Thank you, Holy Father

Changing rules through apostolic letter, Pope Benedict XVI allows College of Cardinals to move up conclave date

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In his last week as pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI issued new rules for conclaves, including a clause that allows the College of Cardinals to move up the date for the beginning of the conclave to elect his successor.

However, the cardinals could not set the date until after the pope left office on Feb. 28.

Pope Benedict also defined the exact penalty—automatic excommunication—that would be incurred by any noncardinal assisting the College of Cardinals who failed to maintain absolute secrecy about the conclave proceedings.

The pope laid out the new rules in an apostolic letter issued "motu proprio" (on his own initiative) on Feb. 22, the feast of the Chair of St. Peter. The Vatican released the document on Feb. 25.

The changes affect the rules established in Blessed John Paul II’s apostolic constitution governing the election of popes, “Universi Dominici Gregis.”

Under the current rules, which remain in effect, upon the vacancy of the papacy, cardinals in Rome “must wait 15 full days for those who are absent” before they can enter into a conclave and begin the process of electing a new pope.

However, Pope Benedict inserted an additional provision that grants the College of Cardinals “the faculty to move up the start of the conclave if all the cardinal-electors are present,” as well as giving them the ability “to delay, if there are serious reasons, the beginning of the election for a few more days.”

However, the conclave still must begin no more than 20 days after the start of the “sede vacante.”

The date of the start of the conclave is to be decided by all the cardinals, including those over the age of 80, who participate in the daily general congregations or discussions that precede a conclave, said Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, the vice chamberlain.

He will assist Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone in the administration of the Church during the “sede vacante.”

The cardinals must wait for every cardinal-elector to arrive or to have sent a legitimate excuse for their absence, such as for reasons of infirmity or serious illness, he told journalists.

The date of the start of the conclave will then be determined by a majority vote, that is 50 percent, plus one, of the cardinals present, Archbishop Celata said.

The other major change to the rules is that the pope defined the exact penalty incurred by support staff assisting the cardinal-electors during a conclave if they break the oath of secrecy about the proceedings.

The aides must swear to never lend support to or favor any outside interference in the election process. Under the old rules, the penalty for breaking the vow was to be determined by the future pope.

Instead, Pope Benedict has rewritten the oath that staff will take, stating that they are “aware that an infraction will incur the penalty of automatic excommunication.”

“The Holy Father wanted to make things immediately clear and not pass

See CONCLAVE, page 7
Pope's legacy includes committed teacher of the faith

By Sean Gallagher

One of the principal duties of a pope is to be the Church's first teacher of the faith. Pope Benedict XVI, who stepped down as bishop of Rome on Feb. 28, was well known for that aspect of his papal ministry through his homilies, speeches and various teaching documents.

Teaching the faith has been central to his ministry, however, since his ordination to the priesthood in 1951. For much of the next 26 years as a Jesuit education, he taught as a theologian in various German universities before being named archbishop of Munich and Freising in Germany in 1977.

In 1981, he was appointed prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, an office he held until his election as pope in 2005.

Three theologians who teach in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis shared their thoughts recently on the legacy of Pope Benedict XVI, who returned to his home office as the principal teacher of the Catholic faith for the universal Church.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, the main teacher of the faith in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, also reflected on this aspect of the regnant pope's ministry in a recent interview.

Benedictine Father Guy Mansani, a theology professor at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, thinks Pope Benedict is one of the most accomplished theologians to have been elected bishop of Rome in recent history, pointing to his research on the theological writings of St. Augustine and St. Bonaventure and his experience as a theological expert at the Second Vatican Council.

"Because of his experience at the council," Father Guy said, "he could convincingly and persuasively distinguish between the real council—the council that spoke in continuity with the great Catholic tradition of the Fathers, the Middle Ages, [the Council of] Trent, and the 19th- and 20th-century papacy—and the council that was the invention of the secular media, the council according to which the Church should be nothing more than a sort of cheerleader for particular social and political causes.

Andy Hohman, who teaches theology and philosophy at Saint Meinrad, said that this was a problem that he had been wrestling with for 50 years.

"He is the pope's theological acumen firsthand during a session of the 1960 World Synod of Bishops meeting on the Eucharist. "The pope presides over most of the synod sessions. And in front of him he had the Vulgate and Greek New Testament—just those two books. He listened for about a week and then finally said, 'I hope you don't tell me I say something about the Eucharist as sacrifice.' He said that this was a problem that he had been wrestling with for 50 years.

"As every pope must, he spoke the truth, the truth of the Gospel, as God gave him light to understand it, and against the distortions of the modern age. But what is distinctive in his teaching is the love with which he taught—his manifest love of Christ and Christ's teaching and mission and his love of those he was addressing."

—Father Guy Mansani, O.S.B.

"It was a magisterial lecture. It was absolutely brilliant. You could have heard a pin drop as he talked."

Hohman appreciated that Pope Benedict continued his theological work as pope in Jesus of Nazareth, his three-volume reflection on the life of Christ, which was published under his pre-papal name, Joseph Ratzinger—a move the Mariano philosophy and theology professor thought was intriguing.

"He was aiming to engage as a theologian in the contemporary theological debate," Hohman said. "This certainly put him at a certain disadvantage. He put his ideas out, they were critiqued, [and] he had no voice to reply to his critics."

"It will be interesting to see if the retired Pope Benedict continues to engage or engages more actively in explicit theological methods and claims once he is free to speak his theological mind without the same level of restriction. Whatever Pope Benedict does theologically in retirement, Father Guy will look back on his pontificate and see love behind the way in which he carried out his teaching office.

"As every pope must, he spoke the truth, the truth of the Gospel, as God gave him light to understand it, and against the distortions of the modern age," Father Guy said. "But what is distinctive in his teaching is the love with which he taught—his manifest love of Christ and Christ’s teaching and mission and his love of those he was addressing. Benedict followed St. Paul's dictum completely to 'speak the truth in love'" (Eph 4:15).

By Sean Gallagher

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Providence Sister Diane Ris, who served as the 16th general superior of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Feb. 20 in Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of the order's motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 80.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 26 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse.


She also served for 20 years as a professor at Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky., and received the Distinguished Teacher Award, the school’s highest faculty honor, in 1989.

She was elected general superior of the Sisters of Providence in 1996, and served in that position until 2001. Surviving are two sisters, Linda VanDenBerg of Jacksonsville, Fla., and Peggy Jones of Memphis, Tenn. Memorial contributions may be made to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.

Sister Diane Ris, S.P.

Sister Diane will be remembered in many ways by different people. She was the treasured teacher of primary children, a wonderful teacher of future teachers. She served in elected leadership as both a provincial and as general superior. She appreciated as a spiritual director and retreat facilitator. Her love of St. Mother Theodore consistently informed her love of Scripture and the study of the Gospel, as God gave him light to understand it, and against the distortions of the modern age. But what is distinctive in his teaching is the love with which he taught—his manifest love of Christ and Christ’s teaching and mission and his love of those he was addressing. Benedict followed St. Paul’s dictum completely to ‘speak the truth in love’” (Eph 4:15).

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Archbishop finishes tour of deaneries with Batesville Mass

By Sean Gallagher

BATESVILLE—Despite frigid temperatures and a cold, blustery wind, Catholics from across southeastern Indiana filled St. Louis Church in Batesville on Feb. 19 for a Mass with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin.

The Mass in the Batesville Deanery was the last of the deanery Masses that Archbishop Tobin celebrated across central and southern Indiana to help him worship with and get to know Catholics throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

In his opening remarks during the Mass, Archbishop Tobin used humor to reference being at the end of his tour of the deaneries.

“I think that it’s a bit like the wedding feast at Cana because the best wine has been reserved for the last,” he jokingly said to the congregation gathered.

In his homily, Archbishop Tobin told his listeners that an early goal for him in his ministry in leading the Church in central and southern Indiana is to help Catholics get to know him.

“Each day, believe me, is a learning curve,” he said.

“And I’m not sure if it’s gotten less steep. But that’s also become something should the people he serves, the Church that he leads.”

The Gospel reading for the Mass included Jesus teaching his disciples the “Our Father,” and the importance of forgiveness.

“Jesus wants us to pray from the freedom that he gained for us in his death and resurrection,” the Archbishop Tobin said. “What can take away that freedom is hatred or resentment, which becomes something like drinking poison ourselves and hoping that the other person dies. The poison kills us.”

Archbishop Tobin also reflected in his homily, as he did in other deanery Masses, on the necessity to connect all pastoral priorities to growth in holiness.

In reflecting on the importance of this call, Archbishop Tobin showed understanding for the difficulties some Catholics in the Batesville Deanery have experienced for more than a year as they have participated in the “Connected in the Spirit” parish planning process.

The process seeks to take account of resources for the future ministry needs of parish communities across central and southern Indiana.

“Holiness is finding freedom, and that’s why Jesus asks us to forgive, to forgive all those who harm us, forgive even the Church who at times, through its representatives, has not seemed to be sympathetic or to listen or care,” Archbishop Tobin said.

“We do that because we loved the one who did the harm. If we can forgive them, for they know not what they do” [Lk 23:34]. And our mission is to be holy, to forgive and to be free.

After the Mass, a group of women from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County spoke about how important it was to attend the Mass and worship with their new shepherd.

