiocese initially reacted with surprise and shock to the news that Pope Benedict XVI had decided to resign on Feb. 28.

Then the reactions turned into thoughtful reflections about the pope who has led the Church for nearly eight years, the 85-year-old pontiff whose decision was based on his advancing age and his declining strength.

A priest who was named a bishop by Pope Benedict talked about his deep appreciation for the pope.

A young adult who remembered being inspired by the pope at a World Youth Day rally in Madrid recalled how Pope Benedict fueled his faith.

An 82-year-old woman who understands the challenges of aging admired the pope for doing what he considers best for the Church.

A religious sister remembered Pope Benedict for declaring Mother Theodore Guérin a saint—the first saint from Indiana.

Their memories and their thoughts are just part of the reactions from Catholics across central and southern Indiana. Here is a sampling of those reactions.

At heart, a humble theologian
Bishop Christopher J. Coyne will always have a deep appreciation for Pope Benedict XVI for appointing him as a bishop in 2011.

The auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis also has a deep respect for Pope Benedict, whom he visited in Rome with other bishops from the Midwest in 2012.

“He’s a very gentle, soft-spoken man who really at heart is a humble theologian and academician,” Bishop Coyne noted.

“He was also somebody who was willing to say yes to—what is to me—the most difficult and challenging job in the world.”

That respect and appreciation showed as Bishop Coyne considered Pope Benedict’s decision to resign.

“It took a lot of integrity on the part of the Holy Father that he was able to be courageous enough to really set aside hundreds of years of practice,” Bishop Coyne said. “How many of us can say that at 85 we would have the energy necessary to govern such a huge reality as the Church, and also keep the schedule that is demanded of the pope?”

“The fact now that he has realized that he just doesn’t have the energy or the strength to do it well is a sad moment for us, but it also shows that he is a man of integrity who places the needs of the Church above any desire whatsoever for position for the sake of position.”

‘The youth of the pope!’
Although Pope Benedict is more than 60 years older than Nick Lesch, he felt a heartfelt connection to the pontiff when he attended World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011.

“In Madrid, we went around chanting, ‘The youth of the pope!’” said Lesch, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “It was something so joyful that we shouted it out in the streets of Madrid. Wherever you went, you heard that echoing through the streets. It was so beautiful.”

Pope Benedict’s influence has continued to shape Lesch’s life and faith.

“He’s the inspiration,” said Lesch, a 21-year-old junior at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) who is majoring in biology and hoping to attend medical school. “It’s inspired me to work harder in my studies—and not just academically, but also spiritually. I’ve grown and read more about the faith.”

‘Given all he could give’
At 82, Maxine Ferguson understands the challenges of aging that Pope Benedict faces. Even more, she admires his decision to do what he considers best for the Church.

“She knew he felt he has given all he could give, and he wants to put the Church in hands that could keep it going up,” said Ferguson, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. “He did what he thought was best, in his heart, for his physical well-being and the Church.”

‘I sensed a gentleness about him’
Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson remembers her brief encounter with Pope Benedict when she gave him a gift.

“Sister Denise Wilkinson offers gifts to Pope Benedict XVI during the canonization liturgy for four saints, including Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin, on Oct. 15, 2006, at St. Peter’s Square in Rome.”

Pope Benedict XVI greets Auxiliary Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, then apostolic administrator, during a Feb. 9, 2013, meeting with U.S. bishops on their ad limina visits to the Vatican.

‘Pope Benedict XVI has been a sure, valiant and serene servant of the truth of the faith of the Church, and I pray with admiration and gratitude for him in what he calls ‘the last stage of his life.’”

—Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein
Pope Benedict XVI is shown in side-by-side images from 2005 and 2013. At left is the pope in a photograph taken on May 4, 2005, about two weeks after his election. At right is an image taken on Feb. 6 at the Vatican. The 85-year-old German pontiff announced on Feb. 11 that he was stepping down, saying he does not have the strength to continue his role over the universal Church.

Courage marks Holy Father’s decision to resign from papacy

A year and a half ago, when Archbishop Daniel M. DiNardo resigned as archbishop of Indianapolis for reasons of health, he made it quite clear that he was not quitting. He has given up his sacramental, pastoral and administrative responsibilities, but he continues, as archbishop emeritus, to pray and to teach.

Now, we learn that Pope Benedict XVI has decided to become the first Roman pontiff in 600 years to resign his position as bishop of Rome.

After much prayer and discernment, the Holy Father concluded that his age and declining health prevent him from carrying out the Petrine ministry as effectively as is needed—today.

In making this announcement, the pope also said, in effect, “I am not quitting.” He plans to retire to a monastery—as Archbishop Buechlein has done—and to dedicate himself to prayer. When he lives out his life in a Vaticano monastery, he will also continue writing and teaching as he has done so successfully for more than 60 years.

Much will be written in the days, weeks and years ahead about the “legacy” of Pope Benedict both before and after he was elected pope nearly eight years ago in April 2005. Surely his scholarship and his ability to teach with clarity and conviction are at the top of this list. His ability to defend the faith unashamedly while maintaining a loving and compassionate regard for all must also be noted. Then, of course, there is his reverence for the sacred liturgy and his unwillingness to accept change simply for change’s sake. His commitment to protecting the environment, which earned him the nickname “the green pope,” will surely be remembered. And much, much more.

But for now, the Church and the world are rightly amazed by Pope Benedict’s decision to resign. What does this unusual step signify—and what is the church to do in the challenging years ahead?

I think there are some things that we must consider:

1. This is an extraordinary action by a man who has always said “yes” when called by God to serve his Church.

2. First of all, this decision is courageous. For a man who loves and respects Church tradition the way Pope Benedict does, to break with 600 years of papal custom cannot have been easy. Much prayer and discernment—and a willingness to face the possibility of harsh criticism—obviously went into this decision.

3. The pope clearly believes that this action is in accordance with God’s will or he wouldn’t do it. We applaud his courage, and pray that he can faithfully carry it out for his own sake and for the good of the Church.

4. Secondly, this action is consistent with Pope Benedict’s frequently stated conviction that “in our generation, the Christian faith finds itself in a much deeper crisis than at any other time in the past.” The Holy Father believes that the demands of the new evangelization and the witness to our Christian faith require a degree of leadership and energy that he can no longer provide effectively.

5. Benedict XVI believes that any increased risk of “breast cancer, stroke, myocardial infarction” are “almost negligible in women who do not smoke.” However, since she failed to cite any studies or research to back up any of her opinions, one has to question her motives and tactics, as she did Father Pacholczyk’s.

6. If, for instance, someone were to become interested in research by the World Health Organization (WHO) has classified combined estrogen-progesteron oral contraceptives as carcinogenic in the development of breast, cervical and hepatocellular cancer. They do acknowledge some controversy exists regarding the relationship to breast cancer, although I find it to be more than coincidental that the pill has been on the market since 1960s. The effect is significantly increased since the 1960s when the oral contraceptive was first introduced to the market.

I disagree. The health risks exist for all women who smoke more than 15 cigarettes per day. The letter writer also stated there was a reduced risk of developing ovarian, endometrial and colorectal cancer, but did not mention the increased risk of cervical cancer and hepatocellular cancer.

Additionally, the risk of invasive cervical cancer is greatest in women taking the pill for more than five years.

My review involved an estrogen/ progesterone combination, which is typical of most products. I counted 88 potential adverse effects that a woman could experience using this oral contraceptive. Some occurring more or less frequently than others, but the more serious noted were thrombosis, thromboprophylaxis, depression, intracranial bleeding, myocardial infarction (heart attack), pulmonary embolism, renal thrombosis, hepatic failure, secondary malignancy, stroke, thromboembolism, thrombosis and visual impairment.

