Archdiocese takes action to reduce budget deficit

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein unveils new initiative to meet changing ministry needs

By Greg Otolski

Escalating health and property insur-
ance costs and the downturn in the stock market have led the archdiocese to take several measures to reduce expenses and reconsider how it will meet ministry needs.

The archdiocese is facing a nearly "$2 million budget deficit. This week, 26 jobs—12 full-time and 14 part-time—were eliminated. The archdiocese employs 458 people in its various agencies throughout central and southern Indiana. Also, all properties and facilities owned by the archdiocese are being evaluated for their overall usefulness and their potential sale value, said Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

“Our goal over the next 18 months is to identify $3 million [in cost reductions],” said Archbishop Buechlein. “This will balance our nearly $2 million deficit budget and give us $1 million to help cover past deficits.”

Despite the difficult economic circumstances, Archbishop Buechlein said the archdiocese will meet the challenge and continue to carry out its mission of “revealing Jesus to people.”

He said that “circumstances are pushing the Church in southern and central Indiana to think in different ways that place our ministries as never before at the service of our parishes—where the Church lives. To meet these challenges and needs, the archbishop has proposed a new initiative for the archdiocese, which he is calling “A New Moment of Grace—2007.”

“I envision a Church that perhaps has fewer buildings but a more vibrant Church lives.”

Pope and Powell discuss Mideast peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As a U.S.-backed peace plan began taking shape in the Middle East, Pope John Paul II and other Vatican officials met U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell for talks on ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In another meeting the same morning, June 2, the pope detailed the Vatican’s vision of lasting regional peace—including independent and sovereign Israeli and Palestinian states—to the Israeli’s new ambassador to the Vatican.

The 83-year-old pontiff, looking in good form, chatted easily with Powell before and after their 30-minute meeting and stood unassisted to bid him goodbye. The pontiff sent his regards to the Israeli’s prime minister. The meetings were to be Bush’s first personal Middle East peace mission.

The Vatican sees solving the conflict as the top priority in achieving regional peace and has pushed the United States to play a stronger role.

Among the reasons the bishops gave was that the permanent diaconate would help alleviate the shortage of priests then being experienced in various parts of the world (but not yet in the United States). That, though, was not considered an adequate rationale for the diaconate because it seemed to imply that the diaconate was merely a temporary solution, a stopgap measure. The basic reason given by the bishops who favored the restoration of the diaconate was that it is an integral part of the threefold hierarchy of orders willed by Christ.

By the time the Second Vatican Council was convened in 1962, the idea of restoring the diaconate was being widely discussed in Europe and in third-world countries. It was natural, therefore, that it would be brought up for discussion at the council.

The bishop’s discussion was that the permanent diaconate would help alleviate the shortage of priests then being experienced in various parts of the world (but not yet in the United States). That, though, was not considered an adequate rationale for the diaconate because it seemed to imply that the diaconate was merely a temporary solution, a stopgap measure. The basic reason given by the bishops who favored the restoration of the diaconate was that it is an integral part of the threefold hierarchy of orders willed by Christ.

On Sept. 29, 1964, the bishops at the council approved the restoration of the permanent diaconate. Section 29 of the Constitution on the Church is the
ministry, may be fewer employees but a more focused mission, and a Church that affirms that our parishes and our ministry to others, the disenfranchised and the marginalized will be absolutely central to our mission,” Archbishop Buechlein said.

In determining how to best meet these needs and challenges, Archbishop Buechlein and the Management Council—the archbishop’s administrative team—have sought advice from several archdiocesan groups.

Those groups include the Board of Consultants, the deans, the Council of Priests, the Archdiocesan Finance Council, the Board of Trustees of the Catholic Community Foundation, the Steering Committee of the Planning for Growth in the Archdiocese process, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and the executive committees of the Archdiocesan Education Commission, the Archdiocesan Association of Parish Administrators of Religious Education and the Archdiocesan Principals Association.

“Our planning processes are telling us that the ministry needs of our archdiocese are changing. At the same time, economic circumstances are pushing the Church to re-evaluate how it is carrying out its mission, what that cost, and what resources are available to us to accomplish the task,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “We need to adjust what we do to reflect the new realities. The Church, after all, is subject to the same economic realities as everyone else.”

In his ministry needs, the archbishop said that in the not-too-distant future one-third of the members of the archdiocese will be of Hispanic origin. A shifting and mobile population has also placed many Catholics far from parish facilities or has left Catholicism behind. This situation creates “home mission” parishes and schools that are too far where there can no longer being carried out their mission unassisted.

In addition, for example, the central administrative offices of the archdiocese have been operating on a deficit budget.