They arrived an hour before the liturgy began “because we wanted to be sure to get good seats,” said St. Vincent Parish member Jane and Nick Bauer of St. Lawrence Parish in Louisville. They arrived an hour before the liturgy began “because we wanted to be sure to get good seats,” said St. Vincent Parish member Jane and Nick Bauer of St. Lawrence Parish in Louisville.

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“The homily was wonderful,” said Naomi Woods, also a member of St. Vincent Parish. “He’s very friendly and down-to-earth. He wants to meet everybody in the archdiocese.”

Jane and Nick Bauer of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg arrived even earlier.

Nick, who is a maintenance worker at his parish, was glad to see the church packed for the liturgy.

“It definitely shows that there’s a strong Catholic community in this part of Indiana,” said Nick. “I hope his ministry goes long and strong. He’s a very wonderful person, very personable.”

Many of the worshipers attended a reception after the Mass and stood in line to meet Archbishop Tobin.

Among those who greeted him were Pete and Debra Mack and their four young children, all members of St. Louis Parish in Batesville.

Debra sees good things for the archdiocese in the months and years to come because of Archbishop Tobin’s leadership.

“I hope that the enthusiasm that he has for the Lord and his faith just spreads throughout the archdiocese and takes it up a notch,” she said. “[Then] we can embrace that and get excited and enthused and then go out there and change the world.”

Grace Mack, a fifth-grader at St. Louis School, also spoke in praise of her new archbishop.

“It was cool to meet [him],” said Grace. “I think he’s very good at homilies. He’s funny and very easy to understand.”

Father Randall Summers, pastor of St. Louis Parish, sat at a table during the reception watching the steady flow of well-wishers waiting in line to meet the new archdiocesan shepherd.

The fact that Archbishop Tobin has been standing there for quite a long time receiving everyone and taking time to meet with everyone—“that just says volumes about how much he cares about the people in this area and the archdiocese as a whole,” said Father Summers. “I just think he’s a very genuine, kind, gentle kind of man. What a great gift it is for us to have him in the archdiocese.”

Over the course of about a month, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin visited each of the 11 deaneries of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, worshipping with and meeting many Catholics from these regions.

After the final deanery Mass on Feb. 19 at St. Louis Church in Batesville, Archbishop Tobin spoke about his experience in visiting the deaneries.

He first talked about his appreciation for the strong turnout for the Masses, which he called an early overwhelming experience.

“I humbled me, and it energizes me because of the sheer goodness of the people, and the sincerity of their witness. I don’t know how to do the best I can for the people,” Archbishop Tobin said. “And I realize that there are thousands and thousands of more people in the archdiocese more who could be my companions in this very early stage.”

“So I have to believe that people here have a great openness to the Church, to the word of God. I think we can go forward together.”

Visiting each of the deaneries also gave Archbishop Tobin an appreciation for what he described as the “diversity” that exists in the archdiocese, the archbishop’s residence and the archdiocesan offices in the extreme north.

“I don’t think that I will forget that there’s a lot of the archdiocese outside of Indianapolis,” he said. “I wouldn’t want them to feel like there’s Indianapolis and, as an afterthought, there’s the rest of it.

“Archbishop Tobin put that desire into action by celebrating a Rite of Election on Feb. 17 at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church in Floyd County.

It was the first time in the history of the archdiocese that this ritual, part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process of welcoming catechumens and candidates into the Church at the Easter Vigil, was celebrated away from SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Archbishop Tobin had in part been prepared for visiting each of the deaneries and the enthusiastic reception he received in them by the 12 years he served as the superior general of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

When he visited parishes around the world staffed by his Congregation he made it a point to sit a table during the reception watching the steady flow of well-wishers waiting in line to meet the new archdiocesan shepherd.

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“I was never sure that I’d ever come back to visit the people that I visited, say, in Burkina Faso [in Africa],” Archbishop Tobin said. “Here, I’m interested in each of these communities because these are my people. I’m going to see them again. The fact that they welcomed me with such sincerity was a marvelous experience for me.”

It has been an experience that has also affected Archbishop Tobin’s daily prayer.

“I pray for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis several times a day,” he said. “And those experiences help me put a face on the prayer. I’m not only praying for where I live, but for people I know and people I share the most important things in life with—God’s word, God’s sacraments.”

Archbishop Tobin also said that his own faith has been strengthened by meeting Catholics from across central and southern Indiana in receptions after each deanery Mass, hearing about the blessings and crosses in their lives and how their faith helped them accept them all.

“These are the people that I like to say help me get out of bed in the morning,” Archbishop Tobin said. “I might have had a late night the night before, and I might say, ‘What the heck. I’ll call in sick.’ But I get out of bed because of these people, because they get out of bed with a lot more [carez] than I ever carried.”

The Criterion Friday, March 1, 2013 Page 3
If anyone deserves a happy and peaceful retirement after a long life of service to the Catholic Church, it’s certainly Pope Benedict XVI. Indeed, his retirement for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). He accepted Pope John Paul II’s invitation of Vatican II.

He believed was the authentic interpretation regarding the liturgy and revelation. Germany, as his by Cardinal Joseph Frings of Cologne, Father Joseph Ratzinger, he was selected to found the journal Communio.

His influence on the Church, though, has been skeptical of the visit. He established even won over the secular media that had outside of Italy, plus 30 more inside Italy. Pope John Paul did, but he made 24 trips and personal, first-hand experience as I, of the burden of the Petrine ministry with great years during which you have helped me carry the word of the Petrine ministry with great competence, affection, love and faith.

With everything else he had to do, Pope Benedict also somehow found the time to write three volumes on Jesus of Nazareth, all immediately becoming best-sellers. Well before he became pope, Benedict was concerned about the secularism of modern society, especially in the West. He called for a “new evangelization,” a phrase first used by Pope Paul VI, and established a permanent office in the Vatican to oversee it.

This past October, he inaugurated a Year of Faith, to continue until November, as part of the new evangelization. He did not travel as much as Pope John Paul did, but he made 24 trips outside of Italy, plus 10 more inside Italy. He visited the United States in 2008, during which he spoke at the United Nations. He also met with some victims of clergy sex abuse. His trip to England in 2010 was a milestone, and it included a visit with the queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury. He even won over the secular media that had been skeptical of the visit. He established a cordial relationship with the former Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

Speaking of Anglicans, one of Pope Benedict’s great accomplishments was the establishment of a new ordinariate for Anglican communities to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. During Pope Benedict’s pontificate, the new vernacular translations of the Mass and other liturgical rites were approved and, in the United States, went into effect during Advent of 2011. Unfortunately, Pope Benedict’s pontificate will also be associated with the clergy sex-abuse scandal. The pope received a lot of criticism from people who didn’t realize that it was the pope, while still at the CDF, who was one of the first high-level officials of the Church to realize the seriousness of the scandal and to do something about it.

The pope has completed his pontificate with the courageous, prudent and humble decision to resign for the good of the Church. He will continue to serve the Church, as he has done throughout his long life, through prayer. We wish him many more years.

**Letters to the Editor**

Allow yourself to be interrupted by God in your life of faith

The big question is: Do we worship God or do we worship our experience of God? Do we worship God or do we worship our idea of him?

If we are to avoid a narcotic approach to religion that pushes us to stagnate from experience to experience hoping for the next bigger and better thing, we must know what we believe apart from the nice, fuzzy feelings that may or may not go along with such a belief. Feelings are good servants, but poor masters.

St. John of the Cross speaks of a second conversion which has to do with learning to live with the warm feelings, consolations and props that accompany the first “conversion” characterized by joy and passion and filled with felt consolation and a deep sense of God’s presence” are taken away. How much dissipate when the initial feelings dissolve? The ego has to break, and this breaking is like entering into a deep darkness. Without some kind of assurance, there can be no movement in love. Love is directional and transcends feelings.

The pope has completed his pontificate with the courageous, prudent and humble decision to resign for the good of the Church. He will continue to serve the Church, as he has done throughout his long life, through prayer. We wish him many more years.

**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” (Commansto Progressio, 116).

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters for the sake of space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In deciding which letters to publish, the editors take into consideration the variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually no more than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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.
Eleven Republicans file brief opposing Health and Human Services' mandate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Eleven Republican members of Congress filed a brief with the U.S. Supreme Court on Feb. 25 in one lawsuit fighting the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' mandate that religious employers must provide health insurance coverage for contraceptive services.

The brief requires facilities that dispense abortion-inducing drugs to meet the same medical standards as those that provide surgical abortions. The proposal requires a doctor who prescribes abortion-inducing drugs to examine the woman in person to schedule follow-up care.

Senator Bill 489, authored by Sen. Mike Young, R-Indianapolis, changes Indiana's informed consent standards to require women to see an ultrasound and hear the fetal heartbeat unless they are engaged in “a too-narrow definition by HHS of which religious entities are protected and whose is not,” the lawmakers' brief says.

“If we are including non-surgical abortion, which is defined as the use of RU-486, the laws are not neutral in Indiana,“ Holdman said in discussing his initial bill.

“On Feb. 25, the Indiana Senate eliminated the requirement for a second ultrasound after a chemical abortion. "We are just trying to control pharmaceutical abortion facilities in Indiana." Holdman said his proposal is intended to ensure women's safety.

