



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Twenty Something

One Catholic's call to action, to 'give as much as I can while I can,' page 12.

CriterionOnline.com

February 7, 2025

Vol. LXV, No. 17 75¢

Scenes from a young filmmaker's life—and the faith and love at the heart of it



By John Shaughnessy

If someone ever makes a movie about filmmaker Branden Stanley, a crucial scene will involve his grueling hike up a mountain in Poland to a place that was special to St. John Paul II.

The scene unfolded during World Youth Day in 2016, shortly after Stanley began working for Spirit Juice Studios, a Chicago-area company that creates award-winning films primarily focused on sharing the depth and the beauty of the Catholic faith.

Yet as he hiked the mountain that day, Stanley was mostly feeling pain on his shoulders and soreness in nearly every other part of his body.

"I had only been in the company for a little bit," recalls Stanley, a former longtime member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. "We were traveling with the Knights of Columbus. And they hiked into the mountains where John Paul II had taken his youth groups, where he had written poetry up there.

"We didn't really know we were going on a 14-mile hike that day with backpacks that weighed 30-40 pounds, with batteries and lenses. They told us we were going on

a small hike. Honestly, it was one of the most grueling days I've ever had on set."

In the midst of that pain, a different feeling filled Stanley as the group reached the mountain peak.

"When you looked over the Polish countryside and the mountain, and you're reading some of the poetry of John Paul II while you're up there, and you have a Mass up there, there's something profound about it all," he says. "And I never would have had that experience if I hadn't pushed through that hike."

Nine years later, that experience still impacts him, his work, his marriage and his family—the impact evident in that the picture of that mountaintop scene continues to grace his office.

"I find the trips and the film shoots that are the most grueling and the most miserable in the moment are also the most memorable because you have to push through something in order to achieve it," says the 32-year-old father of three whose wife Alea is expecting their fourth child this spring.

"I've got a great love for the outdoors. As a family, we go hiking a lot. We try to spend as much time outside as possible. So being in a spot that wasn't only beautiful

See **FILMMAKER**, page 8

Above: A former longtime member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, Branden Stanley has traveled the world creating award-winning films in which he shares the depth and the beauty of the Catholic faith. (Submitted photo)

Church calls for 'just and dignified treatment' of migrants

By Victoria Arthur

As immigration issues dominate public policy discussions at the national and state levels, the Catholic Church in Indiana is adding its voice to the debate



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

with a call to place human dignity at the forefront.

While recognizing every nation's right to protect its citizens and its borders, a recent statement by Archbishop C. Thompson of Indianapolis advocates for "the just and dignified

treatment of migrants" as well as for national immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship for longtime residents who are undocumented.

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC)—the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana—has echoed these sentiments in recent testimony



concerning immigration-related bills that have been introduced at the Statehouse.

Among this high-profile legislation is House Bill 1393, which would require local police to notify federal authorities if they have probable cause that a person they arrested for a felony or misdemeanor is an undocumented immigrant. The bill is moving forward at the Statehouse despite concerns of potential overreach raised by advocates, including the ICC.

"The Church teaches that the federal government, in cooperation with state and local governments, has a responsibility to maintain public safety and if necessary to detain and deport undocumented immigrants who harm U.S. citizens and other immigrants," said Alexander Mingus, executive director of the ICC,

See **MIGRANTS**, page 10

Family Day for Vocations helps children learn about callings in the Church

By Sean Gallagher

Franciscan Sister Mary Amata Naville didn't meet religious sisters as she grew up as a member of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton.

It was only when she was a student at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., that she first met members of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration

See **VOCATIONS**, page 16

Franciscan Sister Mary Amata Naville smiles while watching Joseph and Bethany Bedwell color at a booth during the Family Day for Vocations on Jan. 18 at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. Joseph and Bethany are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Pope will prepare papal document to help Church promote children's rights

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Wrapping up a Vatican summit on the rights of children, Pope Francis announced he was going to publish a papal document dedicated to children.



Pope Francis

He called the Feb. 3 summit venue, in the frescoed halls of the Apostolic Palace, a kind of “open observatory” in which speakers explored “the reality of childhood throughout the world, a childhood that is unfortunately often

hurt, exploited, denied.”

Some 50 experts and leaders from around the world, who shared their experience and compassion, he said, also “elaborated proposals for the protection of children’s rights, considering them not as numbers, but as faces.”

“Children are watching us,” he said, “to see how we are going about living” in this world.

The pope said he planned to prepare a papal document “to give continuity to this commitment and promote it throughout the Church.” Those in attendance applauded the pope and his brief closing remarks and gave him a standing ovation.

The one-day world leaders’ summit titled, “Love them and protect them,”

discussed several topics of concern including a child’s right to food, health care, education, a family, free time and the right to live free from violence and exploitation. It was organized by the recently created Pontifical Committee for the World Day of Children, headed by Franciscan Father Enzo Fortunato.

The invitees included Nobel Prize winners, government ministers and heads of state, leaders of international and nonprofit organizations, top Vatican officials and other experts.

Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 together with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said in his talk, “The threat of ecological devastation—which encompasses the climate crisis and also the biodiversity crisis—is a terrible burden that we are placing on our children.”

He praised the pope for highlighting “the spiritual crisis we face as stemming in part from the willful blindness that prevents so many from seeing the way in which our economic system is driving us toward the exploitation of both people and the planet at the expense of our moral values and the future of children.”

Kailash Satyarthi of India, co-winner of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize and activist campaigning against child labor in India and advocating for the universal right to



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

February 7–16, 2025

<p>February 7 – 5:30 p.m. Legacy Gala Dinner in support of Catholic Charities, Catholic Schools and Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary at J.W. Marriott, Indianapolis</p> <p>February 8 – 1 p.m. Memorial Mass for Rev. Jean Bosco Ntawugashira at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>February 11 – 10:30 a.m. Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>February 11 – 1 p.m. Virtual meeting with USCCB Subcommittee on the Catechism</p>	<p>February 13 – 8:15 a.m. Virtual Judicatories meeting</p> <p>February 13 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>February 13 – 5 p.m. CST Ministries of Lector and Acolyte Mass at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad</p> <p>February 15 – 5 p.m. Mass and Installation of Pastor at St. Luke the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis</p> <p>February 16 – 11 a.m. Mass and lunch at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Beech Grove</p>
--	---

education, said in his talk that while he trusts everyone’s concern for children, he also feels ashamed.

“We know the problems, we know the solutions,” he said, but so far, everything has just been rhetoric and words.

The problem-solvers of the world “are not really honest [with] the problem-sufferers,” he said, when they lack any sense of “moral accountability and moral responsibility.”

“The solution lies in the genuine

feeling and connection” to every child as if he or she were one’s own, he said. It is only when people feel genuine compassion will they feel “an honest urge to take urgent action.”

“We have to fight this menace [of child labor and poverty] and all other crises through compassion in action. We have to create a culture of problem-solving. Let us globalize compassion because they are all our children,” Satyarthi said. †

Pope Francis asks Scandinavian Catholics to persevere in evangelization

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—There is no greater work that Christians can perform than “transmitting the saving message of the Gospel to others,” Pope Francis said, especially among those on the margins of society.

Meeting a group of pilgrims from Scandinavia at the Vatican on Feb. 3, the pope urged them to bring the Gospel to those on the peripheries of their home communities, to “think of those who may be isolated or lonely.”

Pope Francis, welcoming the pilgrims in the Paul VI Audience Hall, asked

them to return home after visiting the tombs of SS. Peter and Paul “full of joyful enthusiasm for sharing the great gift that you have received,” namely, their faith.

“This task is entrusted to each of you, whatever your age, state in life or abilities,” he said. “Even those of you who are elderly, sick or struggling in some way have a noble vocation to bear witness to the compassionate and tender love of the Father.”

Pope Francis prayed that the pilgrims from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland

and Iceland—in Rome as part of a pilgrimage organized by the Scandinavian bishops’ conference—would have their hope strengthened during the Holy Year, which has the motto “Pilgrims of Hope.”

The small but growing Catholic community in Scandinavia itself is a sign of hope, the pope said.

“We can thank almighty God that the seeds of faith planted and watered there by generations of persevering pastors and people is bearing fruit,” he said. “Nor should this surprise us, because God is always faithful to his promises.”

The pilgrims’ journey does not conclude in Rome, he said, because “a pilgrimage does not end but shifts

its focus to the daily ‘pilgrimage of discipleship.’”

Pope Francis also looked ahead to the canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis, which is scheduled to close the Jubilee of Teenagers at the Vatican on April 27. The future saint documented eucharistic miracles and Marian apparitions on a website he designed before dying from leukemia at 15 in 2006.

“This young saint of and for our times shows you, and all of us, how possible it is in today’s world for young people to follow Jesus, share his teachings with others, and so find the fullness of life in joy, freedom and holiness,” he said. †

What do we owe each other?

When he became the 18th president of the University of Notre Dame last year, Indiana native Holy Cross Father Robert Dowd chose a theme for the university’s community to consider. It’s a theme connected to the ways that people are divided in this country, a theme based upon this question, “What do we owe each other?”

The Criterion is inviting our readers—our community—to share their answers to that question, as a way of starting the new year together. Your responses could range from a one-word answer to a personal story reflecting what you think we owe each other.

Please send your responses and stories to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †



Pope’s prayer intention for February

- **For vocations to the priesthood and religious life**—Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ’s mission in the priesthood and religious life.

See Pope Francis’ monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



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

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

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

Web site : www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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

NEWS FROM YOU!

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

E-mail us:
criterion@archindy.org



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

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

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

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2025
Criterion Press Inc.

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


02/07/25

Moving?

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

Name _____

E-mail _____

New Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

New Parish _____

Effective Date _____

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

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

‘A wonderful blessing’: Special Mass celebrates gift of Catholic education

By John Shaughnessy

For 12-year-old Kallie Gettinger and 57-year-old Father Joseph Moriarty, the archdiocese’s Catholic Schools Week Mass on Jan. 29 was a time of firsts, touched with joy.

A sixth-grade student at St. Mary School in Rushville, Kallie was in awe of how big and beautiful SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis is as she entered it for the first time with a group from her school.

Then she and two of her classmates—Hadley Burklow and Maria Mosburg—plus sixth-grader Leanna Paul of St. Gabriel School in Connersville were asked to hand out worship aids as students, teachers and administrators from the 68 schools across the archdiocese entered and eventually packed the cathedral for the Mass.

“This is fun,” Kallie said about being chosen for her role. “It makes me feel part of a bigger community than Rushville.”

As Archbishop Charles C. Thompson took time to speak with the four girls before he processed to the altar to celebrate the Mass, Father Moriarty stood close by, smiling as he talked about being at this, his first archdiocesan Catholic Schools Week Mass as the pastor of a parish with a Catholic school.

“Catholic education has to be a priority for us,” said Father Moriarty, who became the pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis in early January, his latest assignment in his 31 years as a priest. “I’m a product of Catholic education all my life. And I’m just so grateful. I think the joy of Catholic education is the freedom to proclaim God in everything and to have that foundation. And also to teach our students values.

“We live in a world, a culture, that would often say that life and success is about position or ambition. Catholic education has a different view. In the example of the saints, we’re called to be humble before God, as was Mary, the chief example of humility. And every saint has found their own way. In our Catholic schools, we give our children a foundation to find that way—to make their contribution in serving God through humility.”

A celebration of a special gift

With a smile, Archbishop Thompson began his homily with a couple of questions as he walked down the center aisle of the cathedral to get close to the students from across the archdiocese.

One of his questions focused on asking the children and youths what they consider special about their Catholic school.

Hands shot up throughout the pews, leading to a list of answers: friends, community, teachers, priests, religion classes, a Catholic education and the opportunities to go to Mass, to take part in adoration, to learn about God and to

prepare for a life with him.

Nodding to affirm each answer, Archbishop Thompson also cited the valuable contributions of parents, grandparents, educators and staff and “everyone who makes up the Catholic community, who makes possible the gift of a Catholic education to transmit the faith to students.”

He also noted, “And as we come together, we know that in any endeavor as Christians, as Catholics, we don’t do it on our own merit. We always need God. That’s why we have Jesus in word and sacrament, to bring about that healing, that forgiveness, that grace we need to carry forth the mission” that Christ has for his followers—to take the word of God and the love of God into our hearts and share those gifts with the world.

“We have to make sure we’re transforming the world, and not let the world transform us,” the archbishop said. “That we choose to hear the word of God. That it’s God’s love, it’s God’s truth that guides our life.

“If we’re going to transform the world, if we’re going to be faithful witnesses, good Catholics and good citizens, we need something greater than ourselves. We need each other. We need our community. We need one another, but we need one another in Christ’s name.”

In ending his homily, Archbishop Thompson returned to his themes of mission and gratitude.

“When we celebrate Catholic Schools Week, we celebrate all these schools to carry on the mission of the Church, which is ultimately the mission of Jesus Christ.

“I thank you for being here. I thank your parents and grandparents for making the sacrifice so you have this opportunity. For the teachers, the administrators, and all the community—for all the people who work in the schools to make that possible. May the word of God take root in our hearts.”

‘It’s just a beautiful opportunity’

After blessing everyone in the packed cathedral at the end of Mass, Archbishop Thompson returned to the steps leading up to the altar. There, he shared in what has become one of the joy-filled traditions of his celebration of the Catholic Schools Week Mass.

At the archbishop’s invitation, school group after school group lined up to have



Before the archdiocese’s Catholic Schools Week Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Jan. 29, a group of sixth-grade students handed out worship aids to participants. Leanna Paul, left, of St. Gabriel School in Connersville joined three students from St. Mary School in Rushville: Maria Mosburg, left, Hadley Burklow and Kallie Gettinger. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

their photo taken with him. And for the next 25 minutes—until the last photo had been taken with the 20 or so school groups who waited patiently for their turn—smiles, laughs and an overall mood of joy marked the interactions.

That joy was reflected in the expression of Brian Disney, the archdiocesan superintendent of Catholic schools, all throughout the morning of the Mass—from greeting school groups before the Mass to watching them have a photo taken with the archbishop.