Additionally, the World Health Organization (WHO) has classified combined estrogen-progesteron oral contraceptives as carcinogenic in the development of breast, cervical and hepatocellular cancer. They do acknowledge some controversy exists regarding the relationship to breast cancer, although I find it to be more than coincidental that the pill has been on the market since 1960s. The effect is significantly increased since the 1960s when the oral contraceptive was first introduced to the market.

Even if some of the risks might be minimal, why would a woman want to subject her children to a chemical that changes a natural body function if she is not fit? It seems an exploitation of the woman’s body, especially within a marital relationship.

My dictionary defines the word drug as “any chemical of biological substance, other than food, intended for use in the treatment, prevention, or diagnosis of disease.” I contend that the oral contraceptive has very little health benefit considering that pregnancy is not defined as a disease, and its main indication for use is contraception. The other indication listed is “acne vulgaris.” All of the other uses I found were considered “off-label,” which means not officially approved by the FDA.

A final point which should be significant is what if a woman takes the pill and a child is conceived? What will she do?

When this last effect occurs, which is sometimes possible due to the failure of the first two actions, it becomes an abortion.

(Gary Diehl is a registered pharmacist and director of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County.)

Letter to the Editor

We can rely on Mother Church, faith and reason to guide us through life

This letter is in defense of Father Tad Pacholczyk’s bioethics column in the Jan. 25 edition of The Criterion. The Church teaching on oral contraception.

After reading the letter to the editor in the Feb. 1 issue in the same section, I lamented the fact that Father Pacholczyk failed to “present the whole truth of the matter.” I felt obliged to conduct about 10 minutes of research to discover the “whole truth.”

The letter writer accused Father Pacholczyk of “half-truths,” failing to mention “that there are also well-documented health benefits to the pill,” and she implies that any increased risk of “breast cancer, stroke and myocardial infarction” are “almost negligible in women who do not smoke.” However, since I failed to cite any studies or research to back up any of her opinions, one has to question her motives and tactics, as she did Father Pacholczyk’s.

Clayton

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Greg A. Ocolski, Associate Publisher

Mike Krokos, Editor

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City College

Be Our Guest/Gary Diehl

Face our serious health risk

I would like to respond to the letter written in the Feb. 1 issue of The Criterion where the writer expressed her frustration with Father Tad Pacholczyk’s so-called half-truths written in his column, “The Pill as a ‘Care’?” Unfortunately, I didn’t read Father’s column, but in expressing her frustration I believe the letter writer has hit the reader with some half-truths of her own.

She stated that the risks for women taking oral contraceptives are almost exclusive for women who smoke. I disagree. The health risks exist for all women who smoke more than 15 cigarettes per day.

The letter writer also stated there was a reduced risk of developing ovarian, endometrial and colorectal cancer. But did not mention the increased risk of cervical cancer and hepatocellular cancer.

Actually, the risk of invasive cervical cancer is greatest in women taking the pill for more than five years.

My review involved an estrogen/ progesterone combination, which is typical of most products. I counted 88 potential adverse effects that a woman could experience using this oral contraceptive. Some occurring more or less frequently than others, but the more serious noted were thrombosis, thromboprophylaxis, depression, intracranial bleeding, myocardial infarction (heart attack), pulmonary embolism, renal thrombosis, hepatic failure, secondary malignancy, stroke, thromboembolism, thrombosis and visual impairment.

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House expected to pass comprehensive school choice expansion

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

When Karinya Chrisler learned that her son could receive a state-funded school voucher to attend the Catholic school of her choosing, she was “surprised and elated” because she “never qualifies for anything.”

Chrisler, who supports a new school choice expansion bill, testified before the Indiana House Select Committee on Education during a Feb. 5 hearing. She said that she made the decision to search for another school for her son, Nicholas, because the school he was attending was not meeting his needs.

Chrisler told the House panel that her son now attends St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis thanks to a school scholarship voucher, and is thriving.

Chrisler says her son is “bright, happy and safe.” Though she is not Catholic, she told the House panel, “I wanted the morals and values that St. Joan of Arc teaches for my son, too.”

A bill expanding school choice options for more Indiana families is one step closer to becoming a reality as the House of Representatives moves toward passing it. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the bill.

Rep. Bob Behning, R-Indianapolis, author of House Bill 1003, the school choice bill, outlined the details of his proposal before the House panel.

He explained that the bill provides access to school choice options for current and prospective nonpublic school families who meet the income guidelines. Current law requires children to attend a public school for two semesters prior to receiving a school scholarship voucher.

However, House Bill 1003 removes this hurdle for current nonpublic school families and also for students entering kindergarten who could receive a voucher to attend a nonpublic school to provide their family meets income guidelines.

“In House Bill 1003, we are creating a preschool education tax credit program. We are now starting a Granting Scholarship Organization (500) for the exclusive use of preschool to help with early childhood development,” Behning said.

Those who wish to donate to a 500 will get tax credits for their donations.

Behning’s plan also raises the scholarship cap for elementary school tuition. The scholarship cap for elementary school tuition is currently $4,500 per year per child. “Under House Bill 1003, we are increasing the scholarship cap to $5,500 for the first year, and $6,500 the second year,” Behning said.

House Bill 1003 contains the provisions outlined by Gov. [Mike] Pence, which provide access to a school choice voucher for children of military families, special needs children, adopted children and children in foster care,” he added.

“We are adding an income cap at $500 percent of free and reduced lunch for these categories,” Under the plan, the family income threshold is much higher for children in one of the four new categories. The family income could be nearly $130,000, but parents would still be able to use a school scholarship to send their child to the school of the parent’s choice. “To truly have a special education voucher, we also need all the special education dollars to follow the student to the nonpublic school,” Behning said.

The House panel heard several hours of testimony on the bill from school choice advocates and opponents.

Advocates including Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director, who testified in support of the bill on behalf of the Church, said, “The Church supports House Bill 1003 primarily because it provides the opportunity for parents to decide what’s in the best interest of their children and provides a more level playing field between families who have resources to make a choice and families that do not.”

“We have been educating children in Indiana for a long, long time from all socioeconomic groups and, in doing so, we believe we are contributing to the common good,” Mary McCoy, principal of St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, also testified in support of the bill. The thankful lawmakers for passing the original scholarship legislation because it is helping many parents choose a quality education for their children.

McCoy called the new school choice expansion legislation a “win-win situation” for students and families, especially because it would include access to a school voucher for siblings.

Opponents of House Bill 1003, including public school advocates, raised concerns about the drain of money from public schools going to nonpublic schools.

John O’Neal, president of the Indiana State Teachers’ Association testified against the legislation, saying the money will divert the funding stream. O’Neal also raised questions whether Indiana could afford an expansion.

Sally Sloan, who represented the Indiana Federation of Teachers at the hearing, also testified in opposition to the bill. She expressed concerns about what kind of impact the legislation would have on public schools that are currently underfunded.

House Bill 1003 passed the House Select Committee on Education, and is headed to the House Ways and Means Committee for lawmakers to review the fiscal impact the plan could have on the state.

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion. For more information contact the Indiana Catholic Conference, log on to www.indianacc.org.)

Milroy steps down as leader of archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development

By Sean Gallagher

David Milroy, who served as the archdiocesan executive director of stewardship and development for nearly four years, stepped down from that position on Jan. 31. He left to return to work at the Columbus-based Flattrock Capital Management, a firm that he established in 2006 prior to coming to work for the archdiocese.