Sen. Travis Holdman

"VATICAN CITY—St. Peter's Basilica is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling government interest," the lawmakers' brief says.

Glenn Tebbe, Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC)

Bills to regulate chemical abortion, improve informed consent advance

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A bill to regulate chemical abortion in Indiana and another to improve the informed consent law for abortion cleared their first hurdle on Feb. 20 when the Senate health panel passed Holdman's and Stutsman's proposals. The Church supports both measures.

Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, author of Senate Bill 371, said his proposal is intended to ensure women's safety.

"We're just trying to control and regulate abortion-inducing drugs which are not surgical abortions in the state of Indiana," Holdman said in discussing his initial bill.

"We are talking about the life of the mother and of the child. I don't believe what we are asking for is an unreasonable request. We are not prohibiting physicians or abortion clinics from continuing the practice of dispensing the medication under the FDA's guidance."

Tebbe, president of the Indiana Catholic Conference and a member of the Senate panel, "I believe it is important to treat chemical abortions the same way we treat surgical abortions.

"An examination should be required by a physician, and an ultrasound given before any chemicals are given to rule out an ectopic pregnancy, [and] that a person administering the chemical abortion have hospital admitting privileges and surgical privileges, [and] that they be certified in writing that she declines. It requires that the clinic where this is being carried out should be a licensed medical facility, the same for both surgical and chemical abortion facilities in Indiana."

"And that the clinic where this is being carried out should be a licensed medical facility, the same for both surgical and chemical abortion facilities in Indiana."

Glen Tebbe

"We rise in support of these bills to help women get the information they need and protect them through the law." the Church supports both measures.

Abortion advocates who testified in opposition of the proposals cited concerns regarding limiting access to abortion to women who would go to the Internet to find newer, more dangerous abortion-inducing pills. People who oppose the bill include Dr. John Stutsman, an Indiana University School of Medicine professor and OB/GYN who is associated with the pro-life organization Right to Life of Indianapolis, and Phoenix McCain of the Indiana Family Institute told lawmakers, "We are not in support of these bills to help women get the information they need and protect them through the law." the Church supports both measures.

Abortion advocates who testified in opposition of the proposed requirements, however, cited concerns regarding limiting access to abortion to women who would go to the Internet to find newer, more dangerous abortion-inducing pills. People who oppose the bill include Dr. John Stutsman, an Indiana University School of Medicine professor and OB/GYN who is associated with the pro-life organization Right to Life of Indianapolis, and Phoenix McCain of the Indiana Family Institute told lawmakers, "We are not in support of these bills to help women get the information they need and protect them through the law." the Church supports both measures.

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March 1
St. Lawrence Catholic Church, Fr. Kevin Hall, 4646 E. 47th St., Indianapolis. Lenten Fish Fry, 5:30-6:30 p.m., $7 dinner (adults include a main dish, two sides, French fries, biscuit w/a butter apple, iced tea or lemonade). $4.00 dinner includes pizza or grilled cheese. French fries and one side. Children ages 2 and under are free. Contact church office at 317-546-4065. Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 5034 N. Downey Ave., Indianapolis. Fish fry, fish or chicken, $10.00 for adults, children's meals, carry-out available, $3.5-4.8 per person. Information: 317-635-7291.

St. Mary Church, 7500 Navellon Rd., Indianapolis. Fish fry, fried or fish sticks, $7.00 dinner, $4.00 chicken. Sr. Jane and the Fish Fry committee. Information: 317-882-0319 or stmarychurchindy@comcast.net.

St. Pius X Parish, 2290 S. Drive, Indianapolis. Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic Youth Rally, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., $15 per person. Information: 317-231-0767 or t.reckley@sbcglobal.net.

St. Bartholomew Church, 13067 St. Rd., Columbus. Confirmation Sales, “Young Musician Concert,” 7 p.m., $8.00 at 515-378-2137 or 317-872-5088 or mknueven@stmalachy.org.

March 2
St. Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, during room, 8:00 a.m.-noon, $175 per person, members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 812-987-9090 or bobbied@archlafayette.org.

St. Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oakland Road, Indianapolis. Reflections for your Healing Heart,” 5:30 p.m., $5 per person, free-will offering. Information: 317-865-0910 or mknueven@stmalachy.org.

March 3
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 5353 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Taize prayer service, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-356-7291 or parrchdiocese@ollindy.org.

St. Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oakland Road, Indianapolis. “Reflections for your Healing Heart,” 5:30 p.m., $5 per person, free-will offering. Information: 317-865-0910 or mknueven@stmalachy.org.

March 4
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. Parish Mission, “Impact the Second Vatican Council had on our life as Church, religious life and ministry,” Expressions of St. Joseph of Carondelet, presenters. 7 p.m. Information: 317-638-5055 or shparish@shegful.org.

March 5
St. Michael Parish in Greenfield showing film to raise funds for safe havens for youths

St. Michael Parish in Greenfield is hosting two showings of Restless Heart: The Confessions of St. Augustine for 5:30 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. on March 19 at the Legacy Cinema Theater, 2347 W. Main St., Greenfield. All proceeds will go to The Landing, a safe haven for youths in Greenfield and the surrounding area.

Events Calendar

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin to speak at Catholic Business Exchange on March 15

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin will be the keynote speaker at the Catholic Business Exchange (CBE) on March 15 at the Northside Knights of Columbus, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. The event begins with Mass at 6:30 a.m. with Archbishop Tobin as the principal celebrant. The liturgy is followed by breakfast and an address by Archbishop Tobin. The event concludes at 8:30 a.m.

The cost is $15 per CBE member, and $21 for non-members and guests. The cost includes breakfast. Reservations are required by noon on March 13. Due to meal planning, walk-ins cannot be accepted. To register, log on to www.catholicbusinessexchange.com. For more information, contact Jim Liston at jim@CatholicBusinessExchange.org.

St. Mark Church in Indianapolis to host Inclusion Sunday celebration on March 10

St. Mark Church in Indianapolis will celebrate its 12th annual Inclusion Sunday during the 9:30 a.m. Mass on March 10, followed by a fair in Shafer Hall. This celebration is held in March to highlight Disabilities Awareness Month. Inclusion Sunday will include several additions to the 9:30 a.m. Mass. There will be a presentation during the children’s liturgy on “Simplicity—A shaggy member of the Canine Companions for Independence— and his owner. Members of the south side Special Religious Education (SPRED) group will be hospitality ministers and ministry participants. Cantors and lectors for the Mass will be members of the Inclusion Ministry, SPRED and other diverse areas.

After the Mass, a Disabilities Awareness Fair will be held in Shafer Hall, which connects to the church. The fair will have an emphasis on resources for people with autism, but will have information from a variety of other areas as well.

Joe Lorenz, a SPRED participant who is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis and visually impaired and autistic, will be using his keyboard and singing at the SPRED display.

There will also be face painting, and coffee and donuts will be served, as well as gluten-free treats.

St. Mark Church is located at 353 E. Edgewood Ave. For more information, call 317-782-8426.

Celebrating its history

In celebration of its 175th anniversary, St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute offered tours of the church on Feb. 10. Donna McKenzie, pastoral associate for adult faith formation, explains the stained-glass window of the Holy Spirit in the dome above the main altar during one of the tours. A window, pictured separately, is one of the many stained-glass windows made by the Tyrolean Art Glass Company of Innsbruck, Austria. The windows were installed after a fire in 1934 destroyed the interior of the church.
Archbishop: Reforming of curia ‘reasonable priority’ for new pope

By Sean Gallagher

Archbishop Tobin said that curial reform is “a struggle for a bureaucracy that has been around for the better part of two millennia,” he added. At the same time, Archbishop Tobin takes a balanced view when reflecting on the curia—something he said he didn’t always do as head of the congregation.

“As one who used to severely criticize the curia before I worked there, I was told by one historian that you have to remember that the curia saw the Church through church wars and depressions and kept it going, even when there wasn’t a pope,” he said. “My experience is that there’s a lot of goodness in the Roman Curia, a lot of people who are very devout Catholics. But there are structures and trends that blunt the effectiveness of the curia.”

One of those trends, he said, is the tendency of Italians to dominate the staffs of various Vatican offices.

Although the congregation in which he served has a Brazilian cardinal as its prefect and a formerly American, as the person second in charge, Archbishop Tobin noted that the majority of its approximately 40 staff members were Italian.

“What I would like to do is turn the curia into a true service of the Roman pontiff, to which you should come to advance the mission of the Church, the evangelical mission of the Church. The Roman Curia exists to give effect to the will of the bishop of Rome; that’s the only reason it exists. ‘The Roman Curia exists to give effect to the will of the Roman pontiff; that’s the only reason it exists.’”

Archbishop Tobin said that he can hope that in part “if dioceses are willing to pay a bit [with priests], and if the Holy See is willing to pay.”

“In a certain sense, it’s much more economical to employ religious Italians. There are a lot of reasons for that,” Archbishop Tobin noted. “We also use Italian for the working language. A lot of very talented people just don’t want to learn Italian and don’t want to work in that kind of environment, which is unfortunate.”

He also noted that the trend of filling the curia with Italians increased during Pope Benedict’s papacy in part due to the management of Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. But internationalizing the curia, including its lower level positions, can be challenging, Archbishop Tobin said.