“This Mass is definitely one of the

highlights of Catholic Schools Week,” Disney said with a smile. “It’s where we all come together, where all of our schools come together and show that we are one archdiocese—the local Church with Archbishop Thompson as our pastor.

“It’s just a beautiful opportunity to see that the archdiocese is bigger than an individual parish, that it’s bigger than just a school, that it covers a large portion of central and southern Indiana. We’re just excited to have all these kids here with their great energy. It’s such a wonderful blessing.” †



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson poses for a photo with students from Central Catholic School in Indianapolis after the archdiocese’s Catholic Schools Week Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Jan. 29. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Father Joseph Moriarty, pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, shares the Eucharist with a student during the archdiocese’s Catholic Schools Week Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Jan. 29. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



MCNULTY

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

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

Patrick McNulty
BROKER

Brian Candlish
BROKER

Jamy Brase
BROKER

Andy Barnett
BROKER

Steve Hullett
BROKER



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

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

MCNULTYRE.COM



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher* Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Editorial

Dialogue between Christians and Jews is more important than ever

Antisemitism is on the rise here in the United States, in Europe and all over the world. The attitudes and actions that fuel this despicable form of racism and intolerance range from subtle and barely imperceptible to blatant and horrifying. How is it possible that so many people have forgotten, or never learned, the lessons of the Nazi Holocaust's unspeakable inhumanity?

The rise of antisemitism in the current environment is a stark reminder that evil is never completely banished from human hearts and minds. Every new generation must confront racism and intolerance, and unless we remain vigilant, the vicious ideologies that promote hatred and injustice against those who are perceived to be outside the societal mainstream gradually take over.

The dialogue between Christians and Jews encouraged by the Second Vatican Council's document "*Nostra Aetate*" is essential to combatting the resurgence of antisemitism. We accept that our two faiths worship the one God and share the teachings contained in the Old Testament, even if we interpret them differently. The purpose of Jewish-Christian dialogue is to better understand one another out of respect for the religious beliefs and moral precepts that we have in common.

After his resignation from the papacy, Pope Benedict XVI offered some poignant reflections on the state of Jewish-Christian dialogue. Although some of his statements were controversial, his main arguments were defended by at least one prominent rabbi, Arie Folger, the chief rabbi of the Jewish worshipping community in Vienna, Austria.

The articles by the retired pope and the renowned rabbi, along with their subsequent correspondence, have been published in *What is Christianity: The Last Writings of Benedict XVI*. What clearly emerges from this particular example of Jewish-Christian dialogue is that we clearly have much more in common than the things that separate us. Also evident is the fundamental importance of our ability to stand together and speak with one voice on the serious moral and political issues of our time.

Regarding the end result of dialogue between Jews and Christians, Pope Benedict wrote, "As far as is humanly foreseeable, this dialogue will never lead to the unity of the two interpretations [Judaism and Christianity] within human history. This unity is reserved to God at the end of history."

The pope had no doubt that Jews and Christians would one day be united in the heavenly Jerusalem, but he believed that we should not expect this, or even work toward it, in the realm of human history. This means that we must accept the fact that we are fellow believers in the one God of Abraham who seek him by different paths. It also means that the differences between our



A demonstrator holds a sign that translates to 'no to antisemitism', during a protest against antisemitism and to commemorate the 2012 Toulouse attack against a Jewish school that left three children and an adult dead, at the Place de la République square in Paris, France, on March 13, 2022. (OSV News photo/Benoît Tessier, Reuters)

faith traditions should be respected, even revered, and not rejected or ridiculed.

We Christians have violated this principle many times—sometimes grievously—through the years. As Rabbi Folger wrote to Pope Benedict, "The crimes of the past cannot be forgotten; even though they are now considered contrary to Christian principles, they were committed by Christians in the name of Christianity."

We who believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and who seek to follow him, have been given an urgent responsibility to uphold the principles that are outlined in "*Nostra Aetate*" and in the teachings of recent popes, including Pope Francis. We need to reverence and respect our Jewish sisters and brothers because they remain chosen people of God whose mission is to give witness to him to the whole world.

There is perhaps no better place to put into practice the virtues of mutual respect and collaboration between people who disagree with one another than in the relationship between Christians and Jews. The fact that we do not agree on fundamental aspects of religious belief and practice does not make us enemies. On the contrary, what we share in common should make us stronger and more tolerant of one another.

The vile antisemitism that confronts us today is a wake-up call. Either we take seriously the fraternal relationship that exists between Christians and Jews, or we risk being overwhelmed by the forces of racist ideology and intolerance that increasingly threaten us.

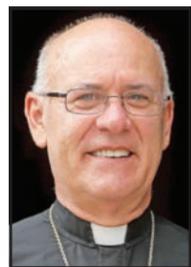
While it is true that our history is marked by failure, it is also a firmly held belief shared by Jews and Christians that our God is loving and merciful and that our only hope is in him.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

We need to walk with all people who seek to worship the Lord

In recent weeks, President Donald J. Trump has taken steps to make it easier for immigration officials to conduct



enforcement actions in "protected areas" (often referred to as "sensitive locations"), including places of worship. In other words, the Department of Homeland Security can arrest noncitizens at church, even for non-criminal offenses.

Parishioners are afraid.

Reports have emerged of migrant communities who are scared to go to church. There have even been reports of arrests during worship services. While a raid on church property may not be a legal threat to religious liberty in every circumstance, it is certainly a moral one.

People have a duty to offer worship to God. Religious freedom protects the rights of persons to carry out their obligations, ensuring that individuals and communities can fulfill their most sacred duty. The government has its own duties. It ought to ensure a just public order and promote the common good. And the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) teaches that "Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption" (#2241).

In this way, the government has a right and responsibility to regulate international borders and to enforce just immigration laws, including for the protection of existing residents, be they citizens or otherwise.

At the same time, the government's enforcement of the law cannot come at the expense of human life or without respect for each person's God-given dignity because the "civil law must ensure that all members of society enjoy respect for certain fundamental rights which innately belong to the person, rights which every positive law must recognize and guarantee" ("*Evangelium Vitae*," #71).

While accommodating migration undertaken to preserve human life is a responsibility shared by all countries, the Church has recognized that more prosperous nations are "obliged, to the

extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin" (CCC, #2241).

Put another way, migrants ought to respect the law and culture of the country that receives them, but at the same time, "[p]olitical authorities are obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the human person" (CCC, #2237), including the natural right to migrate when "there are just reasons in favor of it" ("*Pacem in Terris*," #25).

One of those fundamental rights is the right to religious freedom. To be sure, the right to religious freedom is fundamental but not absolute. Governments may justly limit it for compelling reasons and by no more than is necessary. But to intrude on the right to fulfill our duties to God is a grave judgment that must be guided by prudence rather than the political winds.

The Church's declaration on religious freedom teaches: "Government is ... to help create conditions favorable to the fostering of religious life, in order that the people may be truly enabled to exercise their religious rights and to fulfill their religious duties" ("*Dignitatis Humanae*," #6).

The action taken by the administration to no longer recognize the concept of protected areas in the course of immigration enforcement (which even under the prior guidance was not absolute) does not foster favorable conditions for the free exercise of religion. Indeed, by creating a climate of fear and uncertainty around the right to go to church, such action undermines those conditions.

All Catholics and others of goodwill in our country, regardless of their ideas about the best way to enforce immigration laws, should be unified in the conviction that people must be free to fulfill their duties to God without fear. And our immigration authorities, having now been handed very broad discretion over whether to intrude on sacred spaces, should bear in mind the gravity of such a decision. As pastors, the bishops of the United States are committed to walking with all people who seek to fulfill their duty to worship the Lord.

(Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades is the bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty.) †

Be Our Guest/Michael O'Connell

Do we have the courage of faith?

Faith is defined as belief with a strong conviction with no real proof. It is a complete trust without any evidence.

Faith is being assured of what we believe without being able to see with our own eyes.

The Bible speaks often about faith and Scripture which is full of examples of saints who doubted and lacked in their faith.

A good example of this is St. Thomas the Apostle, who spent years with Jesus and witnessed him healing the sick, raising the dead and performing many other miracles.

But when it came to Jesus' resurrection, Thomas wouldn't believe, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (Jn 20:25).

How do we live by faith today in this world, especially with all the sadness, sorrows, grief and the many setbacks in life? I especially like how St. Anselm wrote that "faith seeks understanding" and how faith, which is a gift from God, makes it possible to gain some understanding of all that he has revealed to us, including the totality of his plan as well as the many mysteries of faith.

We put faith in a pilot who is flying a plane, faith in the doctor who is operating on us, faith in our military and government that they will protect us, and we put faith in our parents and trust they will do the right things for us.

We must also put faith in our supreme Lord, who will always be there for us and who loves us unconditionally, who watches over us and wants our salvation.

Faith is not something that we can obtain on our own; it is a gift from our Lord. The closer we get to our Lord, the more grace we are given.

Pray often, obey the commandments, read and study the Scriptures, be charitable, loving, forgiving and develop a personal relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

As your faith grows and becomes stronger—and when you are challenged and suffer in difficult situations—trust and have faith that your Savior will get you through these times.

Seeing is believing? Or is it believing is seeing?

(Michael O'Connell is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Say 'yes' to God, and your life will change forever

The Gospel for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 5:1-11) is frequently used in homilies or talks about vocations.

Jesus tells Simon and his partners, James and John, to once again cast their nets after a long, futile night. The results are amazing, and the three fishermen are in awe of the miracle they have witnessed. Jesus tells the future Apostles, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." Then, St. Luke adds, "When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him" (Lk 5:10-11).

The unique vocation or calling that these three men receive results from their personal encounter with the power of God as it is manifested in the person of Jesus. Simon acknowledges that Jesus is someone special when he agrees to do what no experienced fisherman would even consider. "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets" (Lk 5:5).

By calling Jesus "Master," Simon treats him with respect. By doing what Jesus asked him to do, he shows that he is open to trying something that he doesn't understand. This is the kind of

obedience (openness) that is essential to responding to God's call. In fact, none of us, whether clergy, religious or lay people, knows what will happen when we say "yes" to our vocational calling. We place our trust in the Lord, confident that he will care for us in every circumstance we face.

After the miracle of the abundant catch of fish, Simon calls Jesus by a different name. As St. Luke tells us, when Simon saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Lk 5:8). In recognition of his holiness, his closeness to God, Jesus is now addressed as "Lord" (*Kyrios* in Greek). In the encounter with holiness itself, Simon is keenly aware of his inadequacy and his first instinct is to distance himself from the Lord.

Jesus has another plan for Simon. As this plan unfolds, Jesus will give him a new identity as "Peter" (the rock), and as we know, he will give him primacy among the 12 Apostles and authority over the Church that he will establish.

In the second reading (1 Cor 15:1-11), St. Paul affirms the primacy of Peter among the Apostles:

I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures; that he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than 500 brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the Apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me. (1 Cor 15:3-8)

What were Simon Peter's qualifications for his unique leadership role? We know from other Scripture sources that he was not without his personal faults, but clearly Jesus saw something in him that justified the name "rock." Sacred Scripture suggests four characteristics or virtues that make St. Peter stand out. These are: humility, patience, purity of heart and obedience.

When Simon Peter says, "I am a sinful man," he is not being falsely modest. He is simply telling the truth. When he agrees to cast his nets again

after a long night with no luck, he shows that he can overcome his natural impatience and place his trust in God.

All four Gospels show Simon Peter to be a man who is pure of heart. Whatever faults he may possess, Peter is honest, kind and only interested in the good of others. He consistently shows that he wants to be obedient to his Lord, even when his weaknesses get in the way. And perhaps most importantly, when he fails to do what his vocation demands of him and betrays his Lord, he accepts the Lord's forgiveness and works even harder to be the rock that Christ's Church requires.

Simon Peter is a model for all of us who have been called to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. He knows that he is not perfect, but he trusts that God's grace will make up for his shortcomings. With his partners, James and John, he is willing to give up comfort, security, and everything the world offers in order to follow Jesus.

"Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch" (Lk 5:4). This is the command that Jesus gave to Peter, James and John. When they said, "Yes," their lives were changed forever. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Dígale un 'sí' a Dios y su vida cambiará para siempre

El Evangelio del quinto domingo del tiempo ordinario (Lc 5:1-11) se utiliza con frecuencia en homilías o charlas sobre las vocaciones.

Jesús le dice a Simón y a sus compañeros, Santiago y Juan, que vuelvan a echar las redes después de una larga e inútil noche. Los resultados son asombrosos, y los tres pescadores se asombran del milagro que han presenciado. Jesús dice a los futuros Apóstoles: "No temas; desde ahora serás pescador de hombres." Y san Lucas añade "Y después de traer las barcas a tierra, dejándolo todo, siguieron a Jesús" (Lc 5:10-11).

La vocación única o el llamado que reciben estos tres hombres es el resultado de su encuentro personal con el poder de Dios manifestado en la persona de Jesús. Simón reconoce que Jesús es alguien especial cuando accede a hacer lo que ningún pescador experimentado se molestaría en considerar. "Maestro, hemos estado trabajando toda la noche y no hemos pescado nada, pero porque Tú lo pides, echaré las redes" (Lc 5:5).

Al llamar a Jesús "Maestro," Simón lo trata con respeto; al hacer lo que le pidió, demuestra que está dispuesto a probar algo

que no entiende. Este es el tipo de obediencia (disposición) esencial para responder al llamado de Dios. De hecho, ninguno de nosotros, seamos clérigos, religiosos o laicos, sabemos lo que ocurrirá cuando aceptemos nuestra vocación. Depositamos nuestra confianza en el Señor, seguros de que Él cuidará de nosotros en cada circunstancia a la que nos enfrentemos.

Después del milagro de la abundante pesca, Simón llama a Jesús por otro nombre. Tal como nos dice san Lucas, al ver esto, Simón cayó de rodillas ante Jesús diciendo: "¡Apártate de mí, Señor, pues soy hombre pecador!" En reconocimiento de su santidad, de su cercanía a Dios, ahora se dirige a Jesús como "Señor" (*Kyrios* en griego). En el encuentro con la santidad misma, Simón es plenamente consciente de su inferioridad y su primer instinto es distanciarse del Señor; pero Jesús tiene otro plan para Simón. A medida que este se desarrolle, Jesús le dará una nueva identidad como «Pedro» (la piedra) y, como sabemos, le dará la primacía entre los 12 Apóstoles y la autoridad sobre la Iglesia que fundará.

