History may hold clues in divining impact of resignation, expert says

ROME (CNS)—The halls of history might hold some clues as to what kind of impact Pope Benedict XVI’s resignation will have on the Church, and how to navigate a smooth transition, said a U.S. scholar.

“All these problems surrounding how to treat Benedict, what to call him, how he will be dealt with in his life after the papacy, how his death will be dealt with, all of these are new” questions, said Joshua Birk, a fellow at the American Academy in Rome and expert in medieval Mediterranean history.

To find some answers or at least some guidance, “we sort of have to go back to these medieval cases [of papal resignation] because we literally have nothing else” to go by, he told Catholic News Service on Feb. 15. There is not much in the annals to sift through, however. Pope resignations are extremely rare with only four in the past 1,100 years, he said. And almost every case involved popes who were pressured to step down.

Only the voluntary resignation of St. Celestine V in 1294, he said, can offer relevant parallels to help the Church make sense of the free and willful resignation of Pope Benedict.

The case of Pope Celestine also resulted in some innovative changes that he brought with him. For example, Birk said, the principles behind Pope Celestine’s decision to step down “how Celestine articulated the sense of the free and willful resignation of Pope Benedict.”

The late 13th-century pope also resulted in some changes that he brought with him. For example, Birk said, the principles behind Pope Celestine’s decision to step down “how Celestine articulated the ability of a pope to resign are incredibly important,” as is the papal bull he issued establishing rules for an abdication.

The late 13th-century pope also

The smiles show the friendship of Allison Kelly, Charlie Springman and David Saling, a friendship that developed from their involvement in a rare Catholic high school program at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

Rare program transforms the lives and perspectives of Catholic high school students

By John Shaughnessy

If there is lasting magic about the high school years, it usually appears in the form of relationships—as strangers are transformed into close friends who understand each other, support each other and care about each other through the good times and the tough times.

Sometimes, the magic lasts through graduation. Other times, it continues for years. Or even a lifetime.

Then there are the times it creates moments that lead to tears of joy.

One of those emotional moments is happening right now for Michelle Roberts as she listens to Charlie Springman, Allison Kelly and David Saling talk about the way their friendship has grown during the past four years.

“I think that a chance to visit Rome is a wonderful opportunity to connect with the tradition of our faith, whatever the occasion,” said Archbishop Tobin. “However, the presence of faithful from the archdiocese at St. Peter’s on June 29 will be a beautiful sign of the hundreds of thousands of Catholics whom I am privileged to lead.”

The use of the pallium, which dates to the fifth century, is reserved for territorial archbishops and the pope. A pallium is an woolen band worn around the neck, chest and shoulders. It bears six black crosses and

Archdiocese sponsors Italy pilgrimage to witness Archbishop Tobin receive pallium on June 29

By Natalie Hofer

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is sponsoring a pilgrimage to Italy from June 25 to July 2 to witness Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin receive his pallium on June 29, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

“I think that a chance to visit Rome is a wonderful opportunity to connect with the tradition of our faith, whatever the occasion,” said Archbishop Tobin. “However, the presence of faithful from the archdiocese at St. Peter’s on June 29 will be a beautiful sign of the hundreds of thousands of Catholics whom I am privileged to lead.”

The use of the pallium, which dates to the fifth century, is reserved for territorial archbishops and the pope. A pallium is an approximately two-inch wide, circular, woolen band worn around the neck, chest and shoulders. It bears six black crosses and
has two pendants, one hanging from the front and one from the back. This liturgical vestment represents an archbishop's sharing of pastoral care with the pope over the faithful of his archdiocese.

The eight-day pilgrimage begins with departure for Rome from Indianapolis on June 25.

The following day, pilgrims will visit the Catacomb of St. Sebastian, one of the oldest and largest series of Christian catacombs, or underground tombs, in Rome. The day will end with Mass and a welcome reception at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

On June 27, the pilgrims will journey to Orvieto, an Italian town that sits atop a 1,000-foot high rock formation. The day-trip includes Mass at San Brizio Chapel. The next day will be spent in Rome, known as the “Eternal City.” Pilgrims will celebrate Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica, and have the rest of the day for personal sightseeing and shopping.

The highlight of the trip occurs on June 29 when Archbishop Tobin—and all archbishops appointed in the past year to lead an archdiocese—will receive their palliums from the pope prior to a Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican. A reception will follow at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

A day trip to Siena follows on June 30. Siena was the home of the famed saint and doctor of the Church, St. Catherine of Siena. The day includes Mass, a visit to the city’s cathedral and a guided tour of the city.

On the last full day, pilgrims will celebrate Mass in Rome at the Church of St. Cecilia in Trastevere, the founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, more commonly known as the Redemptorists. This is the order which Archbishop Tobin joined in 1972 and served as the superior general for from 1994 to 1999.

A day trip to the town of Subiaco will follow. Not far from Rome, Subiaco is where St. Benedict, considered the founding father of western monasticism, first lived as a hermit and later established his first monastery. A visit to St. Scholastica Abbey and the sacred groto Sacro Speco at St. Benedict Abbey are included in the day trip.

The pilgrimage will end on July 2. Pilgrims will arrive back in Indianapolis on the same day.

“The pilgrimage will give me the chance to show off a city that I called home for two decades,” said Archbishop Tobin. “I might be able to return in a small way some of the ‘Hoosier Hospitality’ that has been lavished on me.”

While the archbishop is uncertain of duties required of him by the Vatican during the pilgrimage, he said, “I trust that I will be able to participate in many of the side trips during the pilgrimage. I will be happy to celebrate the Eucharist with my fellow travelers in a number of beautiful places. If necessary, I can make sure that my companions get the desired flavor of gelato.”

The cost of the pilgrimage is $3,545 for a double occupancy room, or $4,145 for a single occupancy room.

The package includes round-trip airfare from Indianapolis, accommodations in a four-star hotel, a daily breakfast buffet, four dinners, transportation from and to the airport in Rome and to each of the day-trip destinations, Mass each day, and an English-speaking escort for the entire trip.

Pilgrims can also receive a Year of Faith plenary indulgence if they participate in the celebration of confession and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father at a designated site, which includes any cathedral church or papal basilica, during the week of the pilgrimage.

For more information, contact Carolyn Noone at 317-236-4128 or 800-582-9036 ext. 1428, or by e-mail at cnoone@archindy.org.†

In the Feb. 15 issue of The Criterion, a photo caption on page 10 misidentified Mary Guyon as the mother of Anita Bardo. Guyon is Bardo’s great aunt. Also, in the Feb. 8 issue, Father Aaron Jenkins was misidentified in the page 6 photo caption concerning the Bateville Deanery Vocation Appreciation Dinner.†

Corrections
Benedictine monk attends pope’s last public liturgy

By Sean Gallagher

Benedictine Father Paul Nord, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, was a witness to history as he participated in the historic liturgy.

The Mass was expected to be the last public liturgical event of Pope Benedict’s papacy. The pope announced on Feb. 11 that he will resign at the end of the month. Benedictine Father Paul Nord, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, assisted at the Mass.

Cardinals are seen in the foreground as Pope Benedict XVI celebrates Ash Wednesday Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Feb. 13. The Mass was expected to be the last public liturgical event of Pope Benedict’s papacy. The pope announced on Feb. 11 that he will resign at the end of the month. Benedictine Father Paul Nord, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, assisted at the Mass.