“I am grateful for all the good work David has done leading our stewardship and development efforts as well as his management of the Catholic Community Foundation,” said Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin in a prepared statement. “David has sharpened the focus of the annual United Catholic Appeal, and made great strides at increasing the number of members of the Miter Society.

“While we appreciated his organizational skills and strategic thinking, we were truly touched by his generous witness to his faith in Jesus Christ and his love for the Church.”

As he looked back on his four years working for the archdiocese, Milroy said he saw many blessings come his way.

“It has been a blessing,” he said. “We work so very hard at the Archdiocesan [Edward T.] O’Meara Catholic Center to support our parishes and help provide some leadership for our shared ministries.

“But clearly the Church is lived locally. In my role, I was able to spend a lot of time with our pastors and their core groups of volunteers. You can’t help but be inspired by the care and commitment of our hard-working priests and parishioners.”

At the same time, Milroy is thankful for how he and his former co-workers in the archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development helped foster stewardship as a way of life in the lives of Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

“We as Church do not always do the best job of helping people understand how their faith life needs to intersect with every other area of their lives—family, work, service in the community, what we do with our resources,” Milroy said. “When you can help someone begin to make those connections, it is very rewarding.”

Before working for the archdiocese, Milroy volunteered to help lead several stewardship initiatives for the Church in central and southern Indiana, including serving as a co-chair of the United Catholic Appeal; Christ Our Hope annual appeal, on the steering committee of the Legacy For Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future campaign, as president of the Catholic Community Foundation and on the archdiocesan financial council.

He also served as interim archdiocesan chief financial officer after the resignation of Jeffrey Stumpf last spring. Milroy holds high hopes for the future of the archdiocese, and foresees volunteering in archdiocesan stewardship efforts in the future.

“My hope for the archdiocese is that we will continue to find ways to bring the Good News to people that desperately need to hear it,” Milroy said. “We see so much brokenness around us, and I firmly believe that the answer to those challenges is Jesus Christ.

“T’m excited about the appointment of Archbishop Tobin. In the short time we have worked together, I’ve found him to be a warm, joyful, prayerful man. He has many great skills, and I believe that the next chapter of the Church’s story in central and southern Indiana is in good hands.”

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Local Catholic Community serving the Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Event Calendar

February 15
Northside Knights of Columbus, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. Catholic Business Exchange, Mass, breakfast and program. “Putting ALL Children First,” Fred Klipsch, Chairman, Klipsch Group Inc. presenter. 6:30-8:30 a.m., 515 members, 523 non-members. Information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

February 16
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Helpers of God’s Precious Infants, pro-life Mass, 11 a.m. Following the Mass,“In Memory of Our Fallen,” a prayer service will be led by Father Postel. Information: 317-357-8352 or maureen@st-csm.org.

February 17
St. Michael the Archangel Parish Life Center, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. Catholic Adult Fellowship, studying Vatican II document on Lay Apostolate, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Information or directions: 317-410-4780 or CatholicAdultFellowship.com.

February 18
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Chapel, St. John the Evangelist Church, 61055 Haverstick Road, Crown Point. Living Word Life Speaker Kris Busiss, Founder of O’Connor House, 7:30 p.m. Information. Katie Stadler at 317-844-0262 or kstadler@knights.org.

February 18-23 March 5

February 19
St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. St. Thomas More Women’s Club/Hot Dog Supper. 6 p.m. Information: 317-831-4142 or pegez@optonline.net.

February 20
Cathay Cemetery, Mausoleum Chapel, 126 N. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. Rosary procession, following Mass, 12:10 p.m. Mass, pray and process through the streets of downtown Indianapolis. Information: faithfulsaints2016@gmail.com.

February 21
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Lenten Speaker series, “Young Musicians Concert,” 7 p.m. Information: 812-379-9353 ext. 237, or bmsncutt@yahoo.com.

March 1
St. Mary Church, 7500 Navilon Road, Mooresville. Knights of Columbus, “I´Thirst,” Tatiana, presenter. 7 p.m. Information: 812-523-5419 or emarvinwilson@comcast.net.

March 2
St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus. Concert series, “Young Musicians Concert,” 7 p.m. Information: 812-379-9353 ext. 237, or bmsncutt@yahoo.com.

Saint Meinrad will host Black History Lecture on February 26

Benedictine Father Cyril Davis, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey and professor emeritus of church history, will deliver the annual Black History Lecture at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Saint Meinrad.

His talk, “No One Can Walk Alone: A Memoir for African-American Month,” will be at 7 p.m. at Central Standard on the campus of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. The keynote speaker is Nancy Hines from Avon.

She is co-founder of Ova coming Together, an ovarian cancer survivor advocacy organization. Hines is a national speaker on breast and ovarian cancers as well as health and wellness issues. She has overcome many obstacles in her own life, including cancer. A tour of the grounds will be available after the program. Please RSVP by Feb. 20.

Contact Kerry Scott at 812-535-2800 or by e-mail at kscott@spmw.org, or call 812-923-5419 or mbhess43@gmail.com.

Parish Lenten speaker series to begin on Feb. 20

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis, will host its 13th annual inter-parish Lenten speaker series, titled “Spaghetti and Spirituality,” on Feb. 20 through March 13.

Prior to dinner at each week’s presentation, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for adoration following the conclusion of the evening’s program. Additionally, a Lenten reflection will be offered by March 8. To make reservations or for more information, call Indiana Landmarks at 812-284-4534.

Tatiana, an internationally renowned Croatian singer, will perform a musical drama entitled “I Thirst...the Crucifixion Story” at two area churches.

The March 1 event will be held at St. Mary Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. In Floyds Knob at 7 p.m. For more information, call 812-923-5419 or e-mail stmarysnavilleton.com.

The March 3 event will be held at St. Patrick Church, 1000 N. Beckley Station Road in Louisville, Ky. at 5 p.m. For more information, call 502-719-0362.

Saints of the Day: Reconsidering Sacrosanctum

Today: Re-considering Notre Dame in northern Indiana.

Sister Mary Carol Altman, O.S.B., who serves as executive director of the Sisters of Providence, Women in Theology, will be at noon on March 6 in Owens Hall of the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse in St. Vincent, Indianapolis.

The presentation will begin at approximately 6:30 p.m. at Msgr. Priori Hall. Each presentation, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for adoration following the conclusion of the evening’s program. Additionally, a Lenten reflection will be offered by March 8. To make reservations or for more information, call Indiana Landmarks at 812-284-4534.

The keynote speaker is Nancy Hines from Avon. She is co-founder of Ova coming Together, an ovarian cancer survivor advocacy organization. Hines is a national speaker on breast and ovarian cancers as well as health and wellness issues. She has overcome many obstacles in her own life, including cancer. A tour of the grounds will be available after the program. Please RSVP by Feb. 20.

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Pope Benedict shows signs of aging, but Vatican reports no illness

Pope Benedict XVI shows signs of aging, but Vatican reports no illness

VAULT CITY (CNS)—From the moment he was elected pope at the age of 78 in 2005, Pope Benedict XVI has kept a schedule that appeared light compared to that of Blessed John Paul II, but busy for a man who already had a papacy and who wanted to retire to study, write and pray when he turned 75.

On Feb. 11 that he would resign at the end of the month. Pope Benedict, 85, said, “I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry.”

Speaking to reporters after the pope’s announcement, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters the pope was not ill, but made the decision because of his declining strength due to his age.

The pope recognized his limits with “a lucidity and courage and sincerity that are absolutely admirable,” Father Lombardi said.

Meeting reporters again on Feb. 12, Father Lombardi confirmed that Pope Benedict had gone to a private health clinic in Rome about three months ago to have the batteries changed on his pacemaker. It was a simple, routine procedure and had no influence on the pope’s decision to resign.