The archdiocese has attempted to balance its budget by cutting costs; reducing the size of its staff; eliminating redundancies, attrition and a hiring freeze; reducing employee benefits; holding salaries to little more than cost-of-living increases; and implementing other cost-saving measures.

However, according to Jeffrey D. Stumpf, chief financial officer for the archdiocese, four strong economic forces are making expenditures outpace the Church’s ability to eliminate its deficit: • The downturn in the economy, which has sent the archdiocese’s overall income into single-digit losses for the last two years. • Skyrocketing medical care costs. • Steep increases in property insurance premiums. • Decreasing support from United Way, government and other funding groups.

Ben-Hur assured the pope of his government’s commitment to resolve political negotiations “pending the willingness and success of the Palestinian [National] Authority to curb terrorism and begin reforms.” He said Israel was ready to “make painful compromises for the sake of peace.”

As the Israeli ambassador left, Powell was on his way to his papal meeting, something Vatican officials described as a coincidence.

Nicholson said Powell thanked Vatican officials for their support for Middle East peace and “implored them to continue to help in all the ways they can.”

“There’s new hope because there’s new leadership in the Palestinian community that stands ready to work with. But we need the help of influential people like the pope in what we’re trying to do,” Nicholson said.

He said Powell emphasized the importance of stopping Palestinian terrorist attacks so the peace process can go forward “with some meaning and some legitimacy.” He said the Vatican officials, for their part, expressed hopes that the peace plan includes attention to the future of the Holy Land’s sacred sites.

Nicholson said the meetings also involved considerable discussions on post-war Iraq, particularly “the way we’re working together to achieve humanitarian relief.” Since the war ended, the Vatican has offered the assistance of Iraqi Church structures in reconstruction efforts, and the pope had spoken of his desire to visit Iraq in late May to lay the groundwork for a concerted Church effort to provide aid to the country.

In his statement, Navarro-Valls said Iraqi political and material reconstruction “must be able to count on the cooperation of the international community.”

Though the Vatican opposed the U.S.-led war, Nicholson said the June 2 meetings were “all forward looking.” He said the Vatican was particularly concerned that basic infrastructure, like electricity, water and sewers, be restored as quickly as possible.

Vatican officials also raised the concern during the meetings that the next regime in majority-Muslim Iraq might curtail this vision this expression in our parishes, where it should be a primary and a shared responsibility.”

He also suggested a refocusing of Church resources to vocations recruitment, stewardship and Catholic education—three areas that will be necessary to accomplish his objectives.

The archbishop called for a new strategy to accomplish the Church’s mission. “Even though we have been doing good work, we are called now to focus our limited resources and choose between more good that is good. Because of these new realities, we can no longer continue to operate as we have and we expect to see new results,” Archbishop Buechlein said.

Among the basic elements of this new strategy, he listed a restructuring of the archdiocesan structure and development efforts; a new approach to vocations recruitment that would include radio outreach and the active engagement of synods; divesting of expensive or unnecessary capital assets, such as his residence; downsizing and merging parishes, schools, religious education and spiritual programs, and the work of the Archdiocesan Youth Organization; and a new approach for setting up scholarships for students in Catholic schools.

The archdiocese anticipates that the entire effort at revenue enhancement and cost control will unfurl in phases over the next 18 months as the Church attempts to erase its nearly $2 million budget deficit.

With all its demands and conditions.

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St. Francis Hospital dedicates chapel in Mooresville

By Mary Ann Wyand

MOORESVILLE—Planning for the new chapel at St. Francis Hospital in Mooresville began on Sept. 11, 2001. The 3,056 victims of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania were remembered in prayer during a Mass on May 23 when Msgr. Joseph P. Schaedel, vicar general, blessed and dedicated the new worship space and thanked the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration for 90 years of health care ministry in the archdiocese.

Franciscan Father John Mannion, a Catholic chaplain for St. Francis Hospitals and Health Centers, said that “it was difficult to concentrate on building a chapel” on the morning that the World Trade Center towers collapsed in New York.

“Let’s be mindful that this chapel was conceived on the day that the World Trade Center was destroyed,” he said. “For the sisters, this chapel is very important because it’s indicative of their mission, it’s indicative of their philosophy and it’s indicative of the spirit of St. Francis himself.”

Msgr. Schaedel represented Archbishop Daniel M. Buehlein at the Mass and dedication ceremony.

“For the people of the archdiocese, St. Francis Hospital has been a part of Catholic life in central and southern Indiana for decades,” the vicar general said. “The archdiocesan and the archdiocese are delighted about the expansion of St. Francis Hospital in Mooresville and the dedication of this beautiful chapel.”