Prayer for the Church in Anticipation of the Vacancy of the See of St. Peter

(For more information, call Father Patrick Beidelman at 800-382-9836, ext. 1480 or 317-256-1480, or send him an e-mail at pbeidelman@archindy.org.)

Parishes and individuals encouraged to pray for Pope Benedict, cardinals

Catholic leaders have suggested that people should pray for Pope Benedict XVI and the cardinals to lead the Church well during the time of the Conclave.

Parishes are encouraged to gather together for prayer. Groups of the faithful come together for prayer. At least one group in each parish should be present for the prayer. The parishes should keep the next pope as an intention in their prayers.

The Mass was expected to be the last public liturgical event of Pope Benedict’s papacy. The pope announced on Feb. 11 that he will resign at the end of the month. Benedictine Father Paul Nord, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, assisted at the Mass.

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The Catholic press and new media

The Catholic press Association has long observed February as Catholic Press Month, when it hopes to impress on Catholics the importance of the Catholic press in their lives. Lately, though, the association has been giving greater emphasis to “the media” rather than just “to the press” because it recognizes that other media are quickly becoming more popular, especially among the younger generations.

Pope Benedict XVI recognizes that fact, too. On Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, the patron of the Catholic press and of journalists, the pope released his message for World Communications Day, which will be observed on the feast of St. Joseph. The title of the message is “Social Networks: Portals of Truth and Faith; ‘New Spaces for Evangelization.’”

Auxiliary Bishop Christopher J. Coyne of Indianapolis has been taking advantages of the new digital media, mainly on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

That led to his selection in the Dec. 30 issue of the national Catholic weekly Our Sunday Visitor as one of “nine Catho­lics whose writing has been outstanding examples of leadership, service and witness in the past year.” He was cited “for his bold and lucid writing in the digital world” and, the article said, “Among bishops, Bishop Coyne is the clear online leader.”

We at The Criterion joined the digital age long ago with our online edition. You can read it at www.CriterionOnline.com each Wednesday to see what stories and features are in our print issue. If you can’t wait until your copy is delivered, you can read the stories, the editorial and some columns on Thursdays.

For years now, newspapers and other periodicals have been observing the decline in circulation. Many, perhaps most, young people now get their news from the digital media. People who still read secular newspapers have seen them shrink in size.

The Catholic press has experienced the same thing. Our Sunday Visitor, which had a circulation of nearly a million back in the 1960s, now has a circulation of 38,000. National Catholic Register is at 24,706 and National Catholic Reporter at approximately 5,000.

The Catholic press isn’t dead though. According to the circulation report of the National Catholic Reporter Association Directory, there were still 139 Catholic newspapers in the United States in 2010 with a circulation of 5,098,010.

Most Catholic magazines have also seen their circulation shrink. One exception is the devotional magazine Magnificat, which has a circulation of 240,000.

We are not ready to give up on print media. We thank you who are reading this for continuing to support this newspaper.

We are convinced, as the U.S. bishops said in 1974, that a Catholic newspaper “remains the least expensive way of conveying comprehensive news and views on a regular basis to the largest number of Catholics.”

As you read this week’s issue of The Criterion, consider whether you could get the stories, columns and features from any other source. You certainly wouldn’t get them from the secular media or from most of the digital media, or even from your parish bulletin, as vital to parish life as it is.

Speaking of parish life, we have all seen statistics that tell us that the number of people who attend Mass on weekends has declined considerably. Of course, we hardly need those statistics when we contrast the number of people at Masses on Christmas and Easter with the number at regular weekend Masses.

These Catholics perhaps need the Catholic press the most. Where else are they getting any religious formation? We are reminded of the situation in Germany, where the circulation of Catholic periodicals is greater than the number of people who attend Mass. When Catholics don’t get their news from their diocesan newspaper, they don’t understand what is going on in this country regarding their Church. This has been painfully obvious in the issue of restriction of religious freedom when polls showed that most Catholics had no idea what the fight was about.

When polls show that many Catholic favor redefining marriage or are cohabiting instead of marrying, you know that they aren’t getting their formation from the Catholic Church, including the Catholic press.

The Church must keep the Catholic press strong while finding new ways to use the news media to spread its teachings.

—John F. Pint, Editor Emeritus

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Ted Pacholczyk

Debating birth control in the public square

Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, in a Dec. 13, 2012 op-ed piece in The Wall Street Journal, argues that the effect of birth control could be reduced by eliminating the required doctor’s visit to get a prescription—making contraception available “over the counter.” If it were made available this way, it would no longer be covered by health insurance, and people could simply purchase it on their own. He insists that this approach would result in “the end of birth control politics.” He relies on several simplistic assumptions and inadequate moral judgments, however, as he tries to advance this argument.

First, he misconstrues the objective. The goal should not be to remove birth control from political debate, but rather to arrive at reasonable medical, ethical and constitutional judgments about birth control and public policy.

Contraception is an important topic for public discussion because it touches on basic human rights and social justice as children, family and sexual fidelity.

Indeed, laws about contraception have always been based on concerns for the public good and public order, as in the case of the state of Connecticut, which in 1879 enacted strong legislation outlawing contraception, specified as the use of “any drug, medicinal article or instrument for the purpose of preventing conception.” This law, similar to the anti-conception laws of many other states, was in effect for nearly 90 years before it was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1965.

These laws codified the long-standing public judgment that contraception was harmful to society because it promoted promiscuity, adultery and other evils. It relied on the nearly universal conviction that children should be seen as a gift and a blessing to society and that, in the words of one commentator, “a healthy society, however tolerant at the margins, must be based on the perception that sex is essentially procreative, with its proper locus in a loving family.”

Yet Jindal fails to engage these core concerns and instead retreats behind a common cultural cliché when he goes on to say, “Contraception is a personal matter—the government should be in the business of banning it or requiring a woman’s employer to keep tabs on her use of it.”

If it is true that contraception is often harmful to individuals and families, to marriage and to women’s health, then it clearly has broader public policy implications, and is objectively speaking, not merely a “personal matter.”

Consider just a few of the health issues.

Contracepting women have increased rates of cardiovascular and thromboembolic events, including increased deep vein thrombosis, strokes, pulmonary emboli (blood clots in the lungs), and heart attacks. Newer third and fourth generation combination birth control pills, which were supposed to lower these risks, and recently there have been class action lawsuits brought against the manufacturers of Yaz, Yasmin and Ocella because women have died from such events.

In seeking to serve the public interest, the government may determine to become involved in such matters, as it did back in 1879, through specific legislative initiatives or through other forms of regulatory oversight.

The recent governmental regulations on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) contraceptive mandate, as a component of Obamacare, reflects an awareness of the public ramifications of this issue, even though the mandate itself is profoundly flawed and ultimately subverts the public interest.

It compels Americans, unbelievably, to pay for the sexual proclivities of their neighbors, not only by requiring employers to cover costs for the Pill in their health plans, but also to cover other morally objectionable procedures, including direct surgical sterilizations and potentially dangerous drugs like the “morning-after” pill.