Father Lombardi said the pope had had the pacemaker put in several years before his election. A Vatican reporter, who had followed the career of the then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, said the pacemaker was put in the 1990s at Rome’s Gemelli Hospital.

Pope Benedict often has seemed tired, with large, dark circles under his eyes during especially busy periods of public liturgies and audiences.

In October 2011, Pope Benedict began riding a mobile platform in liturgical processions. At the time, Father Lombardi said it was “solely to lighten the burden” of the pope.

Just a few months later, the pope began using a cane to walk, experiencing the kind of joint pain normal for a man his age. He used the cane to hold processions, although he acknowledged the pope had been considering resigning then, a time when new reports of clerical sexual abuse were being published in several European countries.

“When the danger is great, one must not run away. For that reason, now is certainly not the time to resign,” he told Seewald, who published the remarks in the book, “Light of the World: The Pope, the Church and the Signs of the Times.

The pope did tell him, though, “one can resign at a peaceful moment or when one simply cannot go on. But one must not run away from danger and say that someone else should do it.”

In another section of the book, the pope told Seewald, “If a pope clearly realizes that he is no longer physically, psychologically and spiritually capable of handling the duties of his office, then he has a right, and under some circumstances, also an obligation to resign.”

While no pope has resigned since Pope Gregory XII in 1415, even as a cardinal Pope Benedict did not rule out the possibility.

Even before Blessed John Paul’s health became critical, reporters asked the then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger whether he thought Pope John Paul could resign. “If he were to see that he absolutely could not [continue], then he certainly would resign,” he said.
from the Sisters of Providence at the time of Mother Theodore’s canonization in 2006.

“I was struck then by how kind a countenance he has,” recalled Sister Denise, general superior of the Sisters of Providence at Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods. “I sensed a gentleness about him.”

From watching older religious sisters, she understands the pope’s decision to step down because of declining energy—and how difficult a decision that is to make.

“I do know from our sisters that making the decision to accept the reality of having less physical, mental and emotional stamina is a difficult and painful one,” she said. “It involves a letting go of things we have been and what we’ve been able to do.”

“I also know that letting go almost always results in a spiritual deepening and renewal, and an ability to minister to others by being good listeners and caring presences to those around them. I am confident the pope will experience this renewal as well.”

“It’s time now for him to rest”

Father John Hollowell remembers exactly what he did on the day Pope Benedict XVI was elected in 2005.

“I did not know much of Pope Benedict before he was elected pope, but the day he was elected, I ran down to the bookstore at Saint Meinrad [Seminary and School of Theology] and picked up a couple of his books that he’d written as Cardinal Ratzinger,” recalled Father Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation of the Blessed Mary Parish in Brazil. “After a few days of reading, I realized why the Holy Spirit had chosen him to be our next pope.

“First of all, his writing is brilliant, and he is well-versed in nearly every subject under the sun. He has a great love for scripture, for dogma, for evangelization, for the liturgy, for social teaching. Secondly, despite the way that he is often portrayed in the media, his compassion and his love shine forth in everything that he writes, everything that he says, and everything that he does.

“The pope’s decision to resign left Father Hollowell with mixed emotions.

“I was surprised, first of all. Secondly, I felt a lot of relief for Pope Benedict. He had desired to retire almost 20 years ago, but John Paul II requested that he continue working for the Church, and so he did faithfully. Thirdly, and selfishly, there was a small bit of sadness simply because I enjoyed Pope Benedict’s writings and everything about his leadership. But he has already sacrificed so much for us, and I know it’s time now for him to rest.”

“He stayed true to who he was”

For Jake Firestine, one of the true signs of Pope Benedict’s character showed in how he didn’t try to imitate the charismatic nature of his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II.

“I really, really respected that about him,” said Firestine, a Fellowship of Catholic University Students missionary at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. “He was more of a listener. Knowing who he was and knowing that he wasn’t going to be John Paul II, he was true to who he was. That was the biggest mark that he left on me. He stayed true to who he was.

A lesson in hope and humility

Franciscan Sister Maureen Irvin believes that Pope Benedict’s decision to resign offers a lesson in humility and hope for people of faith.

“[He is] recognizing that no one is really indispensable and that we can assess our own gifts and talents, our strengths and weaknesses, and know whether it might be time to let go of a particular position or ministry, and pass on to someone else,” said Sister Maureen, congregational minister of the Oldenburg Franciscans.

“I think that the Holy Father is showing us, too, that who we are is not necessarily our occupation or our ministry. Who we are is in our person and our relationship with God. We can give up a position—even one of importance or power—and still have infinite value in the eyes of God, and should it have it in the eyes of one another as well.”

A decision reached in peace

While Pope Benedict’s decision startled many people, “it should not come as a complete surprise,” according to Benedictine Archabbott Justin DuVall, leader of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in Saint Meinrad.

“He has examined his conscience before God and reached the decision with peace,” Archabbott Justin said. “Pope Benedict is a man of faith. I think his decision is an act of faith and the realization that the Church is the work of the Holy Spirit. May God now bless Pope Benedict with peace of mind and heart.”

Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, who now resides at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, agreed.

“Pope Benedict XVI has been a sure, valiant and serene servant of the truth of the faith of the Church, and I pray with admiration and gratitude for him in what he calls ‘the last stage of his life,’ ” he said.

Stoking a fire in the soul

Pope Benedict played a key role in the vocation of transitional Deacon Douglas Marcotte—an archdiocesan seminarian receiving his priestly formation in Rome at the Pontifical North American College.


“The fire for my own vocation to the priesthood was stoked in my soul as I sat with hundreds of thousands of young people in Cologne [Germany in 2005] for World Youth Day, and listened to our new Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.”

Deacon Marcotte, who is scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood on May 18 in Indianapolis, has met the pope.

“It was truly one of the great pleasures of my life, meeting the Holy Father during the ad limina visit last February and speaking briefly with him about my seminary education.”

He also served at a liturgy for the Holy Father during a Mass of Thanksgiving for the new cardinals that the pope created in February 2012.

“Many of [those cardinals] will now be part of the conclave that will elect his successor.”

“It’s been a phenomenal pontificate”

Father Dennis Develius, pastor of St. Mark Parish in Perry County and St. Paul Parish in Tell City, learned about Pope Benedict XVI’s announcement of his resignation like many others did in this digital age—he read about it on the Internet.

“I was bowled over,” Father Develius said. “I think it’s been a phenomenal pontificate. There were many people who were skeptical of him when he was elected. He definitely rose to the office very well and accomplished good things.”

The importance of prayer

“I know an important decision like this comes only after prayerful discernment,” said Benedictine Sister Juliann Babcock, prioress of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

“I was surprised, but I felt confident that the pope made the decision that he thought was right,” said Elizabeth Fish, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis.

“I have faith in God’s will for a new pope. I don’t think it’s a cause for alarm. I’m interested to see what happens next.”

“It shows the depth of his faith”

During a Feb. 11 Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis, permanent Deacon Stephen Hodges reflected in a homily on Pope Benedict’s decision to resign.

“I think that shows great humility on the part of our pope. And it shows the depth of his faith as well,” said Deacon Hodges, who ministers at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood.

“I know some people are shocked by the news. But trust me, my friends, the Holy Spirit is in control. Let’s pray for Pope Benedict and pray for the College of Cardinals as they elect his successor.”