“Would we want to be as Italian as we can be?...It’s very easy, and with goodwill, to slide into all the issues of the Church and the state in Italy.”

Author George Weigel in his new book "Evangelical Catholicism"

Archbishop: Reforming of curia ‘reasonable priority’ for new pope

Since Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation on Feb. 11, various commentators on Church affairs—and some Church leaders—have said that reforming the Roman Curia needs to be a priority of the next pontificate. These calls come in the wake of recent scandals in the curia, most notably last year’s VatiLeaks scandal in which the pope’s butler was convicted of releasing confidential papal documents to the press that highlighted disputes among various members of the curia.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin of Indianapolis agrees that reform in the curia is needed, and has several years of firsthand experience of working in and with the curia that informs his analysis of the situation.

He is the curia as secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Com_ceated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life from 2009 until his appointment to lead the Archidiocese of Indianapolis last year.

Prior to that, he often worked closely with the curia when he served as a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, more commonly known as the Redemptorists, from 1997 to 2009.

Speaking in a Feb. 21 interview with The Criterion, Archbishop Tobin said that curial reform “is a reasonable priority to have, not so much to avoid scandal, but to provide for a government that will help the Holy Father exercise his Petrine service. That’s a struggle for a bureaucracy that has been around for the better part of two millennia,” he added. At the same time, Archbishop Tobin takes a balanced view when reflecting on the curia—something he said he didn’t always do as head of the congregation.

“As one who used to severely criticize the curia before I worked there, I was told by one historian that you have to remember that the curia saw the Church through church wars and depressions and kept it going, even when there wasn’t a pope,” he said. “My experience is that there’s a lot of goodness in the Roman Curia, a lot of people who are very devout Catholics. But there are structures and trends that blunt the effectiveness of the curia.”

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In one of his last public appearances, Pope Benedict XVI told an overflow crowd in St. Peter’s Square on Feb. 24 that his upcoming retirement does not mean he is abandoning the Church, but that he will be serving it in a new way, through prayer and meditation.

At noon, the pope appeared at his window in the Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus, a papal Sunday ritual that will not be repeated until after the election of a new pope.

Despite the blustery weather, turnout was several times the usual for such occasions—easily more than 150,000, with some estimates as high as a quarter of a million. The crowd filled the square, except where prevented by barricades, and spilled out into the Via della Conciliazione. Many groups held signs expressing gratitude and affection—“You are not alone,” one read—and national flags from countries as far away as Brazil.

Benedict was the “teach: solid, strong and unwavering and yet kind and compassionate and loving at the same time,” said Baltazar Aguirre of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Daly City, Calif. He and his sisters with the same love of God.”

“I may continue to serve [the Church] with the same dedication and the same love, with the same sharing of the gospel reading (Lk 9:28-36). “Prayer leads one back to the path, to action.”

“Christian existence,” he said, “consists in a continuous climbing of the mountain for an encounter with God, in order to descend again bearing the love and strength derived from it, so as to serve our brothers and sisters with the same love of God.”

If the relevance to his Feb. 28 resignation was not already clear, the pope made the connection explicit.

“I feel that this word of God is directed in particular to me, in this moment of my life. The Lord calls me to ‘climb the mountain,’ to dedicate myself even more to prayer and meditation. But this does not mean abandoning the Church. On the contrary, if God asks this of me it is precisely so that I may continue to serve [the Church] with the same dedication and the same love with which I have done so till now, but in a way more suited to my age and strength.”

Speaking these words, Pope Benedict was interrupted twice by applause, and afterward received an ovation 30 seconds long. He smiled broadly, thanked the crowd, and added, “Let us thank God for the bit of sun he has granted us.”

Pope Benedict to be ‘pope emeritus’ or ‘Roman pontiff emeritus’

“Prayer doesn’t mean isolating one’s self from the world and its contradictions,” the pope said, in his commentary on the day’s Gospel reading (Lk 9:28-36). “Prayer leads one back to the path, to action.”

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI will continue to be known as Pope Benedict and addressed as “His Holiness,” but after his resignation, he will add the title “emeritus” in one of two acceptable forms, either “pope emeritus” or “Roman pontiff emeritus.”

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said decisions about how the pope would be addressed and what he would wear were made in consultation with Pope Benedict and with Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the chamberlain of the Church, along with others.

After Feb. 28, Pope Benedict will continue to wear a white cassock, but it will be a simplified version of the papal vestment, mainly without the little white cape piece on the shoulders, Father Lombardi told reporters on Feb. 26.

Pope Benedict will leave behind his emblematic red shoes, Father Lombardi said. Instead, he will wear brown shoes, beginning with loafers he was given as a gift last March during a visit to Leon, Mexico. The Jesuit said the pope has found the zapatos to be very comfortable.

The safety of the pope emeritus will be ensured by the Vatican police. Father Lombardi said.

Three hours before his pontificate ends, Pope Benedict intended to fly by helicopter to the papal summer villa at Castel Gandolfo.

At 8 p.m. on Feb. 28—the exact moment Pope Benedict has said he will cease being pope—the Swiss Guards stationed at the main doors of the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo will withdraw and close the doors, Father Lombardi said. The Vatican gendarmes will take over.

Pope Benedict also will give the College of Cardinals his “fisherman’s ring” and seal to be broken, as is usually done upon the death of a pope, the spokesman said. The pope will go back to wearing an episcopal ring he wore as a cardinal.

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Pope Benedict saw Jews and Muslims as allies in defending belief in God

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In trying to help people understand how belief in God is a natural part of life and provides grounding for the values that protect human dignity and peaceful coexistence, Pope Benedict XVI saw Jews and Muslims as natural allies.

At the beginning of his pontificate, his relations with the Jewish and Muslim communities were marked by alternating tensions and new initiatives.

During his pontificate, Pope Benedict visited synagogues in three countries and mosques in three others. However, despite his efforts to promote new forms of dialogue with the followers of Islam, in the field of Catholic-Muslim dialogue, many people remember Pope Benedict primarily for remarks about Mohammed in a 2006 speech.

His relationship with the world’s Jewish communities was not always smooth either, primarily because of his decision in 2009 to lift the excommunication of a traditionalist bishop who denied the extent of the Holocaust.

As recently as last October, Pope Benedict affirmed his deep commitment to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

But he also said, “a weakness of this otherwise extraordinary text has gradually emerged: It speaks of religion solely in a positive way, and it disregates the sick and distorted forms of religion which, from the historical and theological viewpoints, are of far-reaching importance,” and which explain why Christians for centuries had been mostly critical of other religions.

When some 300 religious leaders joined him in Assisi, Italy, in October 2011 to mark the 25th anniversary of Blessed John Paul II’s prayer for peace meeting, Pope Benedict said that as more and more people become convinced religion is a major source of tension in the world, religious believers have to be honest about their communities’ past and present.

“As a Christian I want to say at this point: Yes, it is true, in the course of history, force has also been used in the name of the Christian faith. We acknowledge it with great shame. But it is utterly clear that this was an abuse of the Christian faith. And I very evidently contradict its true nature,” he told the religious leaders.

At the same, he insisted that history also has shown the danger of denying God’s existence because “when man no longer recognizes any criterion or any judge above himself,” he feels free to unleash his fury to obtain what he wants. Explaining his May 2009 visit to the YLB Land, Pope Benedict visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, prayed at the Western Wall—Judaism’s holiest site—and met with Israel’s chief rabbis and with Jewish leaders from throughout the country.

He used his meeting with the Jewish community to reaffirm the fact that “the Catholic Church is irrevocably committed to the path chosen at the Second Vatican Council for a genuine and lasting rapprochement with the Jewish people.

“As ‘Nostra Aetate’ affirmed, ‘The Church continues to value the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews and develops its understanding and respect through biblical and theological studies as well as fraternal dialogue,’ ” he said.

Pope Benedict’s Holy Land trip brought further rapprochement with Muslim leaders as the pope visited a mosque in Jordan, made a major address to Muslim scholars there and visited the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, one of Islam’s holiest sites.

In the 2010 book, Light of the World, Pope Benedict said Catholics and Muslims have two basic things in common: “We both defend major religious values—faith in God and obedience to God—and we both need to situate ourselves correctly in modernity.”

As the Catholic Church did at the Second Vatican Council, he said, the world’s Muslims now are grappling with questions like “What is tolerance? How are truth and tolerance related? In this context, the question of whether tolerance includes the right to change religions also emerges. It is hard for the Islamic partners to accept this. Their argument is that once someone has come to the truth, he can no longer turn back.”

Pope Benedict XVI and Mustafa Cagrici, the grand mufti of Istanbul, pray in the Blue Mosque in Istanbul in this 2006 file photo. In trying to help people understand how belief in God is a natural part of life and provides grounding for the values that protect human dignity and peaceful coexistence, Pope Benedict saw Jews and Muslims as natural allies.

Pope Benedict XVI greets Rabbi Elie Touf, the former chief rabbi of Rome, during a visit to the main synagogue in Rome in this 2010 file photo.

Addressing the participants, the pope said that professing faith in one God, the creator of all humanity, obliges Catholics and Muslims to respect one another and to work together to defend human rights and help those who are suffering. The commandments of love of God and love of neighbor are at “the heart of Islam and Christianity alike,” he said.

Pope Benedict wrote about the ongoing importance of “Nostra Aetate,” the council’s declaration on relations with other religions, for Catholics in increasingly multicultural societies.