Jindal goes on to argue, “As an unapologetic pro-life Republican, I also believe that every adult [18 years old and over] who wants contraception should be able to access it fairly and quite appropriately—and inconsistent—in his pro-life stance by arguing in this fashion.”

Contraception can never be pro-life. It regularly serves as a gateway to abortion, with abortion functioning as the “backup” to failed contraception for countless women and their partners.

Abortion and contraception are two fruits of the same tree, being anti-child and, therefore, anti-life at the root.

Certain “emergency” contraceptives, like Plan B and the new morning-after pill known as EllaOne, also appear able to function directly as abortifacients.

Intrauterine devices (IUD’s) can function similarly, making the uterine lining hostile for an appropriate conceptus, and forcing a loss of life to occur through a failure to implant.

Committed Catholics and politicians of conscience can better advance the public discourse surrounding contraception by avoiding such forms of circumlocution and, instead, directly addressing the medical and ethical evils of contraception and the unacceptable coercion of the coercive HHS mandate itself.

(Father Ted) Pacholczyk, Ph.D earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University and the Pontifical University of Fribourg. He now serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.)

Letters Policy

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

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informative, 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 text for publication in The Criterion. We reserve the right to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, past editorial stance or for lack of relevancy (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequently we limit letters to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be published.

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

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Church supports health coverage expansion for low-income residents

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Improved access to health care coverage for low-income Indiana residents is not only the right thing to do morally, but a new study shows could likely be very good for state economic development.

Two Indiana legislative panels approved legislation to expand health care coverage for low-income residents in the House and Senate on Feb. 13. The proposed legislation closes a gap between coverage made available by the federal government in the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid eligibility provided by Indiana. The Church supports the expansion.

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), who serves as the official spokesman on state and federal issues for the Church in Indiana, testified in support of health care expansion before both the House and Senate panels.

“The Church’s approach to health care is shaped by a fundamental principle that every person has a right to adequate health care. This right comes from the fact that every human being has dignity because human life is created in the image of God,” Tebbe said. “Since 1917, the Catholic bishops in the United States have consistently called for access to quality and affordable life-giving health care for all in a manner that respects life and religious freedom.

“As universal as our Church is, Pope Benedict XVI even talked about the importance of health care at a meeting with community leaders in Rome on Sept. 29. “Human life is created in the image of God.’

“Every human being has dignity because human life is created in the image of God.’

“Since 1917, the Catholic bishops in the United States have consistently called for access to quality and affordable life-giving health care for all in a manner that respects life and religious freedom.

“Human life is created in the image of God.’

“The Church supports making health care more readily achieved for all people, not just for those who have the greatest need and also the highest costs.

“A similar proposal, Senate Bill 551, authored by Senator Patricia L. Miller, R-Indianapolis, passed the Senate Health and Provider Services Committee, and was recommitted to Senate Appropriations. Both the House and Senate health care expansion measures received hours of testimony. The Medicaid expansion proposals aim to cover low-income residents who have an estimated annual income between $5,000 and $35,000. Clere said the state has estimated there are between 300,000 to 500,000 uninsured people in this income category who would be helped by the health care coverage expansion proposal.

“Indiana has been at the forefront of innovation in Medicaid by seeking high-quality care, paired with an ongoing focus on cost savings while seeking to ensure program members understand the cost of the care they receive,” he added. “Personal responsibility is the cornerstone of Hoosier values, and that we should all have skin in the game when it comes to health care.

“Cleres’ proposal takes the best ideas from programs the state has created so far and applies them to Medicaid members with the greatest need and also the highest costs. A similar proposal, Senate Bill 551, authored by Senator Patricia L. Miller, R-Indianapolis, passed the Senate Health and Provider Services Committee, and was recommitted to Senate Appropriations.

“Both the House and Senate health care expansion measures received hours of testimony. The Medicaid expansion proposals aim to cover low-income residents who have an estimated annual income between $5,000 and $35,000. Clere said the state has estimated there are between 300,000 to 500,000 uninsured people in this income category who would be helped by the health care coverage expansion proposal.

“A 2013 study conducted by the University of Nebraska’s Medical Center for Health Policy, commissioned by IHA, indicated a Medicaid expansion in Indiana could generate $3.4 billion in economic activity and finance 30,000 jobs for Indiana through the year 2020. These funds could result in at least $108 million in additional local and state tax revenue, officials said.

“In addition to the ICC, David Sklar of the Jewish Community Relations Council, and Mike Oles III of the United Methodist Church of Indiana Conference supported the expansion. Representatives from the medical community also support the expansion.

Dr. Aaron Carroll, associate professor of pediatrics and director of the Center for Health Policy and Professionalism Research at the U. School of Medicine, said he supports the expansion because research shows that Medicaid improves the health of uninsured people, and expansion allows medical providers to recoup some of their lost for unreimbursed medical care they provide.

“Leaders from the business sector testified in support of the expansion including Mike Riley of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

“Gov. Mike Pence and Republican lawmakers have indicated they do not want to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act unless they can do so with their current Healthy Indiana Plan and Hoosier Healthwise programs developed in Indiana over the past several years, which provide member accountability and co-pays. To do so, Indiana must receive federal approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

“Indiana is awaiting federal approval.

(‘The Church’s approach to health care is shaped by a fundamental principle that every person has a right to adequate health care. This right comes from the fact that every human being has dignity because human life is created in the image of God.’"

---Glenn Tebbe

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The Criterion Friday, February 22, 2013

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February 22
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Charismatic Mass, praise and worship, 7 p.m. Information: 317-846-0705.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 30 S. Downey Ave., Indianapolis. Fish fry, fish or shrimp dinners, $7 per person, children’s meals, carry-out available, 3-3:45 p.m. Information: 317-356-7291.

February 23
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Rosary procession, following 12:10 p.m. Mass, pray and process through the streets of downtown Indianapolis. Information: bject2016@gmail.com.

Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Twister Circle, Oldenburg. 24th annual social to support Immaculate Conception, faithful, following procession St., Indianapolis. Information: available, $3, 5-8 p.m.

St. Louis School donations

During Catholic Schools week in January, first-graders at St. Louis School in Batesville made blankets for the residents of The Waters of Batesville nursing home. First graders pose with a resident who received one of the blankets.

Students present a check to Anne Baran of the Batesville Food Pantry on Feb. 6. In February, students and teachers conducted a fundraiser called “Change for a Change” to raise money for St. Louis School donations for a resident who received one of the blankets.

The Dead Sea Scrolls contain biblical texts dating to approximately 50-100 A.D. They were discovered between 1947-56 in caves near Qumran, on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea in Israel. The exhibit also includes more than 600 other artifacts. The cost for the trip is $95. It covers transportation, lunch, snacks, entrance fee and audio guide fee. The group will depart for Cincinnati by bus from the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center at 9 a.m. and return around 6 p.m.

For more information, contact the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center at 317-784-4207.

Retreat and Conference Center sponsors trip to see Dead Sea Scrolls in Cincinnati

The Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Breeh Grove is sponsoring a day trip to the Cincinnati Museum Center in Cincinnati to see the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit on March 4. The trip will be led by Benedictine Sister Angela Jarboe and Annie Endris.