(For more information about the papal transition, log on to www.archindy.org/pope/ )
Benedict will be prayerful presence in next papacy, spokesman says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Even though Pope Benedict XVI will spend his 85th birthday on Feb. 12, the day after the 85-year-old pope announced that, because of his age and waning energies, he was resigning effective on Feb. 28, the Jesus spokesman described as an “indiscretion” a report in the Italian newspaper Il Sole 24 Ore, which said Pope Benedict had gone to a private Rome clinic three months ago for a small “procedure” to change the batteries in his pacemaker.

The spokesman confirmed that Pope Benedict has a pacemaker and has had it “for some time.” He said the battery recently was changed, but that the procedure had nothing to do with the pope’s decision to resign. Father Lombardi made his remarks on Feb. 12, the day after the 85-year-old pope announced that, because of his age and waning energies, he was resigning effective on Feb. 28.

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The Jesuit spokesman described as an “indiscretion” a report in the Italian newspaper Il Sole 24 Ore, which said Pope Benedict had gone to a private Rome clinic three months ago for a small “procedure” to change the batteries in his pacemaker. The spokesman confirmed it was true, and said it had been a “normal” and “routine” procedure.

The newspaper said the pope, who was elected in 2005, has had the pacemaker for 10 years. Father Lombardi confirmed it was put in while the pope was still Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

In response to questions about how a conclave and a new papacy will be played out while a former pope is still alive and living in the vicinity, Father Lombardi said “there will be absolutely no problem” because Pope Benedict is a discreet and “extremely scrupulous” person. No one would ever expect from him any “interference or comments that would cause even minimal awkwardness or problems for his successor,” he said.

“Rather, his successor will feel supported by the prayers and intensely loving presence and interest from someone who understands “more than anyone in the world” the burden and “someone who, more than anyone in the world, can understand and be interested in the worries of his successor,” the spokesman said.

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Archbishop’s visits connect with faithful in deaneries

TERRE HAUTE, RICHMOND AND INDIANAPOLIS—As Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin continued to visit deaneries across the archdiocese, the reception he received was as heartfelt and hopeful as his message of humility and holiness.

Catholics from the Indianapolis East Deanery filled St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flowers) Church on Feb. 5 as the archbishop celebrated Mass. On Feb. 6, he traveled to St. Patrick Church in Terre Haute to celebrate Mass with members of the 10 parishes in the Terre Haute Deanery.

Four days later, the archbishop headed toward the eastern border of Indiana to celebrate Mass at St. Andrews Church in Richmond with members of the 11 parishes in the Connersville Deanery.

The trips reflected the archbishop’s desire to visit the 11 deaneries in the archdiocese as soon as possible—a commitment he made when he was installed as the sixth archbishop of Indianapolis on Dec. 3.

His homilies in Richmond, Terre Haute and the Indianapolis East Deanery also focused on his consistent themes of holiness and humility.

Archbishop Tobin spoke of everyone’s call to holiness in his homily at St. Patrick Church in Terre Haute. The archbishop quoted from an apostolic letter of Blessed John Paul II: “He said... all pastoral initiatives—what the Church is about—have to be, and must be, set in holiness.”

The archbishop continued with the question, “What is holiness?”

Archbishop Tobin said, “A little later in his letter, Pope John Paul II defines what he is talking about. He says, ‘Holiness is simply belonging to the one who is holy.”

The archbishop explained that “belonging to the one who is holy involves two things—gift and task.”

The “gift” part, he said, is realizing that “you are a royal priesthood... a people of God” with Christ as a high priest who “lives to make intercession for us.”

The “task” part of belonging to the one who is holy, he said, is that “we are called to respond with faith.”

Before the close of the Mass, the archbishop recognized the faith that people in the Terre Haute deanery have had, with two parishes closing in 2012 and one in 2011.

“I’m reminded of St. Paul, who often mentioned in his letters that his faith was strengthened by the faith of the Christian communities,” the archbishop said. “I feel very much the same way here—your faith strengthens my faith.”

That theme of humility was echoed in his homily at St. Andrew Church in Richmond.

The archbishop focused on how the Mass readings of Feb. 10 showed that Isaiah, St. Paul and St. Peter all expressed their unworthiness toward God. Yet instead of rejecting them, God embraced them and called them to a life with him.

“The archbishop’s combination of humor and humility at the beginning and end of the three Masses—and during the receptions that followed—resonated with the people who attended the celebrations.”

“Seeing the large crowd was so exciting,” said Msgr. Paul Koetter, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis and dean of the Indianapolis East Deanery. “It was a blend of all the parishes. Our people were very happy to be there and have the chance to meet the archbishop afterward. He welcomes people so well.”

Msgr. Koetter noted that people in the congregation at Little Flower Church during the archbishop’s visit represented the many Catholics on the east side with Irish roots as well as Black Catholics, largely from St. Rita Parish, and Hispanic Catholics from several parishes.

Their welcome gifts also reflected the character of east side Indianapolis Catholics. The gifts included a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe and a jacket from Father Thomas Sceccina Memorial High School, the archdiocese’s interparochial high school in the deanery.

The archbishop also received gift certificates to three restaurants that Msgr. Koetter said represented the “blue collar” nature of the population of the east side of Indianapolis.

After the Mass at St. Patrick Church in Terre Haute, the faithful of the Terre Haute Deanery greeted the archbishop at the St. Patrick Parish Life Center.

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“This is just an excellent thing that he [Archbishop Tobin] is doing,” said Father Rick Ginther, pastor of St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes, both in Terre Haute, and dean of the Terre Haute Deanery.

Conventional Franciscan Father Mark Weaver, pastor of St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute, returned home on Feb. 5 from a conference in Italy to concelebrate the deanery Mass.

“I talked to people over there [in Italy] who knew him, and they said we are so blessed and fortunate to have him,” Father Ginther said. “They spoke very highly of him.”

Nine-year-old Kaden Boyer, a third-grader at St. Patrick
Faith

Lent can be a time to enter more fully into the Year of Faith

By Daniel Mulhall

Over a year ago, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released a document that provided pastoral recommendations for activities of the Year of Faith that are designed to help Catholics encounter the risen Christ and “the beauty and joy of being Christians.”

While intended for use throughout the entire year, these recommendations also provide guidance, a needed plan, as we are encouraged to walk more profoundly this year through Lent in our prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

This document begins with a brief introduction to the Year of Faith that also provides insight into the meaning of the Lenten journey.

Both the Year of Faith and Lent are periods of “renewed conversion to the Lord Jesus” at the “rediscovery of faith,” so that we may become “credible and joy-filled witnesses to the risen Lord — capable of leading” others to faith. We are called to become “doors to the faith” that others may discover Jesus.

By following these practices, we are to rediscover the joy of believing and to re-experience enthusiasm for sharing our faith, in case we have fallen away from some of the practices that helped us on a path toward God in the past.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith suggests we make a Lenten pilgrimage. Though many flock to pilgrimage sites such as Rome, the Holy Land or a Marian shrine, many may find such a pilgrimage difficult to make — financially, physically or otherwise.

However, that doesn’t mean that you can’t make a Lenten pilgrimage. Instead of going to Rome, visit your local diocesan cathedral and pray beside any of the shrines or tombs that you find there.

We are also encouraged to pray the rosary. The Virgin Mary plays a critical role in the mystery of salvation. She is considered our principal model of faith and virtue in the very model of the Church. During Lent, read an article each week about Mary’s role in the life of the Church. Also pray the rosary each day during Lent.

Participate in faith formation opportunities offered by your parish or diocese. They will help you in your faith journey. This will be especially true for those sessions many parishes are offering that are related to the Year of Faith.

Some of them are similar to those practiced by Catholics. We can often gain a fuller understanding of our own Lenten practices by experiencing them from a different perspective. We are also encouraged to make the most of the Mass.