Msgr. Schaedel said the Stations of the Cross and the tabernacle were originally used in parish churches and were given to the hospital by the archdiocese.

“This is a day of rejoicing,” he said, “for we have come together to offer this new chapel to God. But, first, let us call to mind that we ourselves, who are bound here in faith and love, are the living Church set in the world as a sign and a witness of God’s love for all.”

In his homily, Msgr. Schaedel said “St. Francis Hospital in Mooresville, like any hospital, is all about healing of the body, but also about healing of the soul. Today, we dedicate this chapel to the service of God, the worship of God, and the healing presence and ministry of Jesus himself.”

The Church takes “great care to make sure that we have the top physicians, nurses, medical care professionals and facilities” in Catholic hospitals, he said. “Great care has been taken by St. Francis—Mooresville to make sure that Christ himself has a fitting dwelling place, a dignified place, where others may come [to pray]. As they search for healing of body and spirit for themselves and their loved ones, they will come to this place to experience the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and in His Word in this special room dedicated to his presence and his healing power.”

“May Christ, the divine physician, dwell here forever,” Msgr. Schaedel said, “and may he dwell in the hearts and minds and lives of all those who will come to seek his healing presence in this place.”

Members of the St. Francis Hospital Auxiliary donated the funds for the large glass cross which was built into the wall behind the altar.

St. Elizabeth’s to offer international adoption seminar

By Mary Ann Wyand

Holy Name parishioners Robert and Sharon Jinks of Southport will play their 17-month-old son, Robbie, who was adopted from Guatemala with help from St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services in Indianapolis. Robbie’s adoption was facilitated by Msgr. Joseph P. Schaedel, vicar general, who celebrates a eucharistic liturgy on May 23 in the new chapel at St. Francis Hospital in Mooresville. Members of the St. Francis Hospital Auxiliary donated the funds for the large glass cross which was built into the wall behind the altar.

“We have several families who have adopted children from China, Russia and Guatemala over the past year,” said David Siler, St. Elizabeth’s executive director. “Renee Hummel, adoption social worker for St. Elizabeth’s, said children are currently available for adoption from those countries through Cradle of Hope.

Hummel said the average wait for an international adoption is about 13 months. The seminar will address eligibility, costs and procedures for international adoptions by single or married adults, she said, “who can provide the love, nurturing, stability and security that a child needs.”

Hummel said prospective adoptive parents need to understand that children adopted from other countries will have cultural differences and language challenges, and as parents they will need to learn about their child’s culture.

(For more information or to register for the information session on international adoptions, call St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services at 317-787-3412.)

St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services in Indianapolis and Cradle of Hope Adoption Center Inc. of Silver Spring, Md. are currently available for adoption from those countries through Cradle of Hope.

Holy Name parishioners Robert and Sharon Jinks of Southport play with their 17-month-old son, Robbie, who was adopted from Guatemala with help from St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services in Indianapolis.
Letters to the Editor

Suggestions for getting more people to Mass

A recent issue of The Criterion lamented the statistic that fewer Catholics are attending Sunday Mass regularly. If more Catholics really thought about what is going on at Mass, there would be better attendance.

Perhaps if part of the sermons on Easter and Christmas (when the greatest number of “part-time” Catholics are in attendance) are devoted to Mass participation, improved statistics would result. To use an analogy of attending our favorite team’s basketball game, we are not on the basketball court wearing a uniform, playing, and when the team wins, don’t say, “They won.” We say, “We won!” The team represents us on the court, so we are participating with them and we say we won.

The same is true at Mass. The priest is not alone in offering the Mass. We are offering the Mass with the priest. He is at the altar representing us. He says “Pray, my brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.”

Also, greater emphasis should be placed on the minor elevation, which precedes the Great Amen. “Through him, with him and in him in unity with the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, forever and ever.” This is the gist of the Mass in one sentence. Help people realize this.

To quote from the “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” “Pastors of souls must, therefore, realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, something more is required than the laws governing valid and lawful celebration. It is their duty also to insure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite and enriched by it.”

I pray that clergy will receive this suggestion in the spirit in which it is offered.

Don Marcotte, Indianapolis

Confession is one of the keys to salvation

In a recent column, “Spirituality Today,” Father John Catoir asks the question: “How many will be saved?” It isn’t true, as he says, that we cannot know. We can know. We know that those who abandon the faith and are not attending Church at all will undoubtedly be lost. For those who are sinning frequently and never have their sins forgiven, their salvation is all but lost.