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St. Louis School donations

March 1
St. Lawrence Catholic Church, Fr. Conen Hall, 4644 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Lenten Fish Fry, 5-6:30 p.m.; $7 dinner ($6 if age 65+) includes: one entrée (baked fish, hand battered fried fish, pizza or grilled cheese), two sides, French fries, biscuit w/ apple butter, iced tea or lemonade; $4.00 dinner includes pizza or grilled cheese, French fries and one side.

Children two years and under are free. Contact church office at 317-546-4065.

St. Mary Church, 7500 Navillon Road, Fish Korbs. Concert, “1 Thing,” Tatiana, presents, 7 p.m. Information: 812-928-3419 or stmarycun@benton.com.

March 2
St. Bartholomew Church, 1300 27th St., Columbus. Concert series, “Young Musician Concert,” 7 p.m. Information: 812-378-9535 ext. 237, or music@stbenton.com.

March 3
St. Meinrad Archabbeary Guest House and Retreat Center, dining room, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Trivia Night,” 6-30 p.m., $15 per person. Information: 812-357-8319 or basilil@media.org.

March 7
St. Roch Parish, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. “A Journey of Spiritual Nourishment” and dinner, Anne Ryder, presenter, 6 p.m., $25 per person, no tickets available at the door. Information: 317-652-7311.

March 9
St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 5 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-4207.

Northside Knights of Columbus, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. “Tropical Tribute to Joe and Barb Krier,” food, music, 7:30 p.m.-midnight, $30 per person. Information: 317-872-5088 or sheepygirl@comcast.net.


March 12
St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Ave Marie Guild, Mass for deceased members, 11 a.m., meeting, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-865-0910 or cimoshoe@comcast.net.

Events Calendar

St. Louis School donations

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WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Chavarria-Santoyo**

Jenny Chavarria and Jose Luis Santoyo, Jr. will be married on Sept. 21 at St. Patrick Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Rocio Silva and Abel Chavarria. The groom is the son of Jose Luis Santoyo and Gloria Mireles.

**Giltz-Salatin**

Carrie Marie Giltz and Clint Robert Salatin were married on Oct. 13, 2012, at St. Louis Church in Batesville. The bride is the daughter of Michael and Lori Giltz. The groom is the son of Glenn and Lori Giltz.

**Hartkorn-Andrews**

Elizabeth L. Hartkorn and Philip J. Andrews will be married on Aug. 31 at St. Barnabas Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Tim and the late Karla Hartkorn. The groom is the son of Robin and the late Karl Andrews.

**Heger-Dwenger**

Jessica Lynn Heger and Joseph A. Dwenger II will be married on May 25 at St. Maurice Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Kevin and Susan Israel. The groom is the son of David and Elvira Averyanov.

**Israel-Averyanov**

Elizabeth Susan Israel and Dmitriy Averyanov will be married on June 7 at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Notre Dame. The bride is the daughter of Gary and Susan Israel. The groom is the son of Edward and Elvira Averyanov.

**McClure-Scott**

Alyssa Fay McClure and Sean Matthew Scott will be married on May 25 at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville. The bride is the daughter of Gary and Pam McClure. The groom is the son of David and Maggie Scott.

**O’Bryan-McCusker**

Elizabeth Anne O’Bryan and Kevin Thomas McCusker will be married on April 20 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Larry and Nancy O’Bryan. The groom is the son of Dennis and Susan McCusker.

**Stephens-Sullivan**

Claire Elise Stephens and Michael Jerome Sullivan will be married on April 6 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Knoxville, Tenn. The bride is the daughter of Dr. Gary and Diane Stephens. The groom is the son of Michael and Peggy Sullivan.

**Weigel-Klosterkemper**

Ann Elizabeth Weigel and Jarrad Lee Klosterkemper will be married on June 8 at St. Mary Church in Greensburg. The bride is the daughter of David and Linda Weigel. The groom is the son of Mark and LaChrista Klosterkemper.

**Pre Cana Conference, Tobit Weekend and One in Christ**

Three marriage preparation programs offered in the archdiocese—the Pre Cana Conference, Tobit Weekend and One in Christ—help prepare engaged couples for the sacrament of marriage as well as the challenges of married life.

The Pre Cana Conference programs are scheduled during 2013 on March 3, April 7, May 5 and 19, June 2, July 21, Aug. 25, Sept. 8, Oct. 6 and 20 at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5383 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis.

The program, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Children and Youth Ministry, is presented by a priest and trained volunteer couples. It begins with check-in at 11:15 a.m. and concludes at 6 p.m. on the Sundays listed above.

Registration is required. A $46 fee per couple helps pay for a workbook, other materials and refreshments. The registration fee is non-refundable. To register, log on to www.archindy.org/fatima.


The registration fee of $292 includes the program presented by trained facilitators, meals and overnight accommodations for the weekend.

Registration is required. A $150 non-refundable deposit is required at the time of registration. To register, log on to www.archindy.org/fatima.

One in Christ three-day marriage programs are scheduled for April 6, 7 and 13 at St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis; June 22, 23 and 24 at Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis; and Oct. 26, 27 and Nov. 2 at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. The first and third days are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the second day is from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The cost is $220 and covers meals and materials. For more information call 317-409-1901, e-mail info@OICIndy.com, or log on to www.OICIndy.com.

Early registrations are recommended because the marriage preparation programs fill up quickly.
One family of faith
Indianapolis North and West deaneries welcome Archbishop Tobin

During the reception following the Indianapolis West Deanery welcome Mass at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg on Feb. 12, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin talks with Nicholas and Maddy Donald, children of Christy and Bryan Donald of St. Malachy Parish. The liturgy was the 10th in a series of Masses that Archbishop Tobin celebrated in each of the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries to worship with and get to know Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin reads a prayer at the beginning of the Indianapolis North Deanery welcome Mass on Feb. 11 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. Altar server Matt Collier of St. Joan of Arc Parish holds the missal for the archbishop while Deacon Kerry Blandford watches. The liturgy was the ninth in a series of Masses that Archbishop Tobin celebrated in each of the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries to worship with and get to know Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

Ladonna Mitchell, a member of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis, greets Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin during the reception following the West Deanery welcome Mass at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg on Feb. 12.

Providence Sister Marilyn Herber chats with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin during a reception following the Indianapolis North Deanery welcome Mass at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg on Feb. 11.

Mary Jo Thomas Day, director of religious education at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, presents Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin with a scrapbook created by the children of the religious education classes at St. Monica School during the reception following the West Deanery welcome Mass at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg on Feb. 12.

Members of the St. Malachy Children’s Choir sing at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg during the West Deanery welcome Mass on Feb. 12.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin shares a moment of humor during his homily at the Indianapolis North Deanery welcome Mass on Feb. 11 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis.
NEW ALBANY—The grade school students in the New Albany Deanery Honor Choir were nervous yet ready as they prepared to sing before the New Albany Deanery’s Welcome Mass for Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin on Jan. 29. Not only was the archbishop-listening at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church in Floyd County, but there were also 1,000 worshipers from across the deanery in attendance.

“We had to get the kids used to singing in a church where the acoustics are different,” said Erica Pangburn, co-director of the choir. “They had to perform the music more slowly.

“I think it was a great experience and it also had a beautiful effect in just their second performance since forming in late 2012. The group was started to showcase the musical talents of fifth- through eighth-grade students across the deanery.