Study the Sunday Mass readings in advance. What are the key themes? What is the central message that you find? Put your work to the test by listening carefully to the homily. How does the homily enrich your understanding of the Scriptures? When you receive the Eucharist, meditate on receiving Jesus into your body and how it nourishes you to live the Gospel.

We are asked to pay closer attention to the pope and our bishops. The pope and the bishops are the teachers and “heralds of the faith.” Read their homilies and any letters they have published. You can often find these in your diocesan newspaper or website.

Study and honor the saints. Saints are holy men and women who have been extraordinary witnesses to the Lord. Study their lives. Look for ways to be inspired by their dedication to the Lord. Pay special attention to any of the saints who came from your region or country.

We add variety to our ways of worship by praising God through the arts. Throughout history, great composers and artists have created works of art that inspire us and help us see the beauty and grandeur of our faith. Use these pieces to help you to focus your prayer.

At this special time, share your faith with others. At baptism, we were commissioned to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the world. Make a special effort this Lent to talk with others about what you believe. The more you talk about your beliefs, the clearer they will become for you. In sharing your faith with others, you grow stronger in your own beliefs.

In your Lenten actions, don’t forget to seek forgiveness. Celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation is a traditional Lenten practice. Take advantage of the penitence services or added times for confession that will be offered in your community. Look for opportunities to offer forgiveness to those who have done you harm and to seek forgiveness from those you have harmed.

And don’t forget to grow the domestic Church. Take every opportunity you have to share your faith within your family. Set aside time each week to pray together and to talk about your beliefs. Parents are the most important witnesses in the faith lives of their children.

(Joan Chittister is a Benedictine nun and author of more than 50 books and articles on spirituality. She is the founder of the monastic community, The Monastery of Christ in the Desert. She is currently director of the Center for Conscience Studies at the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas.)

FaithAlive!

Let God transform you with his grace and holiness during Lent

By Dan Luby

It begins with Ash Wednesday, the journey of this rich season.

But it is less a routine and more a pilgrimage toward repentance, to turning from sin to believing and living so that our deepest truth shines through every action and decision and relationship, like dawn through stained glass.

Our eloquent rituals resonate deeply with our feel need for letting go of what weighs us down, and for embracing our friendship with the One who calls us to faith. “Repent and believe the Gospel.” We instinctively recognize our need for both.

Sadly, it is all too easy to become distracted from these essential and lifesaving tasks. Given the challenges of carrying the Lenten message into our work, what are some concrete ways we can more fully effectively and richly begin the pilgrimage of Lent?

In a culture of achievement, it’s hard not to think of Lent as a kind of spiritual self-improvement, the religious equivalent of getting in shape or learning a language. But the pilgrimage of repentance and belief is one of grace, not of accomplishment.

If we plan too elaborate an itinerary for our journey, instead of reaching Easter refreshed and renewed, we drag ourselves across the finish line exhausted and disappointed. Concentrate on one or two special practices for Lent. Seek depth more than breadth, intensity more than volume. Holiness is not acquired through effort, but humbly received as a gift through God’s generosity.

In the biblical tradition, places, things and people are holy because they are touched by God’s presence. Moses comes down from the mountain shining not because he has found God, like a hunter tracking his prey, but because God has found and transformed him.

We are holy because God is present in and with us, in sacraments, Scripture, prayer, in experiences of reconciliation and generosity and compassion. Lent is about living into the holiness that is already ours through grace.

Every aspect of the Church’s life and practice during Lent is lovingly crafted to deepen repentance and belief. Readings for daily and Sunday Masses, for example, nourish us with bread for the journey of conversion. Make a practice of reading one or two of these texts daily, allowing ample time to savor them like the rich food they are.

Remember that the pilgrimage of Lent is always made in the company of others. Complement to improve aspects of specific relationships during Lent. Make a point of listening more attentively. Reach out to those from whom you have become disconnected. Instead of giving up chocolate, consider giving up unsolicited critiques, clever barbs or having the last word.

In this Year of Faith, we are asked to walk our own path toward conversion but also to reach out to our brothers and sisters who have left the Church or stopped practicing the faith. Welcome and invite them with generous hospitality. Ask to hear their stories of faith.

Remember the intensity powerful and pointed command of Jesus to wash each other’s feet, and find ways to imitate his humble, hands-on service with family, friends, neighbors, even enemies.

(Daniel Mulhall is a lifelong catechist who hases and works in Laurel, Md.)

A priest hears confession on the grounds of St. Patrick Parish before a Year of Faith Mass in Casper, Wyo., on Oct. 13, 2012. Lent during the Year of Faith can be a time to enter more fully into activities, such as confession, that will strengthen one’s faith and help Catholics to share their faith with other people.

The season of Lent is a time for fasting, special prayers, and almsgiving in preparation for Easter. It lasts officially from Ash Wednesday until the beginning of the evening Mass on Holy Thursday.

Coaching of Ages

Karen Osborne

When invisibility is a curse, not a blessing

Back when I was a kid, I used to think it would really be cool to be invisible.

Like any child, my thoughts back then were usually very pure. And I never gave much thought to how invisibility could benefit me. 

Invisibility meant that I would be able to go off as much as I wanted. It meant that I would be able to say, or do, whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted. It meant that I would be able to hear what the other kids were saying about me when they thought I wasn’t listening.

Growing up, though, I discovered that invisibility isn’t as much fun as I thought it was. Our world is full of invisible people—the poor, the homeless, the abused, the quiet, and the vulnerable. These people often don’t get the support and help they need simply because people forget they exist. Invisibility often means not being treated like a human being. They are forgotten, lost, treated like dirt.

Near my home, there is an invisible man on the corner near a big downtown park. He is there every day, holding a backpack and sleeping bag, caked with dirt and staring at the ground. People hurry past him on their way to their offices or errands, hoping he won’t look at them. Like the kids, they choose not to see him, or they are really that oblivious, nobody helps them. They have made him invisible.

I remember the invisible boy in my sophomore year math class. I remember that his family didn’t have enough to eat, and he was teased relentlessly by the popular kids for wearing his older brother’s underwear with the cuffs turned down. He had no friends. The more he was teased, the more he withdrew from the social life of the school.

By senior year, we all had forgotten his name, even though he had been in our classes for four years. We made him invisible.

The poor and the different make us uncomfortable, and we make it hard for them, so we don’t have to look at ourselves and realize just how badly we are doing in making this world a just, equal place. It’s easy to avert our eyes from the bag lady spending all of her time in the computer lab. If they are invisible to us, we can stay focused on our selfish needs.

Our society has a history of making people invisible. We’ve even made laws codifying invisibility into legal practice. The Jim Crow laws of the 20th century segregated African-Americans from the white population. This made it easier for the more fortunate to treat the less fortunate as if they were not even human.

One of my favorite things about the New Testament is that it chronicles Jesus’ efforts to lift the veil of invisibility in his own time. Jesus regularly paid attention to those considered “invisible” in his times—lepers, women, foreigners and the poor.

Are you invisible in your school? How can you help them into the light? Invite them to parties or game nights or ask them to be part of study groups or project groups. Simply compliment them. Showing someone that you see them, that you recognize them, “hello,” for example, or saying you like their outfit or what they said in class, can mean so much to someone who is used to being overlooked.

You can show them that they are real, that they are worthy and that they are valued. (Karen Osborne writes for Catholic News Service.)

Your Family

Bill Dodds

Monica Dodos is gone, but she is still with us

Monica is praying for you. You can be sure of that. And she is praying for me. I am thankful for that.

As you may have heard or read, in February of this past year, Monica, who was appointed to this column, passed away on the evening of Jan. 6. She died at home, in our bedroom, of uterine cancer.