The Vatican’s website, cnsnews.com.

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his almost eight-year pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI impressed the world as a teacher, guiding Catholics to see the sources of the faith and saying modern society not to turn to other gods. 

Citing his age and diminishing energy, the 85-year-old pope announced on Feb. 11 that he would resign effective on Feb. 28 and would spend the rest of his life in prayer. As pope of the universal Church, he has influenced every country on earth in his daily homilies—dozens—Bible verses and sermons to criticize the world on the foundational beliefs and practices of Christians ranging from the time of St. Augustine to the present day. He has served in his 58-year papal office during the 1962-65 Second Vatican Council, he made the first public appeal to the pope to see what we are overly eager to interpret the references of the faith in favor of trends that transgressed the bounds of the Catholic Church's timeless traditions. 

Ultimately, the Vatican continued to highlight the Church's moral teachings on issues such as abortion, life in the womb, medical care, marriage and homosexuality. But the pope's message to the faithful at large focused less on single issues and more on the risk of losing the basic. The pope worked closely with the human being and the Creator. And consistently warned the West that the current loss of values could not be tolerated. His was a doctrine that focused on the foundations of their religion. The pope continued the statement on the importance of the Bible's positive influence in the world. 

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Catholic Missionary Overcomes Terrible Accident, Finds New Mission Helping Handicapped

When an oncoming car slammed into Grace Okalany in 1990, she had no idea God was using the event to make her a more effective disciple for his people.

In the moment of the accident, all she could think about was her pain. Grace’s hip, pelvis and femur were severely broken. Doctors tried implanting an artificial hip, but her body rejected it. For three long years, she struggled through recovery and exorcising rehabilitation at a treatment center in Nairobi, Kenya.

“Since I am handicapped myself, I can relate to the young adults; they open up to me.”

— Grace Okalany

To this day, she bears the physical burden of that accident — one leg is shorter than the other and she must use crutches to walk.

“I felt so weak,” Grace recalled. “I thought God had left me to die in the hospital.”

Grace returned to Uganda after her treatment was complete and there met Father John Ahamisibwe, coordinator of Wisdom Training Center, an outreach run by the Montfort Fathers in western Uganda. The ministry is a vocational training center where handicapped young adults living in poverty learn life-skills and income-generating careers like tailoring, shoe repair, and agriculture. Fr. John convinced Grace to join his work — and she immediately saw how the car accident had uniquely prepared her for this special service at the center.

“Since I am handicapped myself, I can relate to the young adults; they open up to me.”

— Grace Okalany

As Cross Catholic Outreach continues its range of relief work to help the poor overseas, its efforts are being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S.

“We’ve received an impressive number of endorsements from American Bishops and Archbishops — 60 Catholic leaders at last count,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach (CCO).

“They’re impressed by the fact that we’ve done outreach in more than 40 countries and that we undertake a variety of projects; everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor.”

Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis sent one of the more recent letters of encouragement, writing: “It is my hope that this ministry will continue to flourish and reach as many people as possible. I will inform the priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis of the important work that Cross Catholic Outreach does and elicit their prayers and financial support for the service you provide to the less fortunate around the world.”

In addition to praising the work CCO accomplishes, many of the Bishops and Archishops are also impressed by the unique collaborative relationship Cross Catholic Outreach has with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum in Rome. This allows the charity to participate in the mercy ministries of the Holy Father himself. In his praise of CCO, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati underscored this unique connection.

“Cross Catholic Outreach’s close collaboration with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum is a source of encouragement,” the Archbishop said. “The Holy See has unique knowledge of local situations throughout the world through its papal representatives in nearly two hundred countries and through its communications with Bishops and others who care for the poor and needy in every corner of the world.”

CCO president, Jim Cavnar, explained the significance of this connection.

“Our collaboration with Cor Unum allows us to fund outreach in virtually any area of the world and we have used method in special cases — to help the victims of natural disasters, for example,” he said. “It only represents a small part of our overall ministry, but it can be a very important benefit in those situations.”

To support the worldwide outreach of Cross Catholic Outreach, look for the ministry brochure enclosed in this issue of the paper or mail your donation to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. A00962, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558. All contributions to the ministry are tax deductible.
In the ninth chapter of the book of John, the Apostle describes Jesus giving a blind man sight to glorify God. In the story, John shows how faith and a simple dab of mud were used as instruments of a miracle — ultimately giving new hope to the handicapped man.

Even today, thousands of years later, we recognize this act as an amazing example of our Lord’s power and love. When Sister Emma Kulumbe looks to this story, she wishes she could, like Jesus, smear mud on the eyes of deaf/blind children to cure them. She and the other Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary ache to have their wards transformed.

Since she hasn’t been so blessed with a miracle, Sister Emma does what she can instead. She helps the children blossom and find hope in other ways. “These children have something to offer that the world needs. We help them glorify God through their faith, joy and talents,” she said. “We work with them to bring those blessings out.” This service is not without its tears, however. Many of the children have histories of past suffering that pierce the nun’s heart with grief.

Sr. Emma recalls one deaf/blind boy named John [his name is changed here] who Sr. Emma brought her to tears. John’s parents worked in remote fields each day and left him home alone while they toiled. The young boy ate nothing all day and slept outside of the hut at night because his parents forbade him from sharing the space with the rest of the family.

One day Sr. Emma visited John and saw he was naked while his brothers and sisters were clothed. M atthew 25:36 came to her mind: “…I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me…” She immediately brought John some clothes and promised to visit again.

Sr. Emma said this kind of neglect is sadly common for physically or mentally handicapped children in Africa and around the world. In many countries, including Malawi, disabled children are considered a curse, and parents prefer to hide them away to avoid the social stigma of raising a “cursed” child.

“Some children couldn’t eat by themselves when we discovered them,” Sr. Emma said. “We showed them how to eat, how to wash their hands, how to hold a cup and how to go to the toilet.”

Worldwide, millions of handicapped children in developing countries live in the shadows like John, forced to the edges of humanity by social stigmas and, more often, extreme poverty. Parents of disabled children in the developing world are too poor to properly care for them — when there’s barely enough food for the family to eat, much-needed physical therapy, special schools and doctor’s visits are out of the question.

“Physically and mentally handicapped children are largely ignored in many areas of the world,” said Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a Catholic ministry alleviating poverty among “the least of these” worldwide. “Even in cases where the parents are attentive, they are often too poor to provide the special care a disabled child needs to lead a fulfilling life. The poor can’t afford surgeries to cure a club foot or cleft palate, nor can they pay for special boarding schools or therapy sessions. Poor families often live in deplorable slums or in far-flung rural areas, and it’s a struggle just to eat each day and keep a roof over their heads.”

“With support from its many American Catholic benefactors, Cross Catholic Outreach is working to bring accessible care to disabled children in dozens of developing countries. It strives to carry the light of Christ to those living and suffering in the shadows.”

As an example of the good that can be done, Cavnar pointed to the story of M ishineca Isorena, a 10-year-old girl with Down’s syndrome in the Philippines. M ishineca was taken in by a Cross Catholic Outreach-sponsored school when she was 5 years old. At the time, she couldn’t walk or talk. Her development was slowed by severe malnutrition and a cleft palate, nor can they pay for special surgeries to cure a club foot or cleft palate.

For some of the ministries serving handicapped children, a significant portion of their budgets come through Cross Catholic Outreach. Such outreaches would either close or need to reduce their services drastically without that help.

“The work of these outreaches wouldn’t be possible without outside support. Fortunately, American Catholics remain involved and their generosity is amazing, especially toward disabled children,” Cavnar said. “I’m confident my fellow Catholics will continue to see the eternal worth of the ‘least of these’ among us and keep supporting our work — the kind of work that touches children like John in Malawi.”

Because John’s parents have allowed him to live and study at Sister Emma’s ministry, the young boy’s life has taken a remarkable turn from its difficult start. Where there was darkness, there is now light. Where there was despair, new hope is taking root. It is the kind of physical and spiritual transformation that only God can orchestrate.

“The Lord has brought us together to serve handicapped children and save them from the darkness,” Sr. Emma said. “He uses our outreach, a dedicated staff and financial support from America to achieve this. Praise God!”

How to Help:

Your help is needed for Cross Catholic Outreach to bring Christ’s mercy to the poorest of the poor. To make a donation, use the enclosed postage-paid brochure or mail a gift to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. A C00962, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.
CHICAGO (CNS)—St. Mary Magdalene has come to the Chicago area—that is a relic of the saint often referred to as the apostle to the Apostles.

On Feb. 20, a relicary carrying a portion of her tibia (leg bone) began a two-week tour to churches in the archdiocese. It then will continue to other Illinois locations during March.

“The purpose of the tour is to share the holiness of the relic and tell the story of the saint who is recorded as the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” said Paul Lawlor, coordinator of the Illinois tour.

“St. Mary Magdalene was told to go and tell the others,” said the first stop was St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in River Forest.

“St. Mary Magdalene is the patronesess of our order,” said Dominican Father Thomas McDermott, pastor. “Dominicans are the custodians of the relic. We are grateful and blessed for the opportunity to have her relic at our church.”