“It helps the kids develop friendships, and helps them develop musically,” said Pangburn, who is music teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Jeffersonville. She noted that the idea for the choir came from Richard Rebilas, music director at Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville. Rebilas was one of the choir as a way to invite younger students to perform at the high school.

“It opens up the dialogue between the deanery schools and teachers,” Rebilas said. “(It also fosters) fellowship with the talented deanery music students, parents and faculty.”

The first New Albany Deanery choir combines grade school students from St. Joseph School in Corydon, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County, St. Paul School in Sellersburg, Our Lady of Providence Jr./St. High School in Clarksville, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Jeffersonville, and Holy Family School. Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and St. Mary’s Catholic Academy, all in New Albany.

“I think it’s very exciting to be working with all the new people,” said Aurora Robinson, a sixth-grade student at Holy Family School.

Her classmate, Elizabeth Hall, agreed. “I think it’s nice to get together with lots of other people from all the other schools to sing together with lots of different voices.”

The choir practices every week. The singers have also had to learn Latin for some songs.

“They taught us how to pronounce it and what it means,” noted Hannah Clere, a sixth-grade student from Holy Family School. “It’s something special to learn to do that.”

The choir will have at least one more opportunity to sing during this school year at the New Albany Deanery Fine Arts Fair at Providence Jr./Sr. High School on May 5.

For her part, Pangburn enjoys teaching the choir. “I just love singing” said Pangburn, a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight. “And I love it when the kids learn from an experience like this.”

(Amy Clare is a world languages teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany.)

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. 22, 6 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 a.m. to St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
• Feb. 28, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, New Albany
• March 1, 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. Vincent de Paul, New Alsea, and St. Margaret, Lawrenceburg
• March 3, 4:30 p.m. to St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
• March 6, 7 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, Milan; St. Mary Magdalene, 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. Mary, Napoleon; and Immaculate Conception, Millhousen, at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen
• March 20, 7:30 p.m. for St. Joseph, Shelbyville; and St. Mary, Paul; St. Paul, Shelby County, at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
• March 20, 6:30 p.m. for St. Anne, Hamburg; St. Maurice, Decatur County; and St. John the Evangelist, Enonoh, at St. John the Evangelist, Enonoh

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

Connorsville Deanery
• Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
• Feb. 28, 7 p.m. at St. Mary (Immaculate Conception), Rushville
• March 6, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connorsville
• March 7, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty

Indiana parish
• March 19, following 5:30 p.m. Mass for Richmond Catholic Community at St. Mary, Richmond
• March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Knightswood

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 12, 7:30 p.m. at St. Rita
• March 14, 7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield

Indianapolis North Deanery
• March 10, 2 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas
• March 11, 7 p.m. at 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. at St. Jude
• March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
• March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
• March 20, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas
• March 25, 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
• March 27, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas

Indianapolis West Deanery
• Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
• Feb. 28, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
• March 4, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas Moore, 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. Joseph
• 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 form 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. except during Holy Week. All attending should enter through the Day Chapel side door.

Lenten activities available online

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. Buechlein. A full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features. ❚
40 Days for Life spring campaign begins in Indianapolis

By Natalie Hofer

Scott Cunningham’s voice remained mostly steady as he told the story of a young woman, a junior at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, who became pregnant.

His voice held as he told how, with the support of her family, a couple was found to adopt the baby. The baby, a boy, was born on July 4, 1969.

At that point, Cunningham paused. His voice choked as he continued.

“He is the man speaking before you now. And I would not be speaking before you if that woman and her family had not believed in the sanctity of life.”

Cunningham, state secretary for the Indiana Knights of Columbus, spoke before more than 200 people gathered at the Movie Buff Theater in Indianapolis on Feb. 10. They were there to watch October Baby, a film that tells the story of a young woman who discovers she is the survivor of a failed abortion attempt.

The showing of the movie was sponsored by St. Monica Knights of Columbus Council #11927 as part of the 40 Days for Life spring campaign kickoff. The actual campaign runs from Ash Wednesday, Feb. 13, through Palm Sunday, March 24.

Timothy O’Donnell, a member of St. John Vianney Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, is a member of the 40 Days for Life leadership team. He explained the 40 Days for Life spring campaign.

“We’re coordinating efforts around prayer, fasting and community outreach . . . about abortion, trying to activate people, to engage people and parishes for this prayer vigil for the next 40 days.”

Praying—not protesting—at an abortion center is one of the key elements of the campaign.

“I think some people think we come out here to protest, and that’s not correct,” said Jane Pollom, 40 Days for Life coordinator at St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. “We are here to pray, to be a loving presence, to change hearts.”

Todd Kowinski, grand knight of Knights of Columbus Council #11927, agreed. “We’re not going to stop the abortion industry at home by ourselves. We can only do that as a community. When we speak as a community, people take us seriously.”

The need for a community to present a prayerful presence is made obvious by statistics cited by 40 Days for Life volunteer Jim Recasner before the film.

According to Recasner, the Center for Disease Control lists the highest cause of death as heart disease, taking about 600,000 lives a year. However, the loss of life to abortion in one year in the U.S. is more than double that number—1.3 million unborn babies.

Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in Indiana. The Planned Parenthood facility at 86th Street and Georgetown Road in Indianapolis is the focal point of the 40 Days for Life prayer vigil. Many people who watched the film joined a prayer procession from the theater to the abortion center. A short prayer and song service at Planned Parenthood followed the march.

Among the marchers were Zach, Owen and Lauren Duckett, members of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis and the children of Jackie and Zach Williams. They are participating for the third year in the 40 Days for Life spring kickoff and campaign.

The children attend Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.

Zach, a high school junior, summarizes the importance of his involvement in the pro-life movement.

“I think life is a very important thing to defend, from conception to death,” he said. “Without life, nothing else matters.”

(For more information about the 40 Days for Life spring prayer vigil in central Indiana, log on to the campaign’s website at www.40daysforlife.com/indianapolis.)

Pro-life advocates process and pray from the Movie Buff Theater at 86th Street and Michigan Road to the Planned Parenthood facility at 86th Street and Georgetown Road in Indianapolis to launch the 40 Days for Life spring campaign on Feb. 10.
Faith

Reconciliation shows importance of forgiveness to Christianity

By Will David Gibson

Will a person attempting for the first time to learn what Catholicism is all about discover that it considers forgiveness of the essence? The Church regards forgiveness as a dynamic force able to change lives. The Catholic Church, of course, puts the forgiveness it considers so central into practice in the sacrament of reconciliation. It is a sacred way in which the Church of people participating in this sacrament today is not what it once was.

In a study released in 2008, 30 percent of adults in the United States who identify themselves as Catholics said they went "to confession less than once a year," and 45 percent said they "never do so."

Twenty-six percent participated in the sacrament "once a year or more often," while just 2 percent participated "once a month or more."

The study was commissioned by the Department of Communications at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan spoke about this situation in his November 2012 presidential address during the national meeting of the U.S. Catholic bishops in Baltimore.

"What an irony that despite the call of the Second Vatican Council for a renewal of the sacrament of penance, what we got instead was its near disappearance," he said.

The cardinal asked, "How will we make the Year of Faith a time to renew the sacrament of penance, in our own lives and in the lives of our beloved people?"

The Church’s current Year of Faith concludes on Nov. 24, 2013.