First diagnosed in late February 2010, she found out in late January 2011 that she had, at most, a year to live. She lasted 10 months and picked an impeccable amount of time to die, into each one of them.

I knew, the whole family knew, that your prayers and the prayers of so many others made a difference over those 10 months. There was a gradual decline in her abilities, but until the final eight days she was up and around, going out to lunch, attending Mass, visiting family and making sure we were making as many happy memories as we could before she died. She enjoyed telling people about her “check-it” list. Obligations she no longer had to meet. At top of the list was her dental work schedule for early March 2012. After she died, I came across a number of notes and letters from friends and family, which reminded me of her working on that list for the last of her life.

“Rule number one: Pray

“Pray right here and now. We all have a natural compulsion to guiding us to God.

“[He made us because he loves us and takes delight in watching us grow closer to him,] ‘In fact, our life is to come to rest.’

“Life is so much simpler when you make decisions with God. God speaks to each of us in a way we will understand.

“Life is like a maze. Sometimes we know which way to go, sometimes we hit a wall. God is the ‘cheese’ we’re trying to find. We wish we could jump up high enough to see where we’re going. Where do I go next? But we need to trust our instinct because we are made to return to God.”

“What’s the point of all of this?” He said, “I am sure you know it.

“You work with family caregivers, Monica stressed the presence of God. Of a caregiver’s, of yours, of her ‘...being in God’s world right now.’ She would explain that it didn’t take away hardships and heartaches, but it could give someone hope that he or she is never alone in those difficult times.

“You aren’t alone in your difficult times. My family and I aren’t alone in ours. In heaven, or on Earth, we remain in the presence of God. A reminder of her presence, in a new and wondrous way, Monica is praying for you and me. She promised she would keep her word.

(www.abortionno.org) to tell the shocking truth of what abortions look like.

One day I'll march for life and pray for the lives of our unborn brothers and sisters. I wish I could! But I can’t. I will not reject abortion until America sees abortion.”

In her Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech at the 2007 ceremonies in Oslo, Norway, Dr. Terri Provost, president of Pro-life America, said “I’ll feel the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion because it is a direct war, a direct killing, direct war on the unborn. I feel myself... Because if a mother can kill her own child, what is left but for you to kill to, you to kill to see “nothingness” in between.”

Indeed, abortion is war waged against the smallest and most innocent of our humanity. War always inflicts the most suffering on the most vulnerable.

Let’s continue to do all we can to combat the Lord’s call to be consistent peacemakers on behalf of all of our brothers and sisters—born and unborn.

Let’s march for life all year long!

(www.abortionno.org) to tell the shocking truth of what abortions look like.

Yes, these pictures are highly controversial. But as with all evil, unless we face it head-on, we often deny its existence. As Father Frank Pavone, national director of the March for Life and pro-life demonstrations in various state capitals are shots in the pro-life arm, but these one-day annual events are simply not enough. We need to march all year long—educating and educating for the full protection of every single unborn person’s life and dignity.

And we need to regularly be present in large numbers at the abortion mills, peacefully and prayerfully denouncing the nurture of evil and the destruction of the innocent.

Another way to keep marching is to sign up to receive legislative alerts from the Pro-life legal arm, but these one-day annual events are simply not enough. We need to march all year long—educating and educating for the full protection of every single unborn person’s life and dignity.

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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Feb. 17, 2013

• Deuteronomy 26:4-10,
• Rom 10:8-13,
• Luke 4:1-13

The Book of Deuteronomy provides the first reading for this first Sunday of Lent. Deuteronomy looks to the days when the Hebrews were fleeing from Egyptian slavery, and making an uncertain way across the treacherous Sinai Peninsula. Even so, Deuteronomy is not a story of doom and gloom. It is hopeful. All will be well for God’s people if they simply love him and follow his commandments. God already had proven to be merciful and protective. He would not change. The decision to obey God, however, and truly to be his faithful people rested solely with the people themselves.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church provides us with a reading from St. Paul’s powerful Epistle to the Romans. The Apostle wrote this letter to the Christians living in Rome, the imperial capital and the center of the Mediterranean world in the first century. As was the case with the other communities to which Paul sent letters, the Christian community of Rome was also were in flight from sin and death. From Romans, and the reading from Luke, we also see flight from the slavery and hopelessness of sin.

Reflection

On Ash Wednesday, the Church invited us to use the season of Lent as a means to grow in holiness. Never doubting by including that the path to holiness is a walk along an imagined primrose path, the Church frankly tells us that holiness requires discipline, focus and unfailing faithfulness to God despite difficulties and the forces, very real in the world, that are absolutely at odds with the Gospel of Jesus. In so many ways, we are similar to the Hebrews as they fled from Egypt and slavery to the land of prosperity and peace that God had promised them. We are in flight from the slavery and hopelessness of sin.

The first people to hear this reading from Romans, and the reading from Luke, also were in flight from sin and death. They were weak. We are weak because selfishness attracts us. They could not see. Neither can we.

God alone gives strength and insight. Lent gives us the opportunity to strengthen our own resolve to resist sin, to be with God, and in God to find our way. †

My Journey to God

My question is this: Are there still many Catholics for whom the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist at least once a year, during the Easter season, to remain in good standing? (city and state withheld)

The Church’s Code of Canon Law in #920 requires Catholics to receive holy Communion at least once a year, during the Easter season. In the United States, the Easter season is defined for this particular purpose as running from the first Sunday of Lent through Trinity Sunday, which is the Sunday after Pentecost.

That same code in #989 says that “each member of the faithful is obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year.” Note that this requirement applies only to “grave sins,” and that no specific time frame is mentioned other than annually.

The Code also says that “who is not conscious of any mortal sin is, at least technically, not required to go to confession at all. However, the code is quick to point out in #988.2 that it is recommended “to the Christian faithful that they also confess venial sins.” The catechism describes venial sins as “everyday faults.” In the sacrament of penance, one encounters directly the merciful, forgiving Christ. Received with reasonable frequency, the grace of this sacrament helps the penitent to make steady progress on the path to holiness. †

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith and spirituality. If your submission is accepted, it may be possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.
Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

BAUER, Liberty Belle. 94, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Jan. 5. Mother of Carol, Peggy Allen, Donna Stearley, Bill, Bob, Dan, Jim, John and Tom Lund. Sister of Patzy Allen, Peggy Burke, Sarah Cannon, Louise Mayfield, Liz Scharf and Mike Brady. Grandfather of six. †

BENZ, Dr. R. Daniel. 81, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Jan. 3. Father of Margaret, Paul Bromund and Paul. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of four.†

BENZ, Margaret. 60, St. Joseph, Forthville, Jan. 15. Wife of John. Mother of Anna, John and Patrick Kaiser. Sister of Emilie McKell, Christie Wallat and Tom Kaiser. Grandmother of four. †


DANCEY, Josephine M. 94, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Jan. 14. Great-grandfather of nine. †

COULTER, Robert Richard, Jr. 57, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Jan. 17. Husband of Kelley Coulter. Father of Ashley Ryan, Dustin and Robert Coulter. †


GAYETTE, Catherine (Brady). 85, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 5. Mother of Angela and John Finney. Sister of Patzy Allen, Peggy Burke, Sarah Cannon, Louise Mayfield, Liz Scharf and Mike Brady. Grandfather of six. †


HANCOCK, Mary Evelyn. 86, Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville, Dec. 28. Mother of Susie Cramolet. Sister of Jack Eckert. Grandmother of five. †


Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Page 14 The Criterion Friday, February 15, 2013

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

14 Days Depart September 17, 2013 from $2398*

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Our 130th Anniversary Sale

"Furnace, Heat Pump or Air Conditioner"

130th Anniversary Sale

"Furnace, Heat Pump or Air Conditioner"

130th Anniversary Sale
Father Hollowell is keynote speaker at Sanctity of Life Dinner, fundraiser

By Natalie Hooper

Many people desire to assist in the pro-life movement, but they struggle with knowing where to start or with finding time to take action. The archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry has a solution: the 2013 Sanctity of Life Dinner and fundraiser. The dinner will take place from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on March 14 at the Riverwalk Banquet Center and Lodge in Indianapolis, featuring Father John Hollowell as the keynote speaker.