En la segunda lectura (1 Cor 15:1-11), san Pablo afirma esa primacía entre los Apóstoles:

Porque yo les entregué en primer lugar lo mismo que recibí: que Cristo murió por nuestros pecados, conforme a las Escrituras; que fue sepultado y que resucitó al tercer día, conforme a las Escrituras; que se apareció a Cefas y después a los doce. Luego se apareció a más de 500 hermanos a la vez, la mayoría de los cuales viven aún, pero algunos ya duermen. Después se apareció a Jacobo, luego a todos los apóstoles. Y al último de tiempo, se me apareció también a mí. (1 Cor 15:3-8)

¿Cuáles eran las cualificaciones de Simón Pedro para su singular papel de líder? Sabemos por otras fuentes de las Escrituras que tenía sus fallas personales, pero es evidente que Jesús vio en él algo que justificaba el nombre de "piedra." La Sagrada Escritura sugiere cuatro características o virtudes que distinguen a san Pedro, a saber: humildad, paciencia, pureza de corazón y obediencia.

Cuando Simón Pedro dice "soy un hombre pecador," no está siendo falsamente modesto, dice la verdad. Cuando acepta volver a echar las redes tras una larga noche sin suerte, demuestra que puede superar su impaciencia

natural y depositar su confianza en Dios.

Los cuatro Evangelios muestran a Simón Pedro como un hombre puro de corazón. Independientemente de los defectos que pueda tener, Pedro es honesto, amable y sólo le interesa el bien de los demás. Demuestra constantemente que quiere ser obediente a su Señor, incluso cuando sus debilidades se interponen en su camino. Y quizá lo más importante, cuando no cumple lo que su vocación le exige y traiciona a su Señor, acepta su perdón y se esfuerza aún más por ser la piedra que la Iglesia de Cristo requiere.

Simón Pedro es un modelo para todos los que hemos sido llamados a ser discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo. Sabe que no es perfecto, pero confía en que la gracia de Dios suplirá sus carencias. Junto con sus compañeros, Santiago y Juan, está dispuesto a renunciar a la comodidad, la seguridad y todo lo que el mundo ofrece para seguir a Jesús.

"Sal a la parte más profunda y echen sus redes para pescar" (Lc 5:4). Esta es la orden que Jesús dio a Pedro, Santiago y Juan. Cuando dijeron "sí," sus vidas cambiaron para siempre. †

Events Calendar

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

February 11

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: Taize.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952.

February 13

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Concert of Sacred Music for Jubilee Year of Hope**, 7 p.m., free. Information: 317-356-7291, parishsecretary@ollindy.org.

February 14-16

Louisville, Ky. **Retrouaille Retreat**, for those in a struggling marriage, location disclosed upon registering. Information, registration: 502-479-3329, 3012@helpourmarriage.org, helpourmarriage.org.

February 14-17

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Used Book Sale**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., freewill donations. Information: 866-996-2947, events.sistersofprovidence.org, lindenleafgifts@spsmw.org.

February 16

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **Indianapolis Symphony Sphinx Series Concert "Strings and Soul,"** 2-4 p.m., featuring string quartet of Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra musicians, tour of Sacred Heart Church available after concert, free. Information: 317-902-3006, judithessex@icloud.com.

February 19

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

February 20

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Virtual Sourdough Bread Baking Workshop**, 6-9 p.m., limited spots available, \$50, includes materials and a sourdough starter kit, register by Feb. 14. Information, registration: 812-535-2932, events.sistersofprovidence.org, wvc@spsmw.org.

February 21

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, WTHR 13 meteorologist Chuck Lofton presenting "Finishing Strong," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Feb. 18. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

February 22

East Central H.S. Performing Arts Center, 1 Trojan Place, St. Leon. **E6 Catholic Men's Conference**, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m., featuring keynote by author and speaker Chris Stefanick, other speakers: Jake Khym, Bobby Angel and Father Jonathan Meyer, includes Mass, confession, adoration, lunch, adults \$48, group of 10 or more adults \$43 per person, high school and college students \$18, clergy and religious free. Information, registration: 812-576-4302, contact@e6catholicmensconference.com, e6catholicmensconference.com.

February 25

St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington. **Day of Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministers**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., guest speaker Michael Gormley, lunch

included, parish assessed \$30 after event. Information, registration: kcarroll@archindy.org, tinyurl.com/DayofFormation25.

February 26

St. Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oaklondon Road, Indianapolis. **"Parenting Pioneers: Navigating the Hypersexualized Culture,"** 7-8:30 p.m., Diocese of Lincoln, Neb., priest and sexual addiction counselor Father Sean Kilcawley presenting, free. Information: 317-826-6000.

February 28

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Pro-life Film: The 1916 Project film**, 6 p.m. doors open for pizza dinner, 6:30 p.m. film showing, panel discussion following, freewill offering for dinner. Information: 317-407-6881, smdye1@gmail.com. View trailer at the1916project.com.

March 1

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confession 8-8:30 a.m. followed by

8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

St. Matthew the Apostle Church, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Children's Rosary**, 9 a.m., children of all ages invited to pray rosary every first Saturday, donuts and fellowship to follow, free. Information: julie3reyes@gmail.com.

March 5

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

March 7

Virtual Prayer with the Sisters of Providence, 7-7:45 p.m., for single women ages 18-42, prayer and sharing on topic of hope. Information, registration: events.sistersofprovidence.org, 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org.

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow.

Information: 317-829-6800, womenscarecenter.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

March 8

St. Pius X Parish Hall, 7200 Sarto Dr., Indianapolis. **SPREAD Dinner Dance**, 6-8:30 p.m., optional Mass 5 p.m., hosted by archdiocesan Disabilities Ministry, RSVP by Feb. 3. Information, registration: archindy.org/specialneeds/events.html. Questions: Jenny Bryans, jbryans@archindy.org.

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, visit with elder sisters and help them with activities such as Bingo, exercise, baking and more. Information, registration: teenvolunteer.sistersofprovidence.org, jluna@spsmw.org, 361-500-9505. †

Retreats and Programs

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

February 22

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Wisdom Knowing and Wisdom Jesus**, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., doctor of nursing Kay Jackson presenting, \$40. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

February 25-27

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **A Contemplative Approach to the Lord's Prayer**, Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

February 28

Oldenburg Franciscan

Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

March 5

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Ashes, Awe and the Cross**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT,

Jane Feliz Rush presenting, \$75. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

March 8

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **'Tis a Gift to Be Simple—Finding Hope and Peace of Mind in A Complex Time**, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Father Jeffrey Godecker and Mary Schaffner presenting, \$45. Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

March 13

Virtual guided meditation series via Zoom, 7-7:45 p.m., every second Thursday of the month through May, offered by Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, free, registration required. Information, registration: events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

March 21-23

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Christian Contemplative Prayer: Being Centered on Christ**,

Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

March 28

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$45, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$32, dinner additional \$11. Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org. †

'Healing after divorce' program to take place on Feb. 16 at Terre Haute parish

An afternoon of sharing and reflection titled "An Afternoon of Grace and Mercy: Healing After Divorce" will be offered at St. Benedict Parish, 111 S. 9th St., in Terre Haute, from 1-3 p.m. (EST) on Feb. 16. The group will meet in the parish center at the corner of 9th and Walnut streets.

The event is a gathering to offer support and healing and explore the needs of divorced Catholics in the community. Conventual Franciscan Father Robert Showers, pastor of St. Benedict and

St. Joseph University parishes, both in Terre Haute, will facilitate the conversation, along with Sue Butwin, parish catechetical leader at St. Benedict Parish and Rob Murray, pastoral associate at St. Joseph University Parish.

There is no cost to attend; however, registration is required. To register, please contact Sue Butwin at 812-232-8421, ext. 121, or e-mail her at sue@stbenedictth.org, or contact Rob Murray at 812-232-7100, ext. 14, or at adultfaith@stjoeup.org. †

Vocations essay contest submissions sought from students in grades 7-12

The Serra Club of Indianapolis' annual John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest is seeking submissions from Catholic students in grades 7-12 in parochial, public or home school systems in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The theme for this year's contest focuses on the 2025 Jubilee Year theme, "Pilgrims of Hope." Essay contest participants are asked to address: How a priest or consecrated person encouraged you to seek God? How does pursuing a vocation bring

hope into your life? And how are you preparing to know where God is calling you to build up his kingdom with your God-given talents?

For more details and an essay submission form, contact your school religion teacher, religious education program instructor or parish catechist/youth minister. Information is also available from the Office of Vocations at vocations@archindy.org.

Submitted essays must be postmarked no later than March 7. †

Wedding Anniversaries

ROBERT AND ROSE MARIE (KANE) FAUST, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 13.

The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on Feb. 13, 1965.

They have four children: Tracy Brown, Shannon Townsend, Kimberly and Christopher Faust.

The couple also has six grandchildren.



DEACON KEN AND CAROL (REUST) SMITH, members of St. Paul Parish in Tell City, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 25.

The couple was married in St. John the Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, Ind. (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend), on Jan. 25, 1975.

They have three children: Karen Woods, Kevin and Scott Smith.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren. †



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

Immigrant artist's memorial to D.C. air disaster victims a call to love

ARLINGTON, Va. (OSV News)—
They are silent sentinels.

Painted a somber, stormy ocean blue, others an earthy olive drab, and some still bare wood and awaiting color, dozens of simple crosses—each standing several feet high—are arrayed in orderly rows, with small, bright floral decorations attached to each.

They're planted in a nearly frozen patch of gently sloping ground across the highway from the end of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Runway 33—which late on Jan. 29, American Eagle Flight 5342 was seconds from safely reaching when it instead collided with a U.S. Army helicopter. Both aircraft plunged, in pieces, into the icy Potomac River.

By the afternoon of Feb. 2, there were 67 crosses standing under a leaden gray sky—one for each victim from the Washington aviation disaster, 64 on the jet and three crew on the helicopter. Names will also be added to the crosses, crafted with concerned diligence by Dallas-based Roberto Marquez, a self-trained, immigrant artist originally from Mexico.

He first crossed the U.S. border at age 15 to work in the produce fields of California. Marquez—now 62—was deported, returned, found stable construction employment, became a citizen, and eventually established a real estate business.

In 2018, he decided to devote himself to painting, including large scale murals.

He's since become known as a disaster artist; his outdoor work sometimes referred to as tragedy memorials. When American daily life is fractured by a public catastrophe—a school shooting; a terrorist attack; an airplane crash—Marquez reliably appears to fashion a grotto of sorts, a space for communal grief and remembrance.

Recently, he was in New Orleans after the Bourbon Street attack that killed 14 and injured 35 on New Year's Day, and in Los Angeles to install both a mural and crosses after the raging wildfires that took at least 29 lives.

"The crosses represent a lot," Marquez told OSV News. "But one of those things is, I do it out of my heart. It's solidarity, and respect, and honor, and remembering those lives."

Although police have effectively quarantined several areas near Reagan National Airport—crews began removing wreckage and the bodies of victims from the river on Feb. 3—people have been stopping at Marquez's installation anyway.

One woman, Marquez surmised, was a relative of one of those who died.

"It was a lady," he shared. "She was crying, and she had a bunch of flowers."

Asked what his work means, Marquez is reflective. His gentle face and dark eyes steadily gaze out from under the brim of a black cowboy hat.



A plane flies over crosses near the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport as seen from Arlington, Va., on Feb. 2 in the aftermath of the collision of American Eagle Flight 5342 and a Black Hawk Army helicopter late on Jan. 29 while the plane was approaching the airport to land. The two aircraft crashed into the Potomac River near the airport. (OSV News photo/Jeenah Moon, Reuters)

"Different things. One is that we need to understand that life is really short," he emphasized. "Now, it was these 67 that went away—but who knows what's going to happen to any one of us later? So this is something to remember; pay our respects and send a message that we're united."

In a nation's capital currently awash with political turmoil and partisanship, some might doubt that—but it seems Marquez doesn't.

"This is a good example," he said, indicating the crosses. "The community has been responding. And it's not only me; it's many people. So this is a collective work."

Is it a ministry?

"People describe it different ways," responded Marquez. "I see it as, I like to do something because it makes me feel good."

Marquez has always used his own funds to build the memorials. He's lost count of the exact number by now—"It has been too many"—but guessed perhaps 50.

"I'm kind of running low on cash," he added. "But there's always people that come and help. A lady just left; she gave me \$200. I said, 'I don't want to take it.' I don't ask. But she came to ask me if I would take the money. I said, 'I'm going to take it, because I need it.'"

A sign near one of the crosses—draped with an American flag—indicated an upcoming vigil. Beneath it were dozens of

white roses, lined up on a lime green tarp.

While crosses are a definitive Christian symbol, Marquez doesn't identify himself by any specific belief.

"I will tell you what my religion is," he said firmly. "I believe in respect; common sense; reason; truth—and I try to use them; to show it. And doing the memorials—and doing this for somebody else—is one way. So that's my religion. Be active; and put it to work."

Unity is a repeated theme in Marquez's thoughtful observations and answers.

"There's one thing that unites us—it has to do with sentiment. When you see somebody crying, I don't pay attention to what religion ... you know?" he asked. "It is that feeling that we as humans have—and that's what unites us."

He paused.

"And I'm sorry to say, but sometimes it's tragedies—and pain comes to our hearts, and that's when we kiss others; we hug; we understand; we're crying," Marquez reflected. "We would like to have just happy moments, but that's not the case. Or maybe to be happy, we need to be sad first. I don't know."

He's not sure where he's going next.

"I don't want to sound pessimistic, but whenever there's another tragedy," Marquez replied. "And the reason is because I want to go and help."

Maybe Philadelphia, where seven people perished after Med Jets Flight 056—a medical ambulance jet—crashed into a neighborhood on Jan. 31. All six

people on the plane were killed; a person in a neighborhood where the plane crashed also died.