I know someone who stayed away from the sacrament of reconciliation for a long time, but eventually returned. By "a long time," I mean at least two decades.

In any event, provided this newcomer could hear that there is another way to live, one in which animosities or hostilities never constitute the last word. In any event, if this newcomer is observant and visits communities at worship, that person will discover that forgiveness and mercy rank among the basics for Catholics.

After all, he or she is bound to feel the pain of the sacrament that was warm, relieving to hear that there is another way of knowing the forgiveness it considers so central into practice in the sacrament of reconciliation, thus dispelling various forces for good in our world.

But would someone hearing about Catholicism for the first time, someone entirely unfamiliar with it, be impressed to learn that the Church considers forgiveness of central importance? Maybe, but maybe not.

Forgiveness is not much different from prayers uttered for those who have offended—God.

Pope Benedict even suggested in his 2012 apostolic exhortation on the Church in the Middle East that the spirit of reconciliation flowing from the sacrament of penance could foster peace in violent places.

More frequent confession will surely help to form consciences and foster reconciliation, thus dispelling various forms of fear and combating violence," the pope explained (#81).

Sacramental forgiveness, then, extends beyond the given moment in which it is received by an individual and into the web of life.

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

By Allan F. Wright

God’s mercy and forgiveness are consistent themes throughout Scripture. In Psalm 51, the prayer of King David speaks to the condition of the human heart before God:

"Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love; in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions. Through the wash of my youth, I knew my sins."

In David's prayer for forgiveness, he first must acknowledge his sin as he seeks God’s merciful love, abundant compassion and cleansing. His prayer for forgiveness is not much different from prayers uttered today by people who acknowledge their sin and the one they have offended—God.

The desire to be forgiven is in itself a movement of the Holy Spirit. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us in #1428 that “this endeavor of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a ‘contrite heart,’ drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first.”

In the Gospels, this mercy, compassion and ability to cleanse of sin is incarnated, “made flesh,” in the person of Jesus.

In Lake, we read of a “sinful woman” who enters the house of Simon where Jesus has been invited for a meal (Lk 7:36-50). This woman, who has been forgiven, loves Jesus not only by providing water for his feet in her tears, but she pours her perfume upon his feet. This “pouring out” is an outward sign of conversion for she will no longer need the perfume, which was vital for her former way of life.

What may we need to “pour out” on the feet of Jesus? Which actions, omissions and attitudes?

Like the sinful woman, when we “pour out” our sins in the confessional, we experience the forgiveness of Christ as expressed through the words of Jesus himself through the priest. Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen remarked, “Once you have surrendered yourself, you make yourself receptive. In receiving from God, you are perfected and completed.”

Gospel examples of God’s forgiveness are many. Jesus’ encounter with Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10), the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:2-11) and with Peter after he denied Jesus three times (Jn 21:15-19) are perhaps the most recognized.

One of the most profound miracles connects forgiveness with healing. In the story of the friends of the paralytic in Mark 2:1-12, Jesus first forgives the paralyzed man of his sin and then healing takes place. There is a connection between forgiveness and healing. The fact that this story takes place in the home and not in the temple or in a synagogue suggests that the home may be the place to begin to forgive so healing can take place.

The benefits and graces are still being poured out in the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, which is a conduit for God’s mercy and love. These passages reveal a God who is still seeking to forgive, heal and cleanse us from sin.

(Allan F. Wright is the academic dean for evangelization at St. Paul Inside the Walls: The Catholic Center for Evangelization of the Diocese of Paterson, N.J.)

A young man prays after receiving the sacrament of reconciliation during the National Catholic Youth Conference held in November 2011 in Indianapolis. The fact that reconciliation is raised to the dignity of a sacrament in the life of the Church demonstrates the importance of forgiveness to the Christian faith.
From the Editor Emeritus
John F. Fink

Year of Faith: Spiritual help for busy people

During Lent, the Church encourages Catholics to be more fervent in their prayers, fasting and almsgiving. While not meaning to neglect the latter two, I’m going to talk to you about columns on prayers. This series for the Year of Faith is in at least two columns on Catholic practices as well as doctrine. 

I was told this was the first time that I’ve written about prayer. In fact, I wrote a whole book about it. It’s called “First Things,” Mostly On Prayer (St. Pauls, $9.95)

Perhaps it’s just my imagination, but I believe that many realize the need for prayer today and that the number of people who pray is growing. In fact, surveys indicate that most people do pray every day. I’m not sure that everyone has the same idea of what prayer is—and I wouldn’t be at all surprised if most people pray prayers of petition almost exclusively—but at least people are praying. One of the places I see more people praying is in our parish’s adoration chapel. We have been able to have perpetual adoration at our parish, with people assigned to spend an hour a day in time in prayer in front of the exposed consecrated host in a monstrance—24 hours a day, seven days a week. And the consecrated host is reported to have been present since Good Friday and Holy Saturday. People are welcome to pray on those two days, but the consecrated host is reserved. Besides those who are assigned to certain hours, numerous other people stop in for a short visit every day and night as their schedules permit. The people who come to the adoration chapel are doctors, lawyers, businessmen and women, tradesmen, married men and women, single people, mothers and fathers, the middle-aged, young and old. It really is quite inspiring to see such a variety of people. They live busy lives and understand their need for spiritual help as they go into today’s secular world. Prayer seems to be a universal action, a natural aspiration. We know of no culture in the history of the world that didn’t include prayer of one type or another. Prayer is an important element of every religion, from Christianity to Hinduism, Buddhist or whatever. 

Many of those religions have things to say about Christian prayer, and it is interesting that Thomas Merton, who knew and wrote a great deal about prayer, was able to learn from his Eastern methods of contemplation before he died accidentally while he was in Bangkok. He told us that the Eastern Catholic Church has the most to offer when it comes to prayer. Above all, of course, it’s the Church that Jesus himself becomes truly present in the Eucharist. But the Catholic Church offers prayer in other ways. It offers the other sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours, and devotions to the Blessed Virgin and other saints. It proposes certain rhythms of praying throughout the day. And its liturgical year, with its various feasts, provides opportunities for prayer. I will say more about prayers next week. 

Cynthia Dewes
Cornucopia

We can’t take much credit for a satisfactory life

Sometimes I wonder how a person can evaluate how his or her life is turning out since there are so many factors that contribute to it. For example, there is the genetic factor. We may be born with a congenital heart defect or with a tendency to have a serious illness or be great at music or have constant acne. It may be in the cards for us to develop diabetes or colon cancer, thanks to genes from earlier generations or carried by others. Of course, we have to be born into good families, or to those who can afford to educate us. We may be prone to clinical depression, high blood pressure or macular degeneration. And, of course, we’d also love to blame genetics for weight gain.

On the other hand, we may be lucky. We may inherit strong teeth, good bones or a lot of energy. Maybe we can take aspirin or eat anything we like without ever getting a headache, never seeing a dentist, or even being a person at all in the future. All of these conclusions are just our best guesses. In any case, forecasting how any of us will live out our lives, there’s someone who’s more important than all of us put together—God. If we want to make our lives count, we have to make our decisions with God in mind. And if we want to have a life that really makes a difference, we need to take this for granted even though history has never happened. †

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul The Apostle Parish, has written a regular column for The Criterion.)