Father Hollowell is a fitting choice as speaker of an event designed to help the archdiocese promote the sanctity of life. The pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil speaks out for the sanctity of life frequently and publicly in blogs, articles and at www.YouTube.com. The theme for the Sanctity of Life Dinner is the “Joy of Charity.”

In regard to charity, Father Hollowell says, “If we want to start changing the culture, legislation is important, and so is helping people understand the positive sides of chastity.”

Pro-Life Ministry has a solution: the Birthline service that provides crisis pregnancy intervention and maternal assistance to women and men living in poverty. “We do want to raise money for the ministry,” says Patty Arthur, administrative assistant for the Office for Pro-Life Ministry, “but a more important aspect is getting high school youths, seminarians and priests to the dinner to educate them about the pro-life cause.”

The evening will also include an awards program, recognizing those who have provided outstanding service to the pro-life ministry. Beverly Jones will receive the Birthline Telephone Volunteer award, and Stephanie Hunter will be recognized for her role as Birthline scheduling coordinator.

An award will be given to Paulin Kattady for her work in post-abortion healing, and Steve and Patty Dlugosz will receive an award for their contributions to Helpers of God’s Precious Infants and to Birthline’s Crisis Pregnancy Intervention.

Everyone is invited to attend the event and to sponsor a teenager, seminarian, priest or religious to attend. Registration and a cash bar will be available starting at 6 p.m. The dinner, speaker, raffles and awards will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. Student tickets are $35, single adult tickets are $45 and married couples can attend for $85.

Special discounted table reservations are also available as follows: 10 adults for $225; 10 teens, including one priest, for $375; 10 teenagers for $325; 10 teenagers, including one priest, for $300.

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services was reported to The Criterion.

**Batesville Deanery**
- Feb. 24, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
- Feb. 23, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
- Feb. 26, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
- March 11, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. for St. John the Baptist, Dover; St. Joseph, St. Leon; St. Paul, New Alsea; and St. Martin, Yorkville, at St. Martin, Yorkville
- March 4, 6:30 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
- March 6, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan, St. Mary Magdalen, New Marion; St. Pius, Ripley County; and St. John the Baptist, Osgood, at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
- March 7, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- March 12, 7 p.m. for St. Nicholas, Ripley County; St. Anthony of Padua, Morris; and St. Louis, Batesville, at St. Louis, Batesville
- March 12, 7 p.m. for St. Denis, Jennings County; St. Maurice, Napoleon, and Immaculate Conception, Millhouseen, at Immaculate Conception, Millhouseen
- March 20, 7 p.m. for St. Joseph, Shelbyville, and St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
- March 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Anne, Hamburg; St. Maurice, Decatur County; and St. John the Evangelist, Enochburg, at St. John the Evangelist, Enochburg

**Bloomington Deanery**
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville

**Connersville Deanery**
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
- Feb. 28, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Mary (Immaculate Conception), Rushville
- March 6, 6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
- March 7, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty
- March 19, following 5:30 p.m. for Mass for Richmond Catholic Community at St. Mary, Richmond
- March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Knightstown

**Indianapolis East Deanery**
- Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit
- March 4, 7 p.m. for St. Bernadette; St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower); and Our Lady of Lourdes, at Our Lady of Lourdes
- March 6, 7 p.m. for Holy Cross and St. Philip Neri at St. Philip Neri
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary
- March 13, 6:30 p.m. at St. Rita
- March 14, 7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield

**Indianapolis North Deanery**
- March 10, 7 p.m. for St. Thomas Aquinas
- March 11, 10 a.m. for St. Thomas Aquinas
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas

**Indianapolis South Deanery**
- March 4, 6:30 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- March 10, 2 p.m. at Good Shepherd
- March 12, 7 p.m. for St. Thomas Aquinas
- March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
- March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Barnabas
- March 25, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
- March 27, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas

**Indianapolis West Deanery**
- Feb. 16, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace
- Feb. 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Monica
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
- Feb. 28, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Holy Cross, Brownsburg
- March 4, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
- March 14, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels at Marian University Chapel
- March 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
- March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Barnabas
- March 23, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel
- St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis will have reconciliation each Wednesday during Lent from 5:30 to 7 p.m. except during Holy Week. All attending should enter through the Day Chapel side door.

**New Albany Deanery**
- Feb. 10, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany (individual confession available every Wednesday during Lent)
- Feb. 25, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navillot
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
- Feb. 27, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Corydon
- Feb. 27, 8 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
- March 3, 4 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
- March 6, 6:30 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Sellersburg
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
- March 12, 8 a.m. at Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany (individual confession)
- March 14, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
- March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
- March 24, 1 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

**Seymour Deanery**
- Feb. 26, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace, Madison
- March 10, 2 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- March 13, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
- March 17, 3:30 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem
- March 17, 5 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg
- March 25, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County, St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

**Tell City Deanery**
- March 13, 6:30 p.m. at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad
- March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

**Terre Haute Deanery**
- Feb. 11, 12:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
- Feb. 24, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
- March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
- March 14, 1:30 p.m. at St. Mary, Terre Haute
- March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Patrick, Terre Haute

Lenten activities available online

Be sure to visit The Criterion’s Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent.

The page consists of links to daily readings, archived Lenten columns by Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Berrigan, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features.
School, joined the Catholic Church last Easter and was excited to meet Archbishop Tobin.

“I told him I came into the Church last year here at the Easter Vigil and that I had a lot of fun doing it,” said Kaden, who also showed the archbishop the cross-shaped freckle pattern on his nose.

“He said that’s a sign of faith, and that I’m probably going to be a priest.”

Donna Murphy had the same glow of joy when she met Archbishop Tobin during an after-Mass reception in the gymnasium of Seton Catholic High School in Richmond. Her visit on Feb. 10 coincided with her 75th birthday.

“I was thanking him for coming for my 75th birthday,” Murphy said with a smile. “He just wished me a happy birthday and said he hoped I would have a big party tonight. He’s very nice, and I enjoyed his homily.”

David and Annette Willhelm waited in a long receiving line in the gymnasium to meet Archbishop Tobin.

“I’ve heard a lot of good things about him,” said David Willhelm, a member of Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Cedar Grove. “We wanted to meet him in person. I feel he will be a good leader for us.”

The Willhelms were among a number of people who expressed their appreciation for Archbishop Tobin’s desire to connect with all the deaneries of the archdiocese.

“It’s a great honor for us,” said Father Jeremy Gries, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Rushville and dean of the Connersville Deanery. “He’s very personable and very gracious. It’s wonderful to have a bishop who is able to be out with the people. That’s great for the spiritual health and well-being of the people in the archdiocese.”

DEANERIES

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DONNA MURPHY OF Holy Family Parish in Richmond jokes with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, telling him how much she appreciates his efforts to come to Richmond to help her celebrate her 75th birthday on Feb. 10—the same day that the archbishop celebrated Mass with the Connersville Deanery at St. Andrew Church in Richmond.