"If I get the opportunity and maybe the permission," he said, "I will set up the crosses that will represent those lives that were lost in Philadelphia."

Marquez regarded the cross hung with the U.S. flag, and said he would like to add other flags to the memorial.

"I don't know how many countries these people were from. We'll see what we can get," he said. "We'd like to get some different countries' flags."

Asked what he'd want to share, Marquez was quick to reply.

"Send out my condolences to those families that are grieving. They're going through this difficult time," he said. "I'm pretty sure there's nothing that is going to make them feel good or better this moment—but maybe later."

Family members of victims visited near the crash site on Feb. 2, transported to the banks of the Potomac River by a fleet of police-escorted charter buses.

Marquez then had a final word to share.

"We should take every opportunity to not only think about me, or myself, or my family—we've got to do something for others. And it can be done in many, many, many different ways," he said. "There's so many ways. But there's one thing that we need to nurture is love—and practice it. Practice it—and do more practice." †

Archbishop Pérez calls for prayer after medical jet crash in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA (OSV News)—Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia is calling for prayer, saying his "heart sank" after learning of a fatal air crash in that city on Jan. 31, just two days after a midair collision between a commercial jet and an Army helicopter near a Washington airport killed 67.

"This shocking tragedy comes with great loss, pain, and anxiety for the families of the crew and passengers as well as neighborhood residents and business owners whose evening was shattered with sudden violence," said Archbishop Pérez in a statement. "We pray fervently that God will bring comfort and healing in this time of anguish."

The archbishop issued his statement a few hours after a medical flight departed Northeast Philadelphia Airport on Jan. 31 at approximately 6 p.m. Minutes after takeoff, the Learjet 55 plunged into a major intersection in the city's northeast section.

The jet struck near a 12-lane section of Roosevelt Boulevard (a portion of U.S. Route 1), a sprawling shopping mall, and a densely populated residential area. The fiery crash, which was captured on a number of security cameras and personal devices, sparked fires at a number of structures on the ground and left a wide debris field.

Officials confirmed at least seven have died as a result of the crash.

All six of those on board the medical jet operated by Jet Rescue Air Ambulance were killed. They were identified as 11-year-old Valentina Guzman Murillo and her mother Lizeth Murillo Ozuna, who were returning to Mexico after Valentina's treatment for a life-threatening illness at Shriners Children's Philadelphia; captain Alan Alejandro Montoya Perales; co-pilot Josue de Jesus Juarez Juarez; Dr. Raul Meza Arredondo; and paramedic Rodrigo Lopez Padilla.

Mexico President Claudia Sheinbaum said in a statement that all six were Mexican nationals. Shriners Children's Hospital said in a statement that it was "heartbroken" to confirm the patient had received care at their facility.

The seventh victim was killed in a car on the ground.

As of Feb. 3, at least 22 others were injured, with three still in critical condition, according to Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker.

The flight's data recorder, or black box, has been recovered, and investigators, including those from the National Transportation Safety Board, remain on the scene.

Shortly after the crash, President Donald J. Trump

posted on his Truth Social account that "more innocent souls" had been lost.

"Our people are totally engaged. First Responders are already being given credit for doing a great job," he wrote, adding, "More to follow. God bless you all."

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro pledged full support from state agencies and resources, commending responders and saying in a media briefing, "This is when you see the best of Philly."

Parker told media that she and her administration "are unified in our approach," part of a "One Philly philosophy with all hands on deck."

Archbishop Pérez in his statement asked people to "unite in prayer and do what we can in the days ahead to share the compassionate love of Christ with those suffering as a result of tonight's crash."

He prayed particularly for the emergency personnel responding to the tragic scene.

"May our Blessed Mother wrap her protective mantle around the first responders working tirelessly to assist the injured, extinguish fires, and safeguard the community," he said. "Our emergency personnel put themselves at great risk to serve us each day and they deserve our unending thanks." †

FILMMAKER

continued from page 1

from an environmental perspective—it wasn't just beautiful mountains—it had a deeper meaning to it. It allowed me to think more about how the beauty of nature can help us in sharing our faith and in leading our faith."

Stanley's emphasis on the connection between faith and beauty shines through in his work, which has resulted in 10 regional Emmys—awards for artistic and technical merit in the television industry. Yet just as meaningful to him is another theme that strikes the core of Spirit Juice's films—the connection between faith and struggle.

That theme has been present in Stanley's personal life in heartbreaking ways.

Love and heartbreak

That reality is captured in a second telling scene—as Stanley receives an Emmy for a short film that means so much to him personally, a film he wishes he never had to make.

In a span of six minutes and 40 seconds, the film *Witness of Mercy: The Story of Jennifer Trapuzzano* powerfully depicts love and heartbreak, joy and devastation, cold-blooded violence and remarkable forgiveness.

The film has its roots in Stanley's time at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., where he graduated from in 2014. During his college years, he grew increasingly closer to a young woman named Alea, whom he had known since their connection in a homeschool production of *The Hobbit* during their middle school education.

Stanley's years in college were also a time when he grew deeper in his Catholic faith, thanks to the example of two older friends, Nathan Trapuzzano and Chauncey Becker.

"Going to a non-Catholic college that wasn't particularly friendly to the faith in many areas, I was able to take all those things that I learned through my home-schooling upbringing and my altar-serving and put them into practice," Stanley says. "You can't really be

lukewarm and keep your faith in a situation like that.

"It was a lot of surrounding myself with people who were looking for the same thing. They were looking to build themselves up in their faith, whether it was through Bible studies or programs at the Newman Center. We knew we had to work on our faith together."

At the core of that group were Nathan and Chauncey. "Going to school, you look for the cool guys and you try to emulate them," Stanley says. "Nathan lived his faith so earnestly and without any sort of embarrassment. Chauncey was another one who lived his faith vibrantly. Seeing the two of them, especially since they were a year or two older, gave me renewed vigor in my faith."

His friendship with them and their impact on him continued, including seeing how Nathan's marriage to his wife Jennifer was rooted in love, joy and faith—a marriage that led to the couple expecting the birth of their first child in 2014.

So Stanley was shocked and devastated when the news came that Nathan, at the age of 24, had been shot and killed during an early-morning robbery as he prayed while taking a walk in his Indianapolis neighborhood on March 31, 2014.

Stanley then marveled when Jennifer, who had lost the love of her life in a murder by a 16-year-old who showed little remorse, expressed her forgiveness for the youth in court, believing she had to embrace the most challenging part of the "Our Father"—"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Stanley movingly captured that range of realities and emotions in *Witness of Mercy*—Nathan's and Jennifer's love for each other, the joyful expectancy of the birth of their daughter Cecilia, the heartbreak of Jennifer searching for her husband that morning and discovering the crime scene, and the power of her forgiveness.

"There are many important stories that we tell here, but it isn't often that I get to tell the story of a friend," Stanley says. "That piece felt like a proper honor for Nathan's life and for Jennifer's witness of forgiveness."

The tragedy of Nathan's loss was compounded by the death of Chauncey to heart complications.

"I think about them regularly. We never really know

what our time is," Stanley

says. "For me, it's a reminder to live out our faith every day. Nathan was a super healthy guy, living his life and praying his morning rosary when everything happened. Chauncey was living his faith out every single day, and then he passed away.

"It's a reminder to never get too comfortable. 'Oh, I've got a lot of time left. I've got a lot of time with my family.' But that's not a guarantee. So, every day, I need to be working on building up my own faith life, but also working with my kids in ways that instill in them the love for the faith that I've got."

A shocking phone call and a new start

In another life-changing scene, Stanley receives a phone call that shocks him, a phone call that questions his standing in the Church and the Catholic faith that he loves and seeks to celebrate.

It was a phone call from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 2020, a time when Stanley was in his late 20s.

"I was told that evidence had come to light that my baptism was never valid," Stanley notes.

His godfather had recalled years later what he considered an irregularity in the baptism, called the archdiocese to ask about it, and it was decided that Stanley didn't properly receive the sacrament as an infant.

"That was a pivotal moment for me," Stanley recalls. "I wouldn't say I had taken my faith for granted, but at the same time you get used to it. You get comfortable in some ways. But when you're confronted with that, it puts it all in perspective a little more, and you appreciate what you got.

"I was baptized, confirmed and received my true first Communion on St. Nicholas' feast day in 2020. It had been 20 some years since I thought I had received my first Communion. Getting to do it again and dwelling on it being the first time I would receive the Eucharist, it gave me chills."

So did the overwhelming reaction of people to another one of his Spirit Juice films, *The Veil Removed*—a film about the Eucharist that has been viewed by more than 100 million people.

"It's about what happens with the consecration," Stanley says. "The idea is that a young man goes to Mass. He's maybe not really feeling it. He's a bit of a lukewarm Catholic, but he begins to see things through the Mass. When it gets to the consecration, he sees saints and angels around the altar, and he sees Christ elevating the Eucharist and Christ above on the cross.

"Filming that was just something special. Especially getting to see the amount of people afterward who were able to view it. It was well over 100 million people who viewed the video. To know you had created something that had allowed people to strengthen their prayer life—or at least understand a little bit more about what happens at the consecration—was really unique. It's an experience I'm very grateful for."

A defining experience from childhood

One of the realities of life is that everyone is influenced by the people and events who touch their lives in major ways and even seemingly small ways.

In his professional career, Stanley has worked with many Catholics who have an influential media presence, including Bishop Robert E. Barron, known for his Word on Fire ministry, and Jonathan Roumie, who plays the role of Christ in the television series, "The Chosen."

"Those are just wonderful experiences," Stanley says. So was the opportunity to help capture on film the National Eucharistic Congress in downtown Indianapolis last July, when more than 50,000 people from across the country gathered together to celebrate Christ's gift of the Eucharist.

Now the executive vice president of Spirit Juice, directing a team of 27, Stanley always views returning to Indianapolis as a homecoming. The city is a place close to his heart where his approach to life was shaped by a defining experience from his childhood and youth—when he was an altar server at Holy Rosary Church under the direction of a man named Gary Willen.

"When you talk about people who influenced me, I go back to Gary Willen, who still leads the altar serving corps at Holy Rosary," Stanley says. "It's easy when you're an altar server to kind of look at it like it's a stage. 'I'm in front of everybody. I get to have this job or position by the altar. I'm really important.' He was really great about washing away any ideas of pride in that respect.

"We were there for a bigger purpose. We were there to serve our Lord. And to offer ourselves up every day for the glory of God and to build the Church. And I don't see this position I have now as being different from

altar serving. It may come with some flashy things now and then, but in the end, the reason I'm here is not for me. Bishop Barron said it well: 'Our life is not about ourselves.' In many ways, this job I have is about doing whatever I can every single day to forward the Church, to forward the faith and to praise God."

A touch of irony, the search for beauty

It's a scene filled with irony, a scene in which Stanley and his wife Alea make a decision that they consider best for their children and their family.

About six months after Stanley hiked that mountain in Poland, the couple decided to remove their television from their home.

"I spend so much time surrounded by technology by necessity. I have to be up on the latest trends and techniques," he says, before recalling the impact of that hike. "It was a good reminder that I need to step away sometimes. Go to the quiet. Have some time to contemplate.

"We do have a projector that I bring out sometimes, and we do home movies. I don't watch much TV and not many movies for somebody's who's pretty deep in the film industry. It's good for me, and it's good for the kids to not have a screen going on very frequently. I'm still able to do my research and watch movies with an analytical eye and take new things in, but I'm not immersing myself in it to an unhealthy degree."

That approach ties into the one constant that Stanley tries to keep in his life—balance.

"Balance between work and time with the family. Balance between intense ambition and contentedness. In every aspect of my life, I look for the balance, and while I can't claim to have 'found it,' I can tell you that this constant internal struggle continues to make me a better boss, manager, co-worker, husband and father.

"What drives me to find this balance is the desire to create something of lasting beauty. This ambition has been the constant in my life for two decades. What has changed, however, is the shape that 'lasting beauty' takes. It may be an incredibly impactful movie, or it could be reaching a point where the team truly thrives under my direction. It could be a successful product launch, or it could be instilling the proper values in my children and seeing them flourish."

That search for balance and lasting beauty all leads to another revealing perspective from Stanley—one he gives when he's asked to share what he would consider as an ending scene for a film about his life so far.

A closing scene of love, family, faith

He starts the vision of that scene by talking about his relationship with Alea, his wife of 10 years.

"She has been a constant support, dealing with the—at times—long hours of my job or times when I'm traveling for extended periods with grace and poise," he says. "Simply put, I wouldn't be here without her.

"Communication and integration of our faith into every element of our lives has been what we've tried to do. We're not perfect at it, but we try to live out the belief that our faith is foremost. And we're not trying to live that out separately but together in ways that bring us closer together. I'm a firm believer that the family that prays together stays together."

That thought leads to another important part of a closing scene.

"When I look at my work and my personal life, my legacy is not going to be what I do at Spirit Juice," he says. "With any luck, the videos we make here will be remembered in 20 years. But the legacy I've really got is the faith that I'm able to instill in my kids. So, if I'm building what is the movie of my faith life, it ends with me instilling a love for the Eucharist and a love for being Catholic in my boys, who will hopefully be able to pass it along to their kids.

"My kids are only 7, 4 and 2 right now, but I'm a



Believing that the family that prays together stays together, Branden and Alea Stanley have made their Catholic faith the key part of the lives of their three children, Finnegan, 7, Everett, 4 and Cassian, 2. The couple is also expecting a daughter this spring. (Submitted photo)

firm believer that we shouldn't underestimate our kids' ability to take it all in and be heroic in their own ways."

As he focuses on imagining that ending scene of faith and family, his thoughts once again turn to his desire to capture and share "something of lasting beauty."

"I'm not creating any unique beauty out of anything. The beauty is already there," he says. "The stories we're telling at Spirit Juice are not something we've created out of thin air. My part in all of this is trying to shine a light on that and trying to magnify that beauty. That goes for the stories we're trying to tell, and it goes for the relationships we're building.