Emmas Walk
Debra Tomassi

What a difference a day makes … or sometimes just a moment

I slowed my car, glanced over my shoulder, and decided not to change lanes. Normally, I’d probably have changed lanes by this time in my early morning commute, but not today. Today, there was no urgency.

No urgency. Today, I couldn’t concentrate on anything but my children.

My mind was elsewhere, remembering two times with my mom.

I recalled the day she and I were sunbathing on the beach with Gloria, a friend of mine. I was stretched out on my lawn chair, eyes closed, slathered with sun cream. Gloria was reading a magazine, and Mom was watching the waves roll in when they bumped into each other. While they drove, I decided to walk to a nearby refreshment truck.

Mom grabbed her wallet. “Would you like a hot dog?” she asked.

“No, thank you,” I said without even looking up. “I’m not hungry now.” Instead, I rested, soaking in the sunshine. Minutes later, they returned. As I listened to them rip into crinkly bags of chips, pop sodas and much hot dogs, I recovered.

“Maybe I will have a hot dog after all,” I announced. 

Mom and Gloria burst into laughter. Indignant, I sat up, opened my eyes, and stared at them.

“What’s so funny,” I demanded.

Giggling, Gloria could only point in the direction of the food truck. Mom was laughing so hard I couldn’t tell if she was laughing at me or the way my eyes met, and I felt the care and concern this stranger had for me. That stranger smiled back. With that, the light turned green, traffic accelerated, and I lost sight of that passionate hot dog lady. But as I maneuvered through the intersection, I realized it was more than the needle on the speedometer that was heading upward. My mood was lighter.

That simple exchange, brief as it was, demonstrated the kindness of a stranger gave me reason to smile. Suddenly, a sense of peace washed over me. My strength returned. Turning to the back seat, I realized God was showing me how his love, even greater than that of a mother, would never leave me. His love would sustain me for the rest of my life.

(Debra Tomassi writes from Alhambra Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomassidebra@yahoo.com)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Feb. 24, 2013

- Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
- Philippians 3:17-4:1

The Book of Genesis is the source of the first reading. It is a story about Abraham, whom the Jews regard as the father of their race. In addition, Abraham is seen as the spiritual father of all who know and honor the one God.

The general theme of all three readings is that of God as the guiding figure in the religious traditions of Christians and Muslims.

Scholars believe that Abraham was an actual person. He is not the figment of imagination, nor a figure constructed in some literary effort. He actually lived.

Several points are important in hearing, or reading, this passage. The first is that God communicates with Abraham, so God is in Abraham’s world. God, however, is above and beyond Abraham’s world. So Abraham does not relate to God as if God were an equal.

Requiring Abraham to sacrifice an offering, God establishes both the divine distance from humans and the divine intimacy with humans. Humans must acknowledge God’s supremacy, and so offer sacrifice. Yet, God is with them.

Abraham himself is human. He is vulnerable. The sun sets. He is terrified. God does not leave us, as God never left Abraham. God is neither distant nor limitation. We all shall die.

Reflection

We progress in Lent. The Church offers us several important lessons to strengthen us in our Lenten resolve, and ultimately in our Christian commitment.

Before truly learning anything about Jesus, before fully absorbing the meaning of the Transfiguration, we must come to the basic conclusion that we humans are limited, even though coming to this conclusion is difficult. It is a flaw that settled upon human nature with Original Sin. In our human limitation, we are shortsighted, even blind very often. Ultimately, no human escapes the final limitation. We all die.

Do we respond? Lent is the opportunity to ponder and to respond.†

The Church allows for some leniency regarding work on Sunday

Q Mny grown children often work on Sunday, and I believe that they don’t think that it is sinful. Sometimes they ask me to baby-sit their children while they work—anything from farm work, remodeling their house, mowing the lawn, etc.

Am I guilty of aiding and abetting them? I baby-sit or am I exempt from guilt because they don’t think they’re sinning? I’m a little scrunched up and worry a lot about this. (Morrilton, Ark.)

A The Church’s Code of Canon Law is rather general in its description of the Sabbath rest and leaves room for personal judgment. It says it is “an intrinsically and gravely disordered state of human nature," requiring a “personal choice.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is a bit more elaborate in #2184, saying that everyone should “enjoy adequate rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social and religious lives,” and in #2186 that “Sunday is a time for reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life.”

The catechism does make allowance in #2186 for people who need to work on Sundays because of poverty and #2187 for necessary public duties.

If I were you, I would be rather lenient in judging family. I am not aware of their economic situation or of the rhythms of life on a farm, but it may be that they view some of their work as necessary. It could be, too, that they find remodeling their house to be recreational and a welcome diversion. (I can’t say, though, that I’ve ever heard a lot of fun talking the lawn!) What you could do—although you needn’t feel obliged to—is to suggest sometimes that you would be even happier to baby-sit for them on Sundays if they took part of the day off just to relax and enjoy each other’s company because even God rested on the Sabbath.

Q When I was a teenager I discovered masturbation, and it has been a problem for me ever since. Believing it to be a mortal sin, I would go to confession every week or two. I am now in my 60s, and recently a priest told me that it was not a mortal sin.

Maybe he meant that it wasn’t a mortal sin for me because I have had a great deal of difficulty controlling those urges for such a long time. Can you resolve my confusion? (St. Louis, Mo.)

A The Catechism in #1859 notes that, in addition to gravity of matter, mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent and goes on to explain that this “presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act as opposed to God’s law” as well as “a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice.”

It may be that certain circumstances— the immaturity of adolescence, for example, or psychological imbalance or the “force of acquired habit” (specified in #2352)—can diminish the level of moral guilt. This is not, of course, to condone the practice of masturbation, but the degree of personal responsibility can vary.

The best course of action is always to entrust oneself to a regular confessor who can understand the psychological makeup of the penitent—with the hope that over time, by consistent effort and the grace of the sacrament, one can conquer this disturbing behavior.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.†)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Catechism invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith. Entries of 500 words or fewer are invited for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.†


WILLIAMS, A., 90, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Jan. 22. Son of Peggie Moore and Bill Williams. Mother of Four. GREAT-grandmother of two.


Archbishop asks House to extend conscience provision to HHS mandate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The chairman of the U.S. Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty has urged the House of Representatives to extend long-standing federal conscience protections to the Affordable Care Act’s new coverage mandates for private health plans.

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore made the request in a Feb. 15 letter to members of the House. Saying the tradition of conscience rights in health care is also an economic and spiritual consensus, but is now under greatly increased pressure,” Archbishop Lori asked legislators in his letter to attach the conscience provision to upcoming appropriation bills for the departments of Labor and Health and Human Services.

“I urge Congress to address this problem when it considers proposals for continuing funding of the federal government in the weeks to come,” he said.

“While the mandate for coverage of abortion-causing drugs, contraceptives and sterilization is hailed by some as a victory for women’s freedom, it permits no free choice by a female employee to decline such coverage for herself or her minor children, even if it violates her moral and religious convictions,” Archbishop Lori added.

He detailed precedents dating back 40 years on conscience rights in health care: The Church amendment of 1973 to shield individual and institutional health care providers from forced involvement in abortion or sterilization.