Tradition has it that some years after the Crucifixion, Mary Magdalene was imprisoned. Upon her release, she and other followers of Jesus were cast out to sea on the shores of Palestine without sails, oars or supplies. The boat miraculously came to shore on the coast of Gaul (France) in a town near Marseille.

After preaching with her companions and converting the whole of Provence, Mary Magdalene retired to a mountain cave on the holy cave, and spent the last 30 years of her life in solitude.

In an interview before it arrived, Father Charles Fanelli, pastor, anticipated "Pilgrims over hundreds of years have traveled to La Sainte-Baume to pray and give thanks for the intercession of St. Mary Magdalene. Now those in the Chicago area and other Illinois towns will only have to travel to our parish or one of the other churches hosting the relicary to do the same," added Father Thomas.

Another Chicago parish that hosted the relicary was St. Mary of the Mount.

In an interview before it arrived, Father Charles Fanelli, pastor, anticipated that other Illinois locations during March.

A letter of authenticity from French Bishop Dominique de Vrville published a papal bull, or proclamation, for the establishment of the Dominicans at La Saine-Baume and St. Maximin, the town where the Basilica of St. Mary Magdalene is located, 20 miles from the cave. The Dominicans have returned to the holy cave, and spent the last 30 years of her life in solitude.

Cardinal Dolan welcomes opportunity to discuss mutual concerns with president

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a letter to President Barack Obama, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan accepted the White House offer to continue discussing the Catholic Church’s concerns about abortion, traditional marriage and federal rules governing implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

“We accept your invitation to address these areas together, always with the civility we have come to expect in conversations,” the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said in the letter sent on Feb. 22.

“We welcome specifically an opportunity to resolve the perplexing issue of the redefining of our religious ministries,” Cardinal Dolan wrote. “Surely, we should be able to find some ground where neither of us is asked to compromise conscience.

In response to a call from Catholic News Service on Feb. 26, a White House official said there was no immediate reaction from Obama to the cardinal’s letter.

The cardinal also renewed good wishes and offered prayers for Obama as he prepared to tackle a long list of goals for his second term that were outlined in his inaugural and State of the Union addresses.

Recalling a meeting with Obama at the White House, Cardinal Dolan pointed to the president’s stated desire “to communicate with the good of our beloved country,” particularly in the Church’s educational, charitable and health care services.

“The bishops of the United States cannot rest so long as the vital ministry the Catholic Church carries out—for people of all or no creeds—remains threatened due to an erosion or loss of the constitutional guarantee of the freedom to serve without violation of our faith,” he said.

Cardinal Dolan said Obama’s second term “provides a special opportunity” to strengthen and promote marriage, family, churches and faith-based ministries of service in order to “keep the American dream alive and well for generations to come.”

The letter also listed a series of issues in which the U.S. bishops are ready to work with Obama “for the good of all people who live in and love our nation.”

Cardinal Dolan specifically mentioned the bishops’ support for:

- Reasonable regulation of firearms.
- Increased attention to the needs of mentally ill people.
- Immigration reform.
- Access to comprehensive, affordable and “life-affirming” health care, “which we believe includes the pre-born child, the undocumented and the dying.”
- International assistance to the world’s poorest people.
- Protecting the environment.
- Education reform, including parental choice.
- Developing a financially responsible federal budget that protects the poor, sick and elderly.
- Peace in the Middle East and an end to the war in Afghanistan.
- Efforts to strengthen family life and uphold the importance of responsible fatherhood.

“These issues of mutual importance are hardly new. … All of them flow from God’s own holy word in the Bible, and the truth about the human person revealed in Jesus as faithfully passed on by the Church,” Cardinal Dolan wrote.

“They also resonate, as you have observed, from the most noble values of America, which the founders of our country identified in the Declaration of Independence as ‘self-evident truths,’ ” he added.

St. Mary Magdalene relic ‘reminds us she was real,’ says tour organizer

Asinhit Andrew venerates the relic of St. Mary Magdalene on Feb. 20 at St. Vincent Ferrer Church in River Forest, Ill., the first stop on a one-month tour in Illinois. A relicary carrying a portion of her tibia (leg bone) will travel for two weeks to churches in the Archdiocese of Chicago before it moves on to other dioceses.

“St. Mary Magdalene’s relic reminds us she was real, made of flesh and bones, just like us,” she said. “Through this tour, St. Mary Magdalene will be able to preach more, even though it’s some 2,000 years later.”
Reconciliation has ancient roots and developed over time

By Daniel S. Mulhall

According to the Gospel of St. Mark, Jesus healed people from a host of maladies, so much so that people were astonished (Mk 6:2). Jesus also frequently forgave the person’s sins before healing the body. The Church remembers Jesus’ healing touch of body and soul in the sacraments of healing, particularly the anointing of the sick and penance, or reconciliation.

While the practice of spiritual healing through the forgiveness of sins is a tradition as old as the Church itself, the practice of confessing individual sins and receiving absolution from a priest or bishop developed over time. And this sacramental practice has changed greatly.

In the early Church, the confession of sins was not a common practice. In baptism, people were washed clean of sin, and no other means of forgiveness was thought needed. People who strayed from the narrow path would return to God through prayer, fasting and works of mercy, and would be forgiven their minor sins in the eucharistic celebration.

Then came the Roman persecution of the second and third centuries when Christians were forced to renounce their eucharistic celebration. For the most severe sin, there was no forgiveness. People who strayed from the narrow path would return to God through prayer, fasting and works of mercy, and would be forgiven their minor sins in the eucharistic celebration.

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As a result of this changed practice, the focus of the sacrament came to be seen as more about punishment and retribution, and less about healing, or helping people to amend their lives and return to the Church.

What started out as a way to encourage people to seek forgiveness frequently for their sinfulness soon came to be seen as so harsh that people seldom took advantage of it. During the next 600 years, the structure of the sacrament changed little. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 ordered that anyone who had reached the age of reason should once a year “individually confess all their sins in a faithful manner to their own priest.” This council also instituted the seal of confession—what was revealed in confession had to be kept secret—and determined that

receive forgiveness, one privately confessed serious sins to a priest, fulfilled a required penance needed to bring one to spiritual wholeness, and accepted the forgiveness of the priest on behalf of the Church.

Over a period of centuries, the monks developed books called penitentials that listed the common sins people confessed and the penance that would accompany absolution. This type of forgiveness could happen multiple times during one’s life and was no longer connected to Lent.

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regular confession and absolution were necessary for a “proper Christian life.”

Two hundred years later, in 1439, the Council of Florence finally defined the sacrament of penance. To be forgiven, the penitent must be contrite for his or her sins, be determined not to sin again, confess all sins (to the best of one’s memory), complete the penance given by the priest (prayer, fasting, giving alms), and be forgiven by the priest who uses these words: “I absolve you.” During the Protestant Reformation, the bishops at the Council of Trent reaffirmed in 1551 the requirements of and need for the sacrament. All mortal sins had to be confessed yearly.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) called for the reform of all sacraments, including penance. The reform of penance focused on a return to spiritual healing, the reconciliation of the person with the Church and with God, and less on punishment for sins.

In 1973 Pope Paul VI formally gave the sacrament the name “reconciliation.”

(Father Lawrence E. Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.) †
Faith, Hope and Charity/
David Siler
Understanding poverty and its implications

January was Poverty Awareness Month in the United States. For Catholics, we are keenly aware every day of the struggles of more and more of our children and families to make ends meet and provide basic human needs. I was appalled recently when I was listening to a popular radio talk show program when a caller suggested that recipients of welfare be listed in local newspapers so that “the hard-working people who can know who they are so that we can harass them if you wish them to shut their lazy butt off the couch.” Although usually a bit less harsh, I hear this type of sentiment regularly.

Unfortunately, there is very little real understanding of our social welfare systems. Most people who have never been on any type of assistance have no idea what it takes to qualify or how much or how long assistance is given.

I will be first to admit that our system has gross inefficiencies and that it is possible to switch assistance without suggesting that we altogether abandon our commitment to the common good in our country. As anyone who has received government assistance will tell you, it is not a get-rich-quick scheme or a stream of income that provides anything but a bare-minimum lifestyle. At Catholic Charities, we work to fill the gaps—and there are many—in the government-administered social welfare system. These supports are not perfect by any means. There is much more work to be done to make our system more efficient and fairer. We need to ensure that we can maintain some level of human dignity when they experience a major health crisis or a period of disability or other crises that lead to an inability to earn income.

Catholic Charities and the Catholic Social Welfare programs—whether public or faith-based—need to have both an educational and psychological component to provide for a level of human dignity when necessary, and to “tramp line” to help validate the causes and families permanently out of poverty.

Enhancements to the trampoline aspect of our welfare system are possible. It is not good for any part of our human family to suffer the many indignities experienced as the result of poverty.

Investments in education, health and well-being, entrepreneurial ventures, job skills training, social skills training and the like are all wise places to focus our financial and human resources that can put the bounces in the trampoline for an individual and his or her family.

The need for a safety net will always exist because there is a segment of the population that will always be poor and dependent—the intellectually or developmentally disabled, for instance.

But the vast majority of people on welfare don’t want to stay there, but do not have the education or skills training or the wherewithal to find their way out of poverty. This is where you and I come in.

To learn more about our nation’s welfare system so that you can be educated and to help dispel the many myths that are perpetuated, go to www.welfareinfo.org/programs/.