"It's all about the beauty that God has created, that God has given us in our faith and in our world and the people we interact with. What motivates me is being able to show that beauty in a way that people understand it differently or maybe understand it for the first time." †



Jonathan Roumie, who plays the role of Christ in the television series, "The Chosen," poses for a photo with filmmaker Branden Stanley by a poster for *Heart of a Servant: The Father Flanagan Story*—a documentary by Spirit Juice Studios in which Roumie and Stanley were both executive producers. (Submitted photo)

Young filmmaker says the Church needs to convey the beauty of faith to his peers

By John Shaughnessy

As a young adult who tries to make his Catholic faith the foundation of his family, friendships and work, Branden Stanley considers the questions seriously—and then shares an intriguing answer.

The questions: What advice would you give to your fellow young adults about trying to live their faith in this world? And what can the Church be doing to help young adults in this regard?

"I can't say I have all the answers there, but honestly for me, this generation is not looking for surface-level things.

They're looking for a deepness and a vibrance in their faith lives," said Stanley, a filmmaker who focuses his work on how the beauty and depth of the Catholic faith can transform lives.

"For me, that meant finding vibrant liturgies, finding parishes that aren't just interested in people going to church on Sundays and then leaving afterward without talking to anyone. It meant having our faith permeate every element of our life. It makes a difference if you approach it from that way, and not just have it be a surface-level thing that you just practice on Sundays."

At 32, Stanley sees a correlation

between that approach and the preference in technology that more and more young people are embracing today.

"There's a reason why young people are going back toward record players and film cameras in an age where there is so much digital stuff around," says Stanley, executive vice president of Spirit Juice Studios in the Chicago area. "We can take pictures on our phones. We can listen to music on our phones, but people are going back toward record players and film cameras because they want the experience. They want to feel something deeper."

Providing and sharing that deeper

faith experience for young adults is the challenge for the Church, he says.

"If we can find ways as a Church, find ways of bringing that richness that we have in our Catholic heritage—the richness of the liturgy, the richness of our traditions—and build that back into our everyday lives, that will do a tremendous job of reinventing the youth and the young people. Because so many places have watered down our faith to something we just practice on Sunday or that we do because we have to, so we don't go to hell.

"There's so much beauty and so much intricacy and so much history there that I think young people and young adults are yearning for, and they may not even know they exist within the Church. So, the more we can do to build that up and present it to them. I think the better off we will be."

That belief guides his approach to the films and visual media presentations that are at the heart of Spirit Juice productions. "A big thing for me is beauty," he says. "I had a great opportunity a couple of months ago to travel to France

and film some of the Gothic cathedrals around Paris and some of the neighboring cities. One of the things that struck me is how the Church has traditionally led in art and architecture—and really beauty across the board.

"And I feel like these days maybe we haven't forgotten that, but we've made it play second fiddle to some of the other transcendentals. We need to talk about truth, goodness and beauty. As a Church, as Catholics, we have this rich history of creating the best and giving glory to God through giving everything we have. And we've moved away from that."

Stanley believes the Church today too



Branden Stanley

Audits show claims the Church profits from refugee work ‘just wrong’

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—Claims that the U.S. bishops’ conference profits from its partnership with the government to assist refugee populations that qualify for federal assistance, and that the Catholic Church facilitates illegal immigration are “just wrong,” said William Canny, the U.S. bishops’ migration director.

Canny, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Migration and Refugee Services, made the comments in an interview on Jan. 30 with OSV News in the wake of remarks by Vice President JD Vance and President Donald J. Trump’s press secretary.

Vance, who is Catholic, questioned the motives of the U.S. bishops’ criticism of Trump’s new immigration policies in a Jan. 26 interview—including reducing restrictions on raids on churches and schools. He asked if the bishops are actually concerned about receiving federal resettlement funding and “their bottom line.”

The same week, in her debut press briefing as White House press secretary on Jan. 28, Karoline Leavitt, also a Catholic, suggested the Trump administration would seek to strip federal funds from nongovernmental organizations—including Catholic Charities—as part of its effort to enforce its immigration policies. In that exchange, Catholic Charities was accused of facilitating illegal immigration, claims the domestic charitable arm of the Catholic Church in the U.S. has long denied.

The USCCB website states that its Migration and Refugee Services “is the largest refugee resettlement agency in the world,” and that in partnership with its affiliates, it resettles approximately 18% of the refugees that arrive in the U.S. each year.

Audited financial statements by an outside firm show that the USCCB received about \$122.6 million in 2022 and about \$129.6 million in 2023 in funding from government agencies for refugee-related services. But the same statements show that the USCCB spent more on those services than the government gave them, meaning the conference did not profit from the grants, according to the conference’s auditors. In 2023, for example, the conference spent \$134.2 million for such services.

“We have an obligation to the federal government, when we take these grants, to report back to them, to monitor the activities that these agencies carry out. We’re talking food, housing, clothes, medical attention,

et cetera, so we have an obligation to monitor that,” Canny said. “The conference does not profit from this money. And in fact, we cannot, we do not run these programs without putting also in some private funds. So there’s absolutely no profiting from these federal grants.”

The refugees eligible for the program, he added, “are highly vetted” by the U.S. government.

“When these refugees come in through this particular program, they are on a path to citizenship in this country,” Canny said. He added the program assists them with basic needs like housing, medical care and job searching.

When it comes to immigration policy, Canny said, the U.S. bishops are supportive of policies that are just, yet humane.

“Let me be clear that we believe that our country has a right to control its border and a legitimate right to determine who can come in and who can’t into the country, within the bounds of justice and law,” Canny said.

He added, “The sanctity of every human life is important to the Catholic Church, the God-given dignity of each person, regardless of nationality or immigration status. So, some of these executive orders that have a tendency to disregard the humanness of people” are cause for concern.

“Government authorities have the right and responsibility to promote public safety and security and to enforce just laws,” Canny said. But he pointed to denying those with “legitimate asylum claims” entry, and fewer restrictions on raids in sensitive locations like churches as particular causes for concern.

After Vance’s comments, the USCCB issued a statement defending its work with refugees.

Others weighed in more sharply, including Kim Daniels, the director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University, who wrote on X that arguments the U.S. bishops are “advocating for open borders” are false.

“It all comes down to an old strategy: politicians targeting Catholics for political gain,” she said.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, who offered prayers at both of Trump’s inaugurations, including his second with Vance just days earlier, called the new vice president’s comments “just scurrilous” on his SiriusXM Catholic Channel show.



A young woman works on her homework at home in Bowling Green, Ky., on Nov. 27, 2021. The Zadrans family, Afghan refugees fleeing the Taliban, came to Bowling Green after a spell at a New Mexico military base. (OSV News photo/Amira Karaoud, Reuters)

“I was really disappointed,” Cardinal Dolan said, calling the comments “not only harmful, this was inaccurate.

“It’s very nasty,” Cardinal Dolan added, inviting Vance to “come look at our audits.

“You think we make money caring for the immigrants? We’re losing it hand over fist,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Cardinal Dolan praised Vance on other issues, including comments he recently delivered to the March for Life, and said he hoped the comments against the Church were “uncharacteristic.”

Canny said the Catholic Church has long held its view on serving refugees, and the U.S. is a nation of immigrants. He pointed out the first American citizen to be canonized—Mother Frances Cabrini—was an immigrant.

Asked how they planned to engage with the Trump administration on immigration policy, Canny said, “Certainly as they organize and get people into place, we hope to be able to meet with them directly and discuss these matters as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has done with every administration.

“So we hope that that will happen to avoid misunderstandings in the future,” he added. †

MIGRANTS

continued from page 1

during a Jan. 23 hearing on the measure in the House Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee.

But he emphasized to lawmakers that the Church is deeply concerned about the “unwritten impact” of this bill on immigrant communities at large.

“The Church cares about these immigrants because they possess, as all humans do, an inalienable dignity despite their immigration status,” Mingus said. “These immigrants are often beloved members of our communities. Some are members of our Catholic parishes who kneel next to us at Mass, share their beloved traditions from their various countries of origin, send their children to our schools, and participate as they are able in fruitful contributions to public life.”

Toward that end, as in previous years, the ICC is again supporting legislation to provide undocumented residents with legal driving privileges so that they can drive to work, church or the grocery store without fear. Driving cards would allow these residents to drive legally and to purchase car insurance, but could not be used for voting or other purposes.

Driving card legislation has stalled in the last several years at the Indiana

General Assembly. Now, with the state’s focus increasingly shifting to identification and deportation of undocumented immigrants, Mingus said that the bishops of Indiana “remind us that immigration enforcement should always be targeted, proportionate and humane.

“The flaws in our federal immigration system have been caused by years of minimal federal immigration reform that has perpetuated real national security threats: the presence of drug cartels, human trafficking, drug trafficking and violent crime,” Mingus continued. “It is most concerning that these real issues hide among the men and women and children who are really suffering and who are in great need of loving care.

“Ultimately, we believe that the deputization of local law enforcement for immigration enforcement would not adequately protect the most vulnerable, and would instead leave them open to subjective immigration enforcement that does not meaningfully advance public safety for Hoosiers or our immigrant brothers and sisters.”

Hundreds of years of Catholic moral teaching form the basis for the Church’s position on immigration. In a Jan. 27 public statement, Archbishop Thompson noted that the Church “has long recognized the right and responsibility of each sovereign nation to maintain proper

border security to protect its citizens while simultaneously remaining clear on the respect owed to the dignity of every person as created in the image of God.

“As Pope Francis exhorts us, we must be especially attentive to the needs of the poor and vulnerable, which includes immigrants and refugees,” Archbishop Thompson wrote. “Christians are keenly aware that the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph were refugees for a time, traveling to another country to escape violence and death as imposed by the unjust decree of King Herod.

“As pastors, we hear the concerns of our brothers and sisters, heightened by recent threats of aggressive immigration enforcement actions, who flee to escape various forms of injustice, such as violence, war and persecution,” the archbishop continued. “Using the foundational principles of the Church’s social and moral teaching, we will continue to advocate for the just and dignified treatment of migrants as well as for national immigration reform that includes targeted, proportionate, and humane enforcement, and reasonable pathways to citizenship for long-time residents with an emphasis on family unity.”

Adding immediacy to this issue is an executive order by recently elected Indiana Gov. Mike Braun requiring all state law enforcement agencies to “cooperate fully” with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) to remove undocumented immigrants in Indiana, beginning with those charged with serious crimes.

Another bill at the Statehouse aims to assist in that effort. House Bill 1158 would require Indiana sheriff’s departments to assist ICE in deporting undocumented immigrants.

The Catholic Church has a number of concerns with this proposed legislation, Mingus told a crowded hearing room at the Statehouse on Jan. 28.

“If we emphasize enforcement without adequate reforms in the system, we will certainly ensnare those immigrants who have become valued members of our

communities,” Mingus said during a hearing on the bill in the House Local Government Committee. “While we understand that your intent is to keep Hoosier citizens safe, an intent that is laudable, we ask you to instead prioritize policies that are not solely focused on enforcement, but rather assisting the federal government in a twofold pursuit of public safety and solidarity with our migrant brothers and sisters in need.”

Mingus explored the topic of solidarity—along with the related concept of subsidiarity—during the recent weekly podcast that he co-hosts with Roarke LaCoursiere, associate director of the ICC.

Both principles are addressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, they explained. And while they may appear to conflict with one another, they are actually complementary, Mingus said—and both aid in discerning answers to difficult questions related to immigration.

In terms of solidarity, the Church states in the catechism that “more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin” (#2241).

“On the other hand, we have this beautiful principle of subsidiarity—how nations have a right to care for their own and to make decisions that impact the nation as a whole,” Mingus said during the podcast. “And the catechism states this clearly: that sovereign nations have a right to control their borders. Public safety is incredibly important. But so is our responsibility to care for those in need.”

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to ICAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for ICAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

‘While we understand that your intent is to keep Hoosier citizens safe—an intent that is laudable—we ask you to instead prioritize policies that are not solely focused on enforcement, but rather assisting the federal government in a twofold pursuit of public safety and solidarity with our migrant brothers and sisters in need.’



—ICC executive director Alexander Mingus speaking during a Jan. 28 hearing on House Bill 1158 in the House Local Government Committee

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Louis and Zélie Martin are models of holiness for married couples

By Lance Richey

(OSV News)—SS. Louis and Zélie Martin, the first married couple to be declared saints in the Church in modern times, offer a model of the vocation to love and holiness that is at the heart of the sacrament of marriage.

By showing how God worked through both their successes and occasional failures as spouses and parents of several children, including St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Martins can offer inspiration and hope for countless millions of Catholic couples seeking to live out their faith in the details of everyday married life.

Zélie Guérin was a formidable young woman. Alongside her deep religious faith, the defining feature of Zélie's personality was her determination to succeed in business and to acquire financial independence. Her childhood had been an unhappy one, marked by material hardship. After she was denied entry to a convent, she turned to the art of lacemaking (for which her village of Alençon was famous) to acquire the respectable dowry which her parents' poverty had denied her.

These early experiences had scarred Zélie, leading her to become what would today be called a workaholic, even when she and Louis were financially secure. In a letter written only weeks before her death from cancer in 1877, Zélie notes her continued work at lacemaking and her intention to "go on like that up to the end."

Louis Martin, on the other hand, could never be described that way. The youngest son of a military officer, he lived a prosperous but almost monastic existence as a watchmaker in Alençon after failing in his youthful attempt at a religious vocation. (He did not know Latin.)

Hardworking and introverted by nature, Louis divided his energies between his successful business and an intense religious devotion defined by daily Mass, prayer and pilgrimages. Unlike many other businesses in town, his shop always remained closed on Sunday. Still single in his 30s, it was rumored he had taken a private vow of celibacy.

Louis' mother, concerned about her youngest son's extended bachelorhood, met Zélie Guérin at a class on lacemaking and immediately saw in her a potential match for her son. How this encounter led to the young couple's initial meeting on a bridge in town is unknown. Told by an inner voice that the handsome stranger she encountered on that bridge was to be her future husband (so the family story goes), the ever-energetic Zélie wasted no time fulfilling this prophecy. Their marriage followed within three months, in July 1858.