“A 1974 alteration to protect conscientious objection to other health services permits an opt-out from coverage of ‘abortion or other services’ for those with a moral or religious objection in former Sen. Daniel Moynihan’s failed 1994 health-care reform bill.

“A congressional exemption in 1999 for both insurers and federal employees with religious objections to contraceptive coverage in health benefits.

“A 2000 appropriations provision instructing the District of Columbia to exempt those with moral or religious objections if it wished to approve a contraceptive mandate for its citizens.

“The 1999 and 2000 provisions have been renewed annually.

“It can hardly be said that all these presidents and Congresses, of both parties, had been waging a war on women,” Archbishop Lori said.

“I have seen no evidence that such laws, showing respect for Americans’ conscientious beliefs, have done any harm to women or to their advancement in society. What seems to be at issue instead is a new, more grinding attitude in recent years toward citizens whose faith or moral principles are not in accord with the views of the current governing power.”

Archbishop Lori also asked for a protection in current appropriations talks that clarifies contemporaneous laws to improve protection of individuals and institutions that decline involvement in abortion, allowing the victims of discrimination to vindicate their rights in court.

The amendment “places the Hyde-Weldon amendment, approved every year since 2004 as part of the Labor-HHS [Health and Human Services] appropriations bill, on a firmer legal basis by merging it with an older law against forced involvement in abortion training,” the Coats-Snowe amendment of 1996, he said.

“The Obama administration has said it supports both these laws and President Obama has signed Hyde-Weldon into law several times since 2008,” Archbishop Lori added.

“We assume no one in Congress opposes the idea that people whose civil rights have been violated have a right to go to court. So this provision should be accepted without serious controversy.” 

What was in the news on Feb. 22, 1963? A cardinal asks to revise the definition of Church, and an uproar over a university’s decision on speakers

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 Feb. 22, 1963, issue of The Criterion.

• Private school aid possible, justified, House gr

• Larger percentage in poll back private school aid

• Larger percentage in poll back private school aid

• Beatification date set for Mother Seton

• Beatification date set for Mother Seton

• Japanese girl is Woods art major

• Japanese girl is Woods art major

• Training in religions parental obligation

• Training in religions parental obligation

• Two were Father Hans Kueng of Germany, a member of the University of Tubingen faculty, and Father Godfrey Diekmann, prominent Benedictine scholar who is vice-president of the National Catholic Liturgical Conference.”

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“...some of these presidents and Congresses, of both parties, had been waging a war on women,” Archbishop Lori said. And “it can hardly be said that all these presidents and Congresses, of both parties, had been waging a war on women,” Archbishop Lori said...
Often overwhelmed by his new surroundings, Charlie was hesitant to look anyone in the eyes or let people get near him. He resisted going to school Masses in the gym because he didn’t like the crowd, the noise and the lights. Charlie’s freshman year was also Roberts’ first year of implementing the Certificate of Completion Program at Roncalli. To help Charlie and the other students in the program, Roberts talked to the entire freshman class during its orientation, stressing the peer mentoring part of the program—and the power that students have as peers. She also looked for students who had an ease about them and an interest in eventually being friends with her students.

Enter David Saling, an outgoing guy whose time at Roncalli has led him to be one of the four presidents of the school’s student council in his senior year. He is also involved in the school’s musicals and Comedy Sportz program. “My mom and Mrs. Roberts know each other,” David recalls. “I’ve always been interested in helping people with special needs. I have a couple of cousins and I work with someone who has special needs. Mrs. Roberts asked me to sit with Charlie at Mass. I thought, ‘Here’s someone who can use a friend right now.’ I wanted to make it happen.”

The connection wasn’t an immediate success. Besides avoiding Masses in the gym, Charlie didn’t look at David in the hall when David said hello to him. David acknowledges that he became frustrated. Roberts stressed patience.

“The friendships I’m working on in freshman year, I’m hoping they will flourish in junior and senior year,” Roberts says.

David stayed involved. So did Allison Kelly. During her freshman year, she sat next to Charlie in one of their classes. Allison has her own challenges as a student because of dyslexia and attention deficit disorder, but she is able to pursue a high school diploma. A member of the school’s choir, she also has a welcoming smile and a friendly personality. Still, she couldn’t reach Charlie.

“I felt I was doing everything wrong,” Allison says. “I wasn’t connecting with him. It made me think, ‘Do I really want to be a special ed teacher?’”

Roberts kept working with Charlie, one of five students in the program this year. She also kept working with David. Allison and the other peer mentors. She knew the difference they eventually would make because she has seen what happens when no one steps forward to make a difference.

“I’m a Catholic school girl,” says Roberts, a 1987 graduate of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. “We had a neighbor growing up who was so big, and kids were so mean to him. I hated that, and it stuck with me. I knew I wanted to teach. It seemed so big, and kids were so mean to him. I hated that, and it made me realize I wanted to do something that makes a difference. I’m hoping they will flourish in junior and senior year,” Allison says about Charlie. “Before finals [in December, 2012], Charlie asked me to go to a basketball game with him. We sat together. He starts conversations with me now. He loves NASCAR, going to the beach and pizza.”

David also notices the difference. “In freshman year, he’d keep his head down when I talked to him in the hall,” David says. “In sophomore year, he’d say ‘Hi’ with his head down. In junior year, it was ‘Hi, David.’ Now in senior year, he says, ‘Hi, David,’ and he looks me in the eye.”

Allison and David have also noticed changes in themselves. “I’ve become more patient with people,” David says. “When I first sat with Charlie in freshman year, I was getting frustrated. I didn’t think I was helping him. It’s [180 degrees different] now. It’s taught me how to take my time with people and get to know them. It’s taught me that people can surprise you. I didn’t think Charlie would be doing the things he’s doing now.”

Allison nods in agreement and adds, “This has really opened my eyes to special needs. Being a special needs student myself, it’s taught me to love and care in a different way. I didn’t know I could love and care in the way I do.”

As David and Allison share their thoughts, Roberts becomes overwhelmed with emotion, and the tears flow down her face. It’s the moment when she also says, “They’re doing the work for me in a way that’s real and relevant. That’s where the real magic happens.”

After she wipes away the tears, Roberts talks about the other parts of Charlie’s education—learning how to do laundry, shop at a grocery store, prepare healthy meals, get ready for job interviews and handle situations at work. She listens as Charlie describes his current job.

“I go to Dairy Queen to work there,” he says. “I clean the tables, take out the trash.”

Roberts nods and notes, “My goal is to support my students in their efforts to maximize their independence and their participation in the world around them—to give them the skills they need whether it’s an academic, social or work-related. I also want to give them an understanding of who they are. They have a voice. They have opinions.”

They also have the ability to melt her heart with a smile. Charlie is flashing one of those smiles now. The freshman who didn’t want people near him, who always kept his eyes down, is now sandwiched between two of his closest friends, smiling directly at a camera that tries to capture the moment forever. “It feels like we’re on the right track,” Roberts says. “It’s why I’m here. The academics are important. Getting Charlie a job is important. But seeing students who struggle to make connections, and then see them make connections, I love that. It makes what we’re doing worth it.”

Michelle Roberts oversees the efforts of Charlie Springer, a senior at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, who is part of the school’s Certificate of Completion Program that allows students with intellectual disabilities to have a Catholic high school experience.