And to learn more about the current issues and how the Catholic Church is doing it, go to www.pwveillance.org and www.catholicwelfareblog.org.

(2008)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 3, 2013

- Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15
- Ephesians 10:1-6, 10-12

In the first reading, from the Book of Exodus, Moses encounters God. Moses was tending his father-in-law’s flock when suddenly an angel appeared and led Moses to a bush. The bush, although on fire, did not burn. Then out of the fire God spoke. The bush is a symbol of the God of Alakhim, Isaac and Jacob. His identity was clear. God always dealt with the people, knew of their plight. He was intervening in the situation to give the people relief. As events unfolded, Moses was the instrument of this relief by leading the people out of Egypt. The reading reveals God’s immediacy, in God’s relationship with the people. He is all-knowing and above all. Moses cannot stand to look upon God’s face. Moses, by removing his footwear, shows respect even for the ground upon which he meets God. Yet, God speaks his divine name to Moses. It was a supreme revelation. In the Hebrew tradition, names are associated with the very being of the person. To know a person’s name was to be given access to the person’s identity. God freely spoke the very name of his being. St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the second reading. Corinth’s Christian community challenged Paul since the city was a reservoir of excesses and moral outrages, and Christians were vulnerable. Not surprisingly, Paul warned the Corinthians of the temptations surrounding and bombarding them. He encouraged them, taught them and sought to inspire them. Recalling the history of God’s people, Paul insists that without God’s guidance, without the nourishment provided by him, the people will die. What they had from earthly resources will not protect or sustain them. With God, they will live and live forever.

St. Luke’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. This reading gives one of the rare glimpses of Pontius Pilate in the Gospels outside the Passion Narratives. It is hardly complimentary to him. The Roman governor who sentenced Jesus to death is ruthless and unmerciful. An ancient tradition is that he was recalled to Rome because of his brutality, a brutality too vicious even by accepted standards of Roman imperial governance. He had no regard for the God of Israel, or for the religion of the people who worshipped the God of Israel. Jesus said that the victims of Pilate’s impetuous cruelty did not deserve what they received. Jesus referred then to an accidental disaster, when 18 people were killed by a falling tower in Siloam. He noted that they, too, were innocent. However, all those to whom Jesus referred in the end died, innocent or not. They could not control evil decisions or others or mishaps of nature or invented things. He warns against the temptation to reform, or else they too will face doom. Then, Jesus tells the parable of the barren fig tree. The owner wants to destroy the tree, but the vinedresser pleads for another year, for enough time to nourish the tree in the hope that it will bear fruit.

Reflection

In these Lenten readings, the Church is very frank. As Paul said, abandoning God reaps a whirlwind of calamity, sweeping into its wake every innocent. We will may be victims of human coldness and human evil, as were the victims of Pilate’s outrage. We may be victims of accidents, as were those killed when the tower fell. It is hard, but humans must face the fact that very often they experience calamity if they rely upon themselves alone. They cannot always withstand human power as big as Pilate’s. They cannot control nature.

God alone is their sure support. Lovingly, God provides guidance, support, and eternal life in Jesus. The question is whether or not we humbly will turn to God and obey God. God will not overwhelm us. He will not entrap us as if we were prey. We must decide. †

Offering Masses for the dead is an ancient practice rooted in Scripture and tradition

Or is a common practice of Catholics to request Masses for the deceased. How can the blessings a Mass a person who has died and presumably has already been judged? (New York)

The custom of Catholics praying for the dead has its origin in Scripture and tradition, which states as the twin pillars of Catholic faith and practice. First, with Scripture, in the Old Testament’s Second Book of Maccabees in Chapter 12, the Jewish leader Judas Maccabees prays for his troops who have been slain. Some of the fallen soldiers have been found wearing pagan amulets taken in plunder, which would have violated the law of Deuteronomy, and Judas asks that God forgive their sin. The New Testament shows in the Second Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy that St. Paul prays for a deceased man named Onesiphorus that the Lord “may grant him to find mercy” (2 Tim 1:18).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states in #1032 that “from the beginning, the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the eucharistic sacrifice, so that, through the purification, they may attain the beatific vision of God.” During the days of Roman persecution, the ancient Christians would gather in the catacombs to pray for the dead, and Tertullian in the early third century wrote that once a year, Christians would gather to offer special Masses for their ancestors in the faith. All of this is based, of course, on the theological doctrines of purgatory and of the communion of saints. In explaining purgatory, the catechism explains that “all who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal Salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter into the possession of heaven” (1030).

The communion of saints describes the spiritual relationship that endures among believers and produces mutual benefit. Those who have already attained heavenly prayers for us who are still on Earth, while we can pray—and offer good works—for those deceased who are still undergoing purification.

What that purification consists of, and how long it lasts, remains a mystery for us while we are still on this near side of eternity. But our prayers and Masses beseech the Lord to speed the process and soften whatever heartache it entails.

When I visit my mother in the town where I grew up, the priest there regularly omits what I think is an important gesture at the beginning of the Gospel reading. He does not use his thumb to sign himself to the cross on his forehead, lips and heart. I had understood that by making that gesture you were demonstrating your intention to take the Gospel into your mind, proclaim his word to others and keep his message in your heart. Because the priest has foregone that important sign, his parishioners omit it, too. Has this gesture been declared optional now or perhaps dropped altogether? (city and state withheld)

A The “General Instruction of the Roman Missal” says in #134 that the priest, upon announcing which of the Gospel writers that day’s passage is taken from, then makes “the sign of the cross with his thumb on the book and on the forehead, mouth and breast, which everyone else does as well.” So, it is not optional. At the same time, the wording is ambiguous and could be taken to indicate that each member of the congregation should sign the Gospel book itself. Such has never been the practice, however, as it would be impractical.

The congregation signs only their foreheads, mouths and breasts, and there is evidence that they have done this at Masses as far back as the tenth century. The fact that this gesture by the entire assembly was first mentioned specifically in the general instruction only in 2002 would seem to indicate that, far from having been dropped, there is even stronger reason to keep it today.

As so often happens with Catholics, a ritual gesture reminds us of what our faith is all about—to do in this case, to receive the Gospel with an open mind, to speak it faithfully and to treasure it in our hearts.

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

Daily Readings

Monday, March 4
St. Casimir
2 Kings 5:1-15b
Psalms 42:2-3, 43:3-4
Luke 4:24-30

Tuesday, March 5
Daniel 3:25, 34-43
Psalm 25:4-8, 9b-10
Matthew 18:21-35

Wednesday, March 6
Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9
Psalms 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20
Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday, March 7
Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, martyrs
Jeremiah 7:23-28
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-9
Luke 11:14-23

Friday, March 8
St. John of God, religious
Hosca 14:2-10
Psalm 81:6b-11c, 14, 17
Mark 12:28-34

Saturday, March 9
St. Frances of Rome, religious
Hosca 6:1-6
Psalms 51:3-4, 18-21b
Luke 18:9-14

Sunday, March 10
Fourth Sunday of Lent
Joshua 5:9a, 10-12
Psalm 117
2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Offering Masses for the dead is an ancient practice rooted in Scripture and tradition 

Letting God Be God

By Sr. Susan Marie Lindstrom, O.S.B.

I have set the limits, myself, certainly, but also on You, God …
I have set the limits, boundaries, parameters …

I am no longer close to erect fences … I am tired of playing God … so maybe, God, that leaves room for You?

My Journey to God

Benedictine Sister Susan Marie Lindstrom is a member of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Ind. She teaches theology at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, Pennsylvania. Christians, George Hamilton, 65, left, and Yousef Lutfi, 73, walk near the Israeli-erected barrier that divides their olive groves near Bethlehem, West Bank on Dec. 22, 2011.

The Criterion Friday, March 1, 2013
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication. Include the date of death. Obituaries of other northwestern Indiana 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 separately obituaries on this page.


SNOW, Mary Katherine, 101, St. Rita, Indianapolis, Feb. 7. Mother of Bonnie Daines, Pamela Griffin, Mary Reed, Beverley, Karen and Dennis Snow. Sister of Dorothy Lewis, Elinor Phillips, Mable Smith, Joseph and Lincoln Wright. Great-grandfather of several. Great-grandfather of one.


From The Criterion, Friday, March 1, 2013

Finding St. Anthony

A woman touches a rosary to a relic of St. Anthony of Padua during a Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York on Feb. 19. Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York celebrated one of several Masses honoring St. Anthony of Padua, a Franciscan friar who died in Italy in 1231, who was known for his gift of preaching and is commonly appealed to as a patron saint of lost items. The relics will be on display in New York and New Jersey before returning to Padua, Italy.

† Medals
† Rosaries
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The Criterion

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Providence Sister Jean Michele Monahan served in administration at parishes and schools for 31 years

Providence Sister Jean Michele Monahan died on Feb. 16 at Mother Theodore Hall at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 93. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 21 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse: Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Jean Mary Thompson was born on July 10, 1919, in Indianapolis and grew up at SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Parish. She entered the Sisters of Providence, of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Sept. 12, 1963, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1969.

During her 49 years as a Sister of Providence, Jean Michele ministered for 31 years in administrative positions in Catholic parishes and schools in Indiana and California. In the archdiocese, she ministered at the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1963 to 1969.