Louis initially offered Zélie a "Josephite" (that is, celibate) marriage, revealing a spiritual understanding of marriage that was far removed from the domineering relationships in which so many new brides found themselves. Likewise, Zélie's somewhat reluctant acceptance of the offer also shows a religious attitude that made her a natural match for this quiet man.

However, their spiritual adviser quickly put an end to this arrangement, and Zélie eventually gave birth to nine children, five of whom, all daughters, survived to adulthood.

Drawn together originally because they recognized in each other what they valued most—namely, a profound faith and the self-discipline required to live it daily—

their conjugal life only strengthened the emotional bonds that already united them. As with every marriage, though, these bonds would be tested by the trials and tragedies of married life.

Zélie's strong but solemn personality made it difficult for her to express the deep love she had for her children. Unintentionally, Zélie inflicted the emotional neglect she had suffered as a child upon her own daughter, Marie-Léonie. It was only at the end of Zélie's life that Léonie achieved some degree of reconciliation and peace with her mother.

The struggles of Léonie, who eventually became a Visitation sister and whose own cause for sainthood has recently been opened, should put to rest any illusions that either the Martin marriage or their parenting was perfect in every respect. (Indeed, an autobiography by Léonie would perhaps have more than Thérèse's to say about the challenges of love.)

The depth of the love between Louis and Zélie, and the faith upon which it rested, was put to its greatest trial by the cancer from which she would die in 1877. Several years earlier, Zélie had seen the first symptoms of illness, beginning with a tumor in her breast. Always reluctant to complain, she ignored her condition and continued her lacemaking schedule and parental duties while the tumor metastasized and spread throughout her body. By the time she sought help in late 1876, her condition was beyond treatment.

Confronted with her terminal diagnosis on the eve of her 45th birthday, with five children and a husband in need of her care, Louis and Zélie fell back upon the same faith that had brought them together and sustained them in their marriage. A pilgrimage to Lourdes (made in June 1877, when travel was almost a torture for her)



A stained-glass window inside St. Thérèse Chapel at Holy Hill in Hubertus, Wis., depicts the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, SS. Louis and Zélie Guérin Martin, meeting for the first time on St. Leonard's Bridge in Alençon, France, in April 1858. They were married three months later. (OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)

had no effect on the cancer's spread, despite Louis' great confidence in the then-new shrine's healing waters. Zélie, always more clear-eyed than Louis, confessed to her sister-in-law, "I know very well that the Blessed Mother can cure me, but I can't help fearing that she doesn't want to, and I'll tell you honestly that a miracle seems very doubtful to me now."

On her deathbed, both spouses revealed, in their distinctive ways, the deep love and faith upon which they had built their life together. Their daughter, Celine, recalled: "We were all kneeling beside her bed, in order of age, with Thérèse beside me. Our poor dear father could not restrain his

grief. As for our mother, she remained calm and self-possessed. She was to die in a truly saintly way, giving us, to the very end, the example of complete self-forgetfulness and most lively faith."

The scene, combining tragedy and sorrow with the comfort and security of a profound faith in God, serves as a miniature of their married life.

Already shattered by her death, Louis was not to be spared his own Calvary, albeit of a very different sort. He gradually retreated from the world, retiring from business to care for his family. In 1886, Louis had his first episode of dementia, wandering alone for four days before being found, no longer delirious but fundamentally changed in personality. His condition worsened until he was placed in an institution, where he would die in 1894.

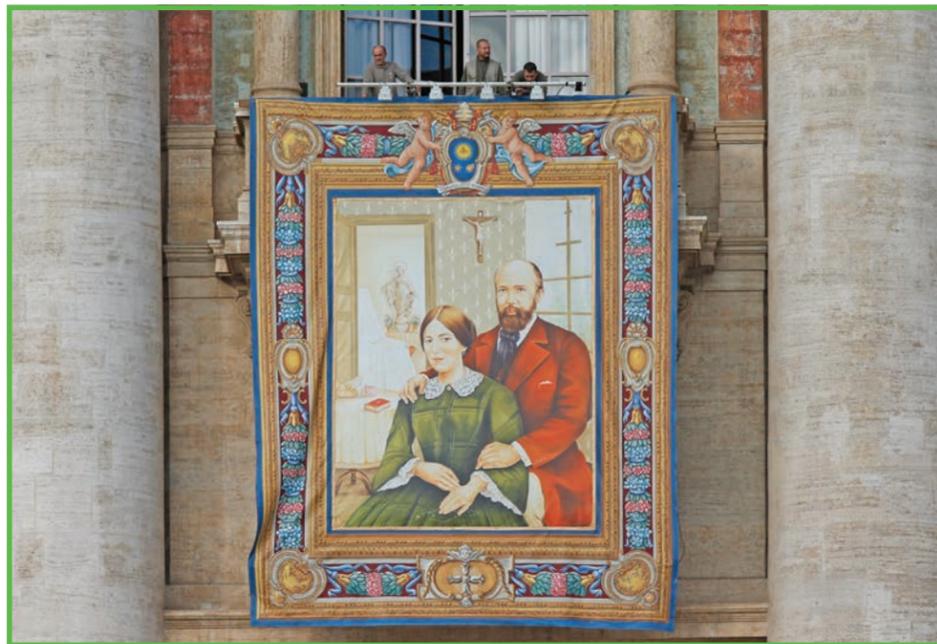
The last fragment of his writing we possess—a letter to his daughters from 1888, only months before his final and permanent descent into dementia—stands as a testimony not only to his character, but to that of the wife he had lost and to the great graces he had been given by God through her and their children.

He writes: "I want to tell you, my dear children, that I have the urgent desire to thank God and to make you thank God, because I feel that our family, though very humble, has the honor of being among the privileged of our adorable Creator." No final testament could better capture the spirit of this remarkable husband and father.

As the first married couple to be declared saints in modern times, Louis and Zélie Martin can serve as a model for couples seeking to live out the Catholic faith fully amid the pressures of work, children, illness and loss. It was therefore especially fitting that, at the opening of the 2014 extraordinary meeting of the Synod of Bishops on the topic of family life, their relics were brought to Rome and venerated as part of the opening Mass.

Now a decade past their canonization in 2015, Catholic couples everywhere should continue to get to know these models for their lives and advocates in heaven. SS. Louis and Zélie Martin, pray for us!

(Lance Richey is president of the University of St. Francis in Fort Wayne, Ind.) †



Workers prepare a banner of Louis and Zélie Guérin Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, on the facade of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Oct. 16, 2015, in advance of the couple's canonization. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

One Catholic's call to action, to 'give as much as I can while I can'

The McConnon sisters needed a trumpet player. The three young women performed in a liturgical ensemble at St. Luke Parish in St. Paul, Minn., and they were seeking a little brass to enhance the upcoming Christmas Eve Mass.



"Francis Roby!" a parishioner told them. "He's a trumpet player, and he's a member of the parish."

The McConnon sisters enlisted Fran, who performed his musical duties with energy to spare, which he devoted to admiring the youngest sister, Maura.

"She was very cute!" thought Fran, who—like Maura—was a high school senior at the time. "For a young man, that's automatic appeal, and I could see she was a kind and friendly person."

It took Fran two weeks to summon the courage to call Maura and ask her on a date. Six years later, they were married.

They raised two daughters, Katie and Bridget, in St. Paul and built careers on their shared Catholic values: Fran, as a social worker for Catholic Charities and later a guidance counselor at a Catholic high school; Maura, in elementary education, teaching children how to read. They sponsored students from various third-world countries through the years.

Then came a conversation that ignited a passion.

Fran spoke to Augustino Mayai, a friend they'd met through Bridget's college who was living in South Sudan. Augustino explained that South Sudan is the poorest country in the world because tens of thousands of young adults graduate from high school each year lacking the means to earn a college degree.

The wheels turned quickly in Fran's heart and head. He and Maura decided that day to start a college scholarship program for South Sudan, beginning the following month—September 2021—with a \$20,000 donation from their capital gains. For years they'd lived paycheck to paycheck, but the house was finally paid off, and they were done paying for their kids' college. They could spare the money.

It was enough to enroll 33 South Sudanese students in college. Come spring, they officially established a 501c3 and enlisted other donors, enough to provide scholarships for 20 more students. The Padoc Area Scholars Society (PASS) was born.

Today, 183 promising young South Sudanese are in college because of PASS. Most are Christian, and many are Catholic, pursuing in-demand fields such as medicine, business and agricultural science. On the website southsudanpass.org, you can click on the blue "Sponsor a Student" button to peruse the applicants and choose a specific student to sponsor. Anne is a 26-year-old orphan who wants to study social work "to help my community and my country at large." Baba, 23, has toiled in manual labor—carrying

stones for foundations, pouring cement—and now recognizes that "the only key to solving my situation is education."

The Catholic Church's social justice principles propelled Fran and Maura—with "compassion and generosity" at the center, he said.

"I want to challenge more people to know they can make a big difference," said Fran, now 67 and a grandfather of two.

As they helped the South Sudanese, Maura courageously battled breast cancer. She died last June.

She left Fran her retirement savings, which he is now pouring into the construction of a dorm in Juba, the capital city. Most PASS scholars live on the streets.

Fran marvels over Maura's lasting impact: faith in action. "She worked extremely hard, and she would be so happy knowing her sweat and tears will be assisting some of the poorest youths in the world for decades to come," he said.

He's praying other Catholics will donate to furnish the new dorm, sponsor students and support PASS at large.

It calls for a switch in thinking, Fran said—from trying to gain as much as possible to trying to help as much as possible. "The attitude is, 'I will give as much as I can while I can.'"

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

Faith at Home/Laura Kelly Fanucci

Husband's example plants seeds, leading to the power of a 'nudge' to pray

During my husband's years in business school, he learned about the power of the "nudge": how to form a new habit by connecting it to a habit you already have. This practice changed my life, because—apologies to my dentist—the nudge is the only way I started flossing regularly.



He explained the nudge as we stood in our bathroom staring at the toothbrush holder. Since I was already in the habit of brushing my teeth twice a day, I simply needed to put the flosser in the space where I usually kept my toothbrush. That way, when I would automatically reach for the brush, I'd remember the

nudge to floss first.

Miracle of miracles, it worked! So last night as I was flossing, I started to wonder: What if we carried over this nudge practice to our prayer lives, too?

Think about what already nudges you to pray: the daily news, a friend's request, the sound of church bells or an ambulance racing by. Then think about the routines you do without thinking. What could you pair with prayer, to give yourself an easy-to-remember nudge at work or home?

When you open the fridge, say a quick prayer of thanks for the gift of food. When you leave the house, bless yourself with holy water by the door. When you pass a hospital, pray for the patients and caregivers. When you hug your kids or grandkids, thank God for the gift of their lives. Daily life offers us a thousand simple ways to pray.

Many people love to make New Year's resolutions, but studies estimate that only 9% keep them. Learning about the power of the nudge can help us make—and keep—new habits. Friends have told me about laying out their workout clothes at night to remind them to exercise in the morning. Some families say a prayer in the

car every time they drive past a church or cemetery. What if you looked at your daily habits and added one nudge to pray?

If you brew coffee first thing in the morning, you could pray for the workers who picked the beans—or pray for the spouse who shares the coffee pot with you. If you're quick to click on a certain app, set your Bible next to your phone—or change the wallpaper on your home screen to remind you to pray.

I've made myself a few nudges like this through the years. During one season when several friends were going through difficult pregnancies, I decided to pray every time I picked up a laundry basket, to remember those who were carrying heavy burdens. Once when I got exasperated with tripping over piles of kids' shoes by the back door, I realized I could turn my annoyance into a sneaky prayer: to pray for each child as I straightened their shoes—and reminded them to straighten their shoes in turn.

This year, I'm taking a nudge from my husband again. During one Lent, he started reading the Mass readings via e-mail every day, and it's still the first thing he does when he picks up his phone each morning. Lately I've been more likely to scroll through the news or social media, neither of which nudge me to pray the way that Scripture does. So I'm trying to build a new habit by putting my prayer book on top of my phone at night, to remember to pick it up first in the morning.

How can you change your prayer habits with an easy, unmistakable reminder? If you need a visual cue, stick a note on your mirror. If you prefer an alarm, set a reminder on your phone. Notice where your strongest habits are, and build on a nudge to pray.

And who knows: you might even start flossing every day, too.

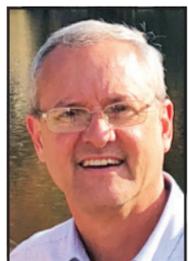
Lately I've been more likely to scroll through the news or social media, neither of which nudge me to pray the way that Scripture does. So I'm trying to build a new habit by putting my prayer book on top of my phone at night, to remember to pick it up first in the morning.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is an author, speaker and founder of Mothering Spirit, an online gathering place on parenting and spirituality.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

What messages could be hidden in dreams? They may reveal God's plans

Do you dream? Are those dreams—as Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* believed—just a piece of undigested meat or potato? Or could your dreams be another tool for God to offer direction in your life?



What basis does any person have for suggesting that dreams and spirituality could be linked?

There are many examples of key figures in the Scriptures who were given clear directives in dreams: Joseph, the husband of Mary, was told to not be afraid to marry Mary and then later to take her and the

child Jesus and flee to Egypt; Joseph, son of Jacob, whose 11 brothers who were sold into slavery; the wise men, who were directed to travel home by a different

route after visiting the Christ Child in Bethlehem. There were more cryptic dreams too, like Jacob wrestling with an angel.

Do you sometimes find that you "wrestle" with decisions? Some people tell me that they don't dream much.

I believe—like much in life—that there is probably a continuum in the dreaming experience; some dream regularly and some much less frequently.

This is not unlike an individual's sensitivity to spicy food: some have no tolerance, and others seem unaffected by quite spicy dishes.

After journaling for more than 30 years—and much of that time journaling my dreams—I am convinced that there are many clues from God that surface in my dreams.

The great psychologist, Carl Jung, spent his life trying

to decipher the collective unconscious and the role that dreams can play among other psychological issues. In one dramatic "dream," he changes place with a doctor who, when Jung was ill, says that the world needs Jung. After this dream, Jung begins to recover while his doctor is taken ill and eventually succumbs to a terminal illness.

I believe that dreams are often sent to us to deliver a message—sometimes subtle, sometimes quite overt and straight forward.

Do you dream? Do you take the time to unravel the messages that are disguised in your night musings? Oh, what marvelous plans God has for us! Continue to search for his will in your life.

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

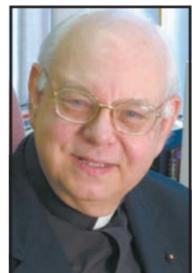
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, February 9, 2025

- Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- Luke 5:1-11

The Book of Isaiah is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. It was composed in a time when tranquility prevailed in the southern Hebrew kingdom of Judah, but with dark clouds forming on the horizon.



Isaiah believed that God had called him to call the people to obedience to his will. He warned them

that disaster awaited if the wayward and listless among them did not reform, and if the nation did not return to God.

He was not received well by the people. No one wanted to turn away from the happy times and good living for the more restricted life that would pertain if all were faithful to God. They resented Isaiah either in spite of his privileged position, or perhaps because of it.

It was not just that the prophet demanded that people mend their ways. He wrote with great determination, at times with fiery language displayed in this reading.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the next reading. The Apostle recalls the death of Jesus and then his resurrection, reporting that St. Peter, whom Paul calls "Cephas," using the Greek term for his name, saw Jesus after the resurrection, that St. James saw Jesus, and that even 500 of those who believed in the Gospel saw the risen Lord.

The reading also is autobiographical. Paul declares that he himself is an Apostle, having been called by the Lord, however, he calls himself "least" among the Apostles, since he, unlike the others, once persecuted Christ living in the Church (1 Cor 15:9).

Unrestrained by this sense of personal unworthiness, Paul wholeheartedly accepts and responds to this calling. Through him, he devoutly believes God works his plan of redemption and mercy.

St. Luke's Gospel supplies the last reading. This particular passage shows

the fine literary hand at work in the composition of the Gospel of Luke. Each Gospel is a carefully prepared document to assure that readers understand very well the message of Jesus. Here, Luke appears to use the Gospel of Mark as a source. But he also adds details drawn from a source that John may have used.

Of course, Jesus is the central figure in the story, but the next most important figure is Peter. In this story, Peter, a fisherman, was in his boat on the Sea of Galilee when Jesus embarked. The Lord began to preach to the people assembled on the shore.

Then Jesus told Peter to row into deeper water and lower the nets into the water for a catch. Peter mildly protests, but he does as told. The nets are so filled with fish that Peter and his companions have difficulty in pulling the nets aboard.

Humbly aware of the Lord's power, Peter confesses his own sinfulness. Recognizing Peter's faith, Jesus tells Peter thereafter to fish for souls.

Reflection

For weeks since Christmas, the Church has been introducing us to Jesus. The great feasts of the Epiphany and of the Baptism of the Lord told us about Jesus.

Now, subtly but firmly, the Church tells us where we meet Jesus today. It is in and through the Church, in which reposes the memory and authority of Peter, given to him by Jesus.

We need God's guidance. We cannot wander from God. The readings firmly say this.

Isaiah, Paul and Peter all saw themselves as unworthy of their God-given mission. Yet, fortified by God's help, they became instruments of redemption. They fulfilled holy tasks.

Each person who hears the word of Christ is healed and strengthened by his grace, and has a holy task even if he or she feels unworthy. God calls each of us and will give us all that we need truly to be saved from our sins and to serve God. †

Daily Readings

Monday, February 10

St. Scholastica, virgin
Genesis 1:1-19
Psalm 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10, 12, 24, 35c
Mark 6:53-56

Tuesday, February 11

Our Lady of Lourdes
Genesis 1:20-2:4a
Psalm 8:4-9
Mark 7:1-13

Wednesday, February 12

Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-17
Psalm 104:1-2a, 27-28, 29b-30
Mark 7:14-23

Thursday, February 13

Genesis 2:18-25
Psalm 128:1-5
Mark 7:24-30

Friday, February 14

St. Cyril, monk
St. Methodius, bishop
Genesis 3:1-8
Psalm 32:1-2, 5-7
Mark 7:31-37

Saturday, February 15

Genesis 3:9-24
Psalm 90:2-6, 12-13
Mark 8:1-10

Sunday, February 16

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 17:5-8
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
Luke 6:17, 20-26

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Wine used at Mass must have a required level of alcohol content

QI'm a parish priest and recently when I went to order hosts and sacramental wine for my parish, I noticed the company I usually shop from was offering something called "non-alcoholic church wine."



I told the lady on the phone that I imagine this isn't valid matter for consecration at a Mass, and advised her

to look further into this. She said some priests have been asking for it. I've been doing a bit of my own research now, but it doesn't sound like that question has been faced before. Maybe I am wrong? Is a wine that has been produced using the normal fermentation procedure, but then has its alcohol removed, valid matter for consecration? (Ireland)

AThe short answer is that it depends on exactly what the church supply company is referring to as "non-alcoholic church wine."

As you know, for sacraments to be valid—that is, for them to "work"—there must be both a valid formula (i.e., the words of the prayer to be said) and valid matter (the physical "stuff" used in a sacrament).

Canon 924 of the Code of Canon Law discusses the valid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist, noting that "the wine must be natural, made from grapes of the vine, and not corrupt" (with "not corrupt" in this context meaning "not spoiled").

In a nutshell, Canon 924 is telling us that the wine, which is to become the blood of Christ, must be something which can truly be considered "wine" in a strict sense.

To start with an obvious example, even though some people use ginger ale or sparkling apple juice as a non-alcoholic wine substitute in some social situations, these are not "made from grapes of the vine" and therefore cannot validly be used as wine in the eucharistic celebration.

Likewise, a wine-flavored beverage that was chemically engineered in a laboratory with artificial flavors also could not be used for the Eucharist as it clearly is not "natural." And a beverage that was wine-based, but contained other non-wine additives like flavorings or preservatives, would not be considered valid matter for the eucharistic celebration.

Furthermore, for wine to be truly wine, there must be at least some level of fermentation and thus alcohol content, however minimal. So, even though grape juice is made from the same basic ingredient as wine, it cannot be used in place of wine at Mass.

Unlike wine where the grapes are crushed, grape juice is usually made by boiling grapes down, which prevents any fermentation. Typically, the grape juice found in grocery stores is pasteurized and possibly made from a concentrate, which makes it insufficiently "natural" in the sense that it is of a fundamentally different nature than true wine.

In a similar vein, boiling wine, or using some other process to remove the alcohol from the wine after it was already fermented and bottled, would alter the nature of the beverage to the point where it would be something other than wine, and hence would not be valid matter for the Eucharist.

But there is one acceptable form of what could be called "non-alcoholic wine," which is something called "mustum." Mustum is the juice of grapes which have been crushed in the manner of wine-making, but which has not yet fermented to the point where it would have the alcohol level of normal table wine.

As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (the future Pope Benedict XVI) wrote in a 2003 letter from the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith: "Mustum, which is grape juice that is either fresh or preserved by methods that suspend its fermentation without altering its nature (for example, freezing), is valid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist."

So, if the "non-alcoholic church wine" your church supply company is offering is actually mustum, it would be valid matter for the Eucharist. Anything else would be invalid matter and therefore should be avoided.

It is important to note that permission from the local ordinary (the local bishop or vicar general) is needed before a priest may use mustum.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.) †

My Journey to God

The Good Shepherd

By C. S. Likins

My Shepherd always comes for me
even when I run from Him
on purpose
trying to hide from my sin
still He finds me and brings me
back on His strong shoulders
He can take it
no matter how far I stray
or how badly I behave
His love can lift me up
He doesn't wait for tears of
repentance or words of sorrow
on my part
or promises that I'll never sin again
My Shepherd only wants to
keep me with the flock

(C.S. Likins is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. Photo: Christ is seen carrying a lamb on his shoulders in this image of "The Good Shepherd," a painting by the German Renaissance artist Lucas Cranach der Ältere.) (CNS photo/courtesy Holy See Press Office)



Rest in peace

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

BISCHOFF, Alvada, 85, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Dec. 28. Mother of Elizabeth Isaacs, Danny and Eric Bischoff. Sister of Nilah Cox. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 16.

BOLLY, John F., 86, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Jan. 3. Husband of Marjorie Bolly. Father of Donna Burke, Jenifer Fuson and Jack Bolly. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three.

BRAUN, Teresa, 84, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Nov. 23. Wife of Tom Braun. Mother of Kim Shearer. Sister of Bob Matson.

BUSH, Maria, 84, Prince of Peace, Madison, Jan. 15. Mother of Dr. Stephanie and Valerie Bush, Bethany Grant, Autem Roberts, John, Jr., Kevin and Sean Harvey. Sister of Pita Jones, Francis Lopez and Mary Whitaker. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 10.

CARPENTER, Steven D., 61, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Jan. 14. Husband of Katie Carpenter. Father of Ashley Pierce-Ignateyeva, Meghan and Alex Carpenter and Alex Pierce. Son of Evelyn Carpenter. Brother of Cathy Tacoma and Rob Carpenter. Grandfather of three.

CARRICO, Beverly A., 84, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Jan. 6. Mother of Suzie Preidt, Julie Stone, Pamela and Ken Carrico. Sister of Theresa Berry, Louise Craney, Martha

Green and Rita Lillopp. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of two.

FRENTZ, Thomas J., 63, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Dec. 30. Husband of Sharon Frentz.

GIROT, Linda, 79, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Dec. 4. Wife of James Girot, Sr. Mother of Daniel, David and James Girot, Jr. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of three.

GUTHRIE, Theresa E., 100, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Dec. 24. Mother of Genevieve Marsi, Jeannette Stevens and Daniel Guthrie. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 15.

HARMON, John T., 78, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Jan. 10. Husband of Mildred Harmon. Father of Katharine, Anderson and William Harmon. Brother of Lynn Harvey. Grandfather of four.

HOLMAN, Judith, 82, St. Michael, Brookville, Jan. 18. Wife of Edward Holman. Mother of David and Michael Holman. Sister of Precious Blood Sister Jeanette and Jerry Buehler. Aunt of one.

JOHNSON, Corrine, 99, St. Michael, Brookville, Jan. 17. Mother of Sharon Agin, Chris and Mark Johnson. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 14.

KOCHERT, Stephen P., 81, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Jan. 10. Husband of June Kochert. Father of Elizabeth and Brian Kochert. Brother of Jane Timberlake, Lawrence and Ronald Kochert. Grandfather of one.

KOERS, David J., 72, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 24. Husband of Dorothy Koers. Brother of Cathy Wellner, Mary, Michael, Phil and Peter Koers.

KOMLANC, Elizabeth J., 101, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Nov. 5. Mother of Maureen Ajamie, Elizabeth Plante, Bernadette Schneider, Erin Squillace, Karla Wells and Charles Komlanc. Grandmother of 20. Great-grandmother of 16.

KRUER, Brenda M., 82, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Jan. 11. Wife of Jerry Krue. Mother of Tammy Goodridge and Kevin Krue. Sister of Michelle Kirchgessner. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of one.

LEMONS, Carol S., 82, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Dec. 14. Mother of Cindy Schofield, Andrew, James and Joseph Lemons. Sister of Gary, Michael and Thomas Steigerwald. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of several.

MATTINGLY, Richard L., 77, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Jan. 9. Uncle of several.

MEEKS, Harold G., 78, St. Mary, Greensburg, Jan. 14. Husband of Sylvia Meeks. Father of Debra McKinney, Shannon Smith and Tony Meeks. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of five.

MILLER, Rosalie A., 95, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Jan. 20. Mother of Mary Bess, Nancy, Art, Carl, Ed, Mark, Michael and Sam Miller. Grandmother of 26. Great-grandmother of 34. Great-great-grandmother of two.

O'CONNOR, Nancy M., 79, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 14.

OSKINS, Agnes, 92, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Nov. 25. Mother of Anita, Faye, David, Donald and Kevin. Sister of Rovana Miller. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 29. Great-great-grandmother of 19.

PETERS, Alberta K., 103, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 27. Mother of Linda LaMere. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of five.

RECORD, Phyllis A., 66, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Dec. 22. Mother of Jaclyn Cleary, Nicole, Alfred and Jacob Kaufman. Sister of Mary McCoy, Ronnie Chandler and Rick Lang. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of two.

RISCH, John, 77, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Jan. 8. Husband of Vikki Risch. Father of Angela Redmond and Brian Risch. Brother of Mary Jo Risch.

STEPHENSON, Dennis A., 72, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Husband of Patricia Stephenson. Father of Ashley Ripperger, Britney, Adam, Bradley, Kyle and Ryan Stephenson. Brother of Diane Stephenson-Moore, Danny and Dave Stephenson. Grandfather of 16. (correction)

STROBEL, Paul J., 84, St. Paul, Tell City, Jan. 11. Husband of Ruth Strobel. Father of Janet McFarland and Sue Strobel-Sanders. Brother of Carol Dauby. Grandfather of one.

THROCKMORTON, Charles R., 87, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Jan. 4.

Blessing of throats



Father Jeffrey Dufresne blesses the throats of students of Lumen Christi Catholic School in Indianapolis on Feb. 3 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The Church traditionally blesses throats on this date, which is the feast of St. Blaise, a patron saint of throat ailments. Father Dufresne serves as pastor of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Father of Roberta, Greg and Jeff Throckmorton. Brother of Carolyn DeMichele. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of two.

TUCHER, Patricia A., 83, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Jan. 12. Sister of Linda Brown, Brenda Parks, Kathleen Sebastian, Kevin, Richard and Vincent Tucher. Aunt of several.

TURK, Elizabeth A., 61, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Dec. 23. Wife of James Turk. Mother of Allison Cleveland and Jason Habich. Sister of Shannon Middleton and Susan Voyles Garr. Grandmother of six.

WISNIEWSKI, Richard H., 95, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Jan. 6. Father of Maria

Bandy, Joseph and Richard Wisniewski. Grandfather of eight.