She returned to the motherhouse in 1999, and contributed to the community life in a variety of ways. Beginning in 2002, she dedicated herself completely to prayer.

Monahan was sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.
Bishop Chatard team will compete in national robotics championship

By John Shaughnessy

As he prepared his teams for the first-ever competition in Indianapolis, Assistant Principal Michael Mundell adopted the approach that many good teachers take. He wanted his high school students to organize on their own, as they tried to do something of most of them had never done previously.

He stressed that making mistakes and learning from them are crucial parts of the learning process. He hoped that the experience would spark a flame in them that would possibly do something most of them had never done before.

“I wanted them to have fun,” Mundell said.

The coach never focused on how the teams from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis would finish in the first Indianapolis VEX Robotics Championship at Bankers Life Fieldhouse on Jan. 19-20.

“I just kept congratulating them on what they had already accomplished—that they had built a robot, they had started something new, and they would represent the school well,” said Mundell, whose physics students already run an interparochial high school for the Indianapolis North Deanery.

Of the 40 teams that participated in the competition, the two teams from Bishop Chatard placed third and fifth in an event that was hosted by the Mayor’s Office of Indianapolis to fuel students’ involvement in the areas of math, science, technology and engineering.

The success of the Bishop Chatard teams reflected the overall achievement of Catholic high schools in Indianapolis in the competition as the robotic teams from Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School—sixth place—and Roncalli High School—10th place—also placed in the top 10.

Teams from Cathedral High School and Father Thomas Scevola Memorial High School also participated.

Bishop Chatard’s third-place-finishing team also won the competition’s阿马 Award, given to the team with an “amazing, well-rounded and top-performing robot.” That team also qualified for the U.S. National VEX Robotics Championship on March 7-9 in Ralston, Neb.

That’s when VEX Robotics provided the kits that team members had to assemble into a robot. Students then had to program and prepare the robot for a competition that involved directing the robot in a series of tasks.

Mundell gave the credit to the team’s members, saying, “It’s a lot of trial and error. It’s really a process. We have to think more than putting them in the right direction and asking them to think critically about it.”

The teams’ members enjoyed the different approach to learning.

“Working with the girls, all the equations work out perfectly,” said Deeghan Atha, a Bishop Chatard senior and a robotics team captain. “Here, you have to try different things. You might have an idea, and then there’s a problem. So you have to keep going back and checking your progress.”

Junior Eric Rohrbach was one of the few students on the Bishop Chatard teams who had previous experience in working with robots.

“When I heard Chatard was going to have a team, I thought it would be fun,” said Eric, who is also a team captain.

“I thought we could be competitive, but I wasn’t expecting us to be good enough to make it to the finals.”

The national championships will be another “great learning opportunity” for the students, Mundell said.

“It should be a lot of fun,” he said.

“We’ve already had so much positive reaction from other students, parents and teachers. It’s a huge boost for the program going forward. I’m just very proud of them.”

U.S. House passes bill to help storm-ravaged houses of worship rebuild

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Many churches “were the only shelter available to people who lost their homes” during Hurricane Sandy, said Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., in arguing for federal assistance to help houses of worship still trying to recover from the storm.

On Feb. 13, the House of Representatives passed a bill in a 354-72 vote that will allow Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster funding to go to churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and other houses of worship.

“Organizations should not be denied federal assistance in times of need just because of their religious affiliations,” said Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y.

Co-sponsored by Reps. Chris Smith, R-N.J., and Grace Meng, D-N.Y., the Federal Disaster Assistance Appropriations Act of 2013 will provide federal assistance to all nonprofit organizations, regardless of religious affiliation.

“Current FEMA policy is patently unfair, unjustified and discriminatory and may even suggest hostility to religion,” said Smith. “It is unconscionable that foundational pillars of our communities damaged by Sandy … have been economically denied access to these otherwise generally available relief funds.”

The bill must now pass the Senate before it may be signed into law by the president. A measure supported by large numbers of Republicans and Democrats alike, it has been endorsed by a wide variety of organizations from the National Association of Evangelicals to the Jewish Federations of North America to the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops.

“There’s no constitutional reason why houses of worship, which often are the first to provide timely disaster relief to hard-hit communities, should be categorically banned from receiving federal aid to repair buildings,” said Daniel Bloember, legal counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

The Becket Fund provided a detailed legal analysis of the Establishment Clause for Smith to show that the bill was in line with the Constitution.

“Your proposed bill will not violate the Constitution but will instead protect it,” the analysis concluded.

In October 2012, the super-storm Hurricane Sandy knocked out power and flooded large portions of the New Jersey-New York coast, toppling trees and destroying many homes and businesses.

On Jan. 29, President Barack Obama signed into law a $50.5 billion emergency measure for victims of Sandy, which enveloped large regions of New York and New Jersey last October. But because of FEMA regulations, many religious organizations have not received federal funding to aid with cleanup.

“The wind and waves did not discriminate when it came to destroying property. The houses of worship are the very bedrock of the neighborhoods now trying to rebuild. To not offer natural disaster assistance grants to rebuild a house of worship just doesn’t make any sense,” Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York told The Wall Street Journal.

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry
New book captures archbishop emeritus’ journey of faith

Reviewed by John Shaughnessy

In the opening pages of his latest book, Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein offers a poignant and revealing look at how the stroke he suffered two years ago has changed his life and his journey of faith. He starts by describing the physical challenges he faced when he realized he was having a stroke in the early morning hours of March 19, 2011—and how he called 911 on that first day of St. Joseph.

“Once I knew the paramedics were on their way, I had figured out how to unlock the front door so they could get in,” he writes in Surprised by Grace: Memories and Reflections After 25 Years of Episcopal Ministry.

“I managed to crawl out of the bedroom and down the stairs to the front door, muttering prayers to St. Joseph. To help me. I reached up, unlocked the door and then crawled back to the stairs where I sat down and waited for the response team.”

The struggle was just beginning.

In a first chapter titled “Aloneness,” the archbishop emeritus writes, “Since the stroke, I have had to face the fact that I will never be able to live as I once did on my own. My emotions, and my pride, strongly reject this humiliating truth about myself. I know that I have to fight against this temptation to see myself as ‘damaged goods for life.’ In fact, that’s not the case at all. My mind is clear. My body is healing. And I’m learning to deal with my emotions. ‘I am not damaged goods. I’m a monk, a priest and a bishop who seeks God alone.’

In those opening revelations, the archbishop emeritus offers a powerful reminder of how a person’s mind and spirit can still reach for hope and holiness even as the body struggles—and how strength and courage it takes to see those goals under challenging circumstances.

In the book overall, he seeks to offer his memories and reflections on his 74 years of life and his 25 years as a bishop, including the 19 years of leading the Archdiocese of Indianapolis before Pope Benedict XVI granted his request for early retirement for health reasons in September of 2011.

The book touches briefly on some of the highlights during his tenure—expanding the services of Catholic Charities to serve nearly 180,000 people a year in central and southern Indiana, raising $300 million to pay for building projects and ministry needs across the archdiocese, and having a Catholic school in every county.

26 schools earned Blue Ribbon recognition for excellence from the U.S. Department of Education—more than any diocese in the country.

Yet, at its heart, the book captures the journey of faith of a man.

The quiet monk who grew up in southern Indiana has walked a path of faith that has led him to face equal challenges with the late Blessed John Paul II. Pope Benedict XVI and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. He writes about his meetings with those spiritual leaders and the influences that their lives and their thoughts on faith have had on him.

At the end of his book, the archbishop emeritus shares the inspiration for its title:

‘In many ways, this young man helped me accept the fact that my cancer was God’s gift. … Bryan’s call to courage underscored what I knew I needed to do. His insight provided a fine stimulus for me to remember that Easter comes by way of the cross. There is no other way.’ — Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein in his new book

At the same time, he writes glowingly of the influence of his parents, and even the influence of a then-sixth-grade boy named Bryan Rush who wrote to him after the archbishop emeritus was diagnosed with cancer in 2008.

Bryan wrote: ‘The definition of courage is hard to memorize. But luckily for everyone, it’s easy to describe. It’s the ability to move forward when times are dark. The times you give it all you got, even though you’re weary. So remember dear Archbishop, that even though times are bad, you’re still the grace of God, so always stay glad.’

Still touched by that message, the archbishop emeritus writes: ‘In many ways, this young man helped me accept the fact that my cancer was God’s gift. Bryan’s call to courage underscored what I knew I needed to do. His insight provided a fine stimulus for me to remember that Easter comes by way of the cross. There is no other way.’

The book also delivers a reminder that the burdens of carrying a cross can be lifted at times through the strength that other people provide in small ways.

The archbishop emeritus received an unexpected visit he received in 2012 when he was in the infirmary of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad where he now lives. The visit was from a group of young men and women from Indianapolis on a retreat at the monastery. The group stopped by to thank him for his efforts of support young people in their faith.

I visited the archbishop emeritus. In a different way, the example of Mary, Christ’s mother, has touched him throughout his life and even more so now.

“She was repeatedly confronted with choices that required blind faith in God’s Providence,” he writes. “From a business perspective, Mary had every reason to be afraid and anxious. In every case, Mary said yes to God’s will. … Mary accepted many things that she did not understand, and she placed her hope in the only thing that is trustworthy: the love and fidelity of the Triune God.”

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. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features.