YAGER, Kimberly S., 56, St. Mary, Rushville, Jan. 23. Wife of Steven Yager. Mother of Karley, Lexey, Justin and Taylor Yager. Daughter of Paul and Suzanne Fry. Sister of Melanie Krieger and Stephanie Tressler. †

Elizabeth Mahan, 103, the mother of Father Daniel Mahan, died on January 24

Elizabeth Marie (Corrigan) Mahan, the mother of Father Daniel Mahan, an archdiocesan priest serving as director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Institute on the Catechism, died on Jan. 24 at Abbington Assisted Living in Pickerington, Ohio. She was 103.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 30 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. Burial followed at Oaklawn Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Mahan was born on July 15, 1921, in McKees Rocks, Pa., to Edward and Hazel (Langon) Corrigan. She lived her childhood years in Aurora in southeastern Indiana, where she was a student at the former St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception School. Her family later moved to Indianapolis, where she graduated in 1939 from Shortridge High School. During World War II, she worked as a secretary.

On June 29, 1946, she married William Mahan. They had met at a Catholic Youth Organization dance shortly after Mahan had returned from heroic and decorated service in the U.S. Army in Europe in World War II.

The couple became the parents of six children, all of whom survive: Mary Josephine Johnson, Jean Tripp, Father Daniel, James, Patrick and William Mahan. Elizabeth's husband died on Feb. 10, 1992, after sharing 45 years of marriage with her.

In later years, she worked for Resorts Condominiums International as the executive assistant for the entrepreneur and philanthropist Christel DeHaan.

Active in her Catholic faith throughout her life, Mahan was a member at different periods of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish and Holy Spirit Parish, both in Indianapolis. She was also a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and a Benedictine oblate affiliated with Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.

In addition to her children, Mahan is also survived by 12 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, IN 47577. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

Saint Meinrad monk professes solemn vows in Jan. 25 liturgy

Benedictine Brother Gregory Morris professed solemn vows on Jan. 25 as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad during a Mass in the monastic community's Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln.

Brother Gregory, 37, is a native of Fort Thomas, Ky., where he was a member of St. Catherine of Siena Parish. He currently serves in the monastery as a liturgical master of ceremonies and in its oblate office.

After graduating from Newport Central Catholic High School in Newport, Ky., Brother Gregory earned a bachelor's degree in history and theology at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Ky. In 2024, he earned a master's degree in Catholic philosophical studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Before joining the monastery, Brother Gregory worked for The Kroger

Company in a variety of positions.

In professing solemn vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community at Saint Meinrad, he becomes a full and permanent member of the Benedictine community.

(For more information on Saint Meinrad Archabbey, visit www.saintmeinrad.org.) †

Right: Benedictine Brother Gregory Morris reads on Jan. 25 from the hand-written document of his solemn vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. The solemn profession of vows took place during a Mass in the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad. Brother Gregory also shows the traditional haircut, known in Latin as "corona" ("crown") given to monks at the monastery when they profess solemn vows. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)



Benedictine novice professes temporary vows at Saint Meinrad

Benedictine Novice Joshua Brahm of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad professed temporary vows as a monk in a liturgy on Jan. 20 in the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln.

As is the custom of Saint Meinrad, he took on a religious name during the profession of vows. Novice Joshua is now Brother Ambrose.



Br. Ambrose Brahm, O.S.B.

A native of Ferdinand, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese, Brother Ambrose, 37, was previously a member of Christ the King Parish in Ferdinand and attended Forest Park High School there.

He currently serves as an assistant sacristan for the monastery. Before joining the monastery, he worked for Kimball Electronics for five years.

Temporary vows are typically for three years. This period offers a continuing opportunity for the monk and the monastic community to determine whether monastic life is, indeed, the right vocation for this individual. †

Saint Meinrad Archabbey receives new novices into community

In a recent ceremony at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, two new novices were received by the monastic community.

Benedictine Novices Douglas Allison and Patrick Barrett were clothed on Jan. 19 in the Benedictine habit. They now begin a year of monastic formation, including study of the *Rule* of St. Benedict and monastic history.

Novice Douglas, 24, is a native of Perrysburg, Ohio, where he was a member of St. Rose

Parish. He earned a bachelor's degree in 2023 in accounting and finance at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Before entering the monastery, he provided Communion for homebound people for several years and worked for the office of the Ohio Auditor of State.



Nov. Douglas Allison, O.S.B.

Novice Patrick, 20, is a native of Texico, Ill. He was previously a member of St. Mary Immaculate Conception Parish in Mount Vernon, Ill., and a 2023 graduate of Mount Vernon Township High School.

Before entering the monastery, Novice Patrick worked as a lifeguard, in maintenance at a recreation facility and at an antique store.

Novices take a year off from formal studies and trades. The novitiate is a time of prayer and learning intended to help a novice discern his vocation as a monk. At the end of this year, a novice may be permitted to profess temporary vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community of Saint Meinrad. †



Nov. Patrick Barrett, O.S.B.

Religious poverty, chastity, obedience are signs of hope, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The way consecrated women and men live their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience can offer light and hope to



Pope Francis

a world looking for authentic relationships marked by love and self-giving, Pope Francis said. Celebrating vespers on Feb. 1, the eve of the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and of the Catholic Church's celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life, the pope thanked members of religious congregations for their witness, saying it is "leaven for the Church."

Pope Francis was joined by hundreds of sisters, brothers, consecrated virgins and religious-order priests, including the new leadership of Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life: Consolata Missionary Sister Simona Brambilla, the prefect; and Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, a Salesian, the pro-prefect.

According to Vatican statistics, there are close to 600,000 professed women religious in the Catholic Church. The number of religious-order priests is about 128,500 and the number of religious brothers is close to 50,000.

The vespers for the feast of the Presentation, also known as Candlemas, began with eight religious women and men lighting candles around the main altar of St. Peter's Basilica, evoking the feast's celebration of Simeon and Anna recognizing Christ as the light of the world when Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple.

Deacons put incense in three large braziers at the foot of the altar, sending up thick clouds of smoke to represent prayers rising to heaven.

In his homily, Pope Francis focused on how religious consecration aims to imitate Jesus and his complete devotion to doing God's will, and "how, through the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience that you have professed, you can bring its light to the women and men of our time."

Through poverty, the pope said, religious show how things have value "in the order of love, rejecting everything that can obscure their beauty—selfishness, greed, dependence, violent use and misuse for the purpose of death and destruction—and embracing instead all that can highlight that beauty: simplicity, generosity, sharing and solidarity."

Choosing chastity and not marriage, the pope said, "reaffirms the absolute primacy of God's love, to be received with an undivided and spousal heart."

Too often, he said, the world is marked by "distorted forms of affectivity, in which the principle of pleasure drives people to seek in others the satisfaction of their own needs rather than the joy born of a fruitful encounter.

"The chosen spouse of a lifetime is replaced by the 'partner' of the moment," Pope Francis said, "while children freely accepted as a gift are replaced by those demanded as a 'right' or eliminated as 'unwanted.'"

The chaste love of a consecrated person, on the other hand, shows modern men and women "a way to heal the malady of isolation through the exercise of a free and liberating way of loving—a way of loving that accepts and respects everyone, while coercing or rejecting no one," the pope said.

The obedience exercised in religious communities, he said, is "a prophetic sign for our society" because it is based on listening to one another and then acting, "even at the cost of setting aside our own tastes, plans and preferences." †

Classified Directory

Hauling and Tree Removal Services

Fred & Sons
Hauling & Tree Removal Service
FredAndSons.com
317-626-5973
Call today for prompt service!

- Tree Removal, Topping & Trimming
- Shrub Trimming & Removal
- Light Hauling
- Construction Clean-up
- Junk Removal
- Brush Pile Cleaning
- Garage/Basement/Attic Cleanout
- Gutter Cleaning
- Mini Barn / Shed / Fence / Deck Demolition & Removal
- Appliance / E-Waste Removal
- Stump Grinding

Call
317-236-1585
TO ADVERTISE IN
The Criterion

Employment

Director, Our Lady of Fatima Archdiocesan Retreat House

The Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, seeks a leader to direct retreat and renewal ministry at Fatima Retreat House.

This director oversees all aspects of activity at the retreat center as well as serving as a liaison between Fatima and the Archdiocese. Familiarity with Catholic retreat/renewal experiences is required, as is at least 5 years of related experience. The equivalent of an undergraduate major in Catholic theology or a related field is preferred.

Cover letter, resume and references may be sent in confidence to kogorek@archindy.org.

VOCATIONS

continued from page 1

based in Mishawaka, Ind., and who operate Franciscan Hospital in Indianapolis.

Sister Mary Amata, 27, joined that community seven years ago and is now preparing to profess perpetual vows later this year. So, she was glad to see many children from across the archdiocese meeting many religious and archdiocesan seminarians at the first Family Day for Vocations on Jan. 18 at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

"I'm grateful that these families have a desire to expose their children to priests and religious, even at a young age," Sister Mary Amata said. "They can see that it's a possibility for them, that it's a joyful life. It's fulfilling to do everything for Jesus in religious life or the priesthood."

More than 100 people from families living across central and southern Indiana took part in the event that involved booths for crafts and games run by members of religious communities, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral across the street and a lunch for teens open to the possibility of vocations to the priesthood or religious life.

"We need to facilitate a culture of vocations in the archdiocese," said Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director. "Events like this help that culture to take shape really beautifully."

'It's not our will. It's God's will.'

The archdiocesan Vocations Office sponsored the Family Day for Vocations. In addition to archdiocesan seminarians present at the event, representatives of six religious orders also took part: Benedictine Sisters from Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove; the Perpetual Adoration Franciscan Sisters; the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the Benedictines of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad; the Congregation of Holy Cross and the Legion of Christ.

"Planting seeds is what we're doing," said Father Keucher as he looked out on a number of young children visiting booths with their parents and siblings. "Maybe some of those seeds will germinate in 20 years. Maybe some in five years. But it's happening. It's happening through conversations that our children and families are having with religious and seminarians who are present. It's really awesome."

Sara Mattice recognized the importance of the conversations about vocations she'll have with her four children, the oldest of whom is four, both now and in the years to come. She thought coming to the Family Day for Vocations was a way to start those conversations.

"I want religious life to be an option for my kids," said Mattice, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "These are their most formative years. The spiritual life is part of our family life. I want them to know that this is an option from when they're little and are starting their prayer life."

Nicole Fraley came to the event with three teenage daughters from their home in Connersville where they are members of St. Gabriel Parish. Another of her children is seminarian Jack Fraley, who is in his first year of formation at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. When Nicole's children were young, there was no event like the Family Day for Vocations for her to show them different options in religious life and ordained ministry.

As her children grew, she came to recognize that it was a key duty for her to help them discern their vocation.

"It's not our will. It's God's will," Fraley said. "When they were little, it became evident that they're not ours. So, we have to make sure that they're on the right path."



Transitional Deacon Thomas Day, right, speaks on Jan. 18 with Michael Delaney, left, Isaac Delaney and their mother, Sarah Delaney, at the Family Day for Vocations at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Rosie Fraley, one of her daughters, is a junior at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond. She was glad to see so many families like her own at the event.

"It's cool to see so many young families," she said. "It's important for little kids to know that there are different kinds of vocations."

'It's encouraging for the future'

While Sister Mary Amata represented her religious community at the event, the Family Day for Vocations was a bit of a family reunion for her. Katie Kraft, a sister of hers, came to the event with her husband Jacob and their four children. Sister Mary Amata's parents, Bob and Jenni Naville, also travelled to Indianapolis for the day.

Even though coming to the event involved a two-hour drive from their family's home in New Albany, Jacob was glad to bring his young children along, saying that it would help normalize religious life for them.

"I don't know what they're called to be, but I want it all to be normal for them," said Jacob, who is a member with his family of Holy Family Parish in New Albany. "I don't want there to be a hurdle because it's something odd."

"It's encouraging for the future," said Bob Naville of the presence of so many children at the event. "They're the future of the Church."

Benedictine Sister Heather Jean Foltz, vocations director at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, was grateful for the event and said it was "a good opportunity to foster relationships" with families and young women open to a possible religious vocation.

"It's a great way to talk to families about vocations and



Benedictine Sister Cathy Ann Lepore of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, left, shows Nicole, Rosie and Caroline Fraley how to make rosaries on Jan. 18 during the Family Day for Vocations. The Fraleys are members of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville.

how we're all called to love and serve God," said Sister Heather Jean. "It's great to see families nurturing that. It's important for kids to learn from an early age that there are all different kinds of vocations in the Church."

Benedictine Father Simon Herrmann had only been serving as Saint Meinrad Archabbey's vocations director for about a month when he represented his community at the Family Day for Vocations.

"It's a great opportunity for families to experience the dynamic gift of the Holy Spirit in bringing religious orders to the archdiocese," he said. "My hope is that this continues to grow and that other families will have the opportunity to see that there are vast ways to serve the Lord in the archdiocese, both as diocesan priests and in religious orders."

Switching roles

Rory Babb came to the Family Day for Vocations with his wife Diana and their four children, ages 6, 4, 3 and 10 months.

He was encouraged to see other young families like his own.

"It's great to know that we're one of many," said Babb, who, with his family, is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "We can support each other. It's tough when you go to an event and you're the only family with young kids."

As transitional Deacon Isaac Siefker took part in the event, his thoughts turned back to his childhood when he first started to think about the priesthood.

"I've been thinking about seminary literally as long as I can remember," said Deacon Siefker, 27. "I probably started serving at Mass when I was 6-years-old."

Growing up in a family in which the faith was actively fostered by his parents has helped Deacon Siefker know that family life is critical in promoting priestly and religious vocations.

"To see families with faith and devotion [who] care enough about their faith to come out early on a Saturday morning is beautiful," he said. "In some ways, I can see myself in these little kids. Their families are like the way my family was. But now the roles have switched. Now, I'm the guy in the Roman collar who's supposed to be showing the happiness and joy that a vocation can bring you."

(To learn more about priestly and religious vocations in central and southern Indiana, visit the website of the archdiocesan vocations office at www.HearGodsCall.com.) †



Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, preaches on Jan. 18 during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral that was part of the vocation office's first Family Day for Vocations.