Catholics who decide to never go to confession will undoubtedly be lost. The error these people make is to think the Holy Eucharist will wash away all their sins or they fail to recognize that when they commit a mortal sin, their conscience does not awaken them to this sin as they have long since silenced the voice of conscience in their souls. Sin causes blindness. The blindness that sets in when a person doesn’t go to confession is virtually total.

We do know that the soul that goes to confession and Mass regularly and uses the teachings of the Church as guide, will undoubtedly receive 100 percent of the time, save his or her soul.

There is no mystery as to what it takes to save one’s soul—confession, attending Mass and living by sound doctrine. What is a mystery is why so few follow this path.

Prayers for those not following this path are urgently needed within the Church and our Catholic community. It has been estimated that only 37 percent of all Catholics attend Mass regularly in the United States. Getting them to return to regular attendance at Mass and the worthy reception of the sacraments is a goal urgently needing our prayers.

The salvation of many souls hangs in the balance. Our prayers should frequently be directed toward this end.

Bob Saverine, Stamford, Conn.
Columns will look at the importance of the Rosary

First in a series

In my opinion, a Church without Mary the Mother of God would be like a body without a heart. And a Church without Mary would be like a motherless child. In fact, we recall from the Passion account in the Gospel of St. John, from the cross, through the instrumentality of John, “the disciple whom he loved,” Christ said “Beloved your mother.” And thus, Mary became “Mother of the Church.”

Those of you who are long-standing readers of my weekly column know that I compose a series of columns on a particular theme for the summer months. Since May is Mary’s month and since the Holy Father has designated this year as the “Year of the Rosary,” this week I want to announce that the summer 2003 series will be about the Rosary.

In proclaiming October 2002 to October 2003 as the Year of the Rosary, the pope expressed his desire that, during the great feast of Mary, “this theme should be especially emphasized and promoted. I hope my effort in the coming weeks will add up to that. And I hope you enjoy reading the series as much as I look forward to composing it. The task is made easier than usual because Pope John Paul II recently published an Apostolic Letter titled “Rosarium Virginis Mariae” (“The Rosary of the Virgin Mary”).” In his introduction to the letter, the pope wrote: “The Rosary of the Virgin Mary, which gradually took form in the second millennium under the guidance of the Spirit of God, is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium. Simple yet profound, it still remains, at the dawn of the third millennium, a prayer of great significance, destined to bring forth a harvest of holiness. It lends itself to the spiritual journey of the Christian life, which, after two thousand years, has lost none of the freshness of its beginnings and feels drawn by the Spirit of God to ‘set out into the deep’ (dive in alatum).” In order once more to proclaim and even cry out, before the world that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, “the way, and the truth and the life” (Jn 14,6), the “goal of human history and the point on which the desires of history and civilization turn,” (“Pastor et Doctrina,” the Church in the Modern World” [Gaudium et Spes], 445).

“The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christian devotional prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety, of which it can be said to be a compendium (cf. Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation Marialis Cultus (2 February 1974, 153). It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial Magnificat for the work of the redemptive Incarnation, which began in her virginal womb. With the Rosary, the Christian people sit at the school of Mary and are led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as through from the hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.”

Over the next 10 weeks or so, I hope to “unpack” and “flesh out” the rich meaning of this introduction of the Holy Father’s Apostolic Letter and to shed light “on the school of Mary.” As I foresee the series at this time (and it may change), I plan to follow the following outline: 1) My personal experience from childhood on. 2) The timeless necessity of the Rosary as a prayer form; 3) A review of the history of the Rosary; 4) Highlights of Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter, Rosarium Virginis Mariae; 5) What the Vatican Council said about prayer to Mary and how the Rosary is a compendium of the Gospel and like a little Summa of our Faith; 6) How to pray the Rosary in a meaningful and contemplative way; 7) The Joyful Mysteries; 8) The (new) Mysteries of Light; 9) The Sorrowful Mysteries; 10) the Glorious Mysteries; and finally a reflection on a set I call the Priestly Mysteries of Christ. As I say, these themes may change along the way.

In the introduction to his letter, the Holy Father said: “The Rosary, reclaimed in its full meaning, goes to the very heart of Christian life; it offers a familiar yet fruitful spiritual and educational opportunity for personal contemplation, the formation of the People of God, and the new evangelization” (63).

Following the pope’s lead, I hope to show how the Rosary goes to the very heart of Christian life and our mission. It is virtually a universal phenomenon that the Mother of God reaches people in mission efforts first and leads them to Jesus.

Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for June

Women Religious: that their love of God and the religious charism may be widely appreciated and encouraged.

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis
St. John the Evangelist Parish, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, is having its "St. John’s Night with the Indians" on June 6. There will be a cookout from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the rectory garden then a baseball game at Victory Field at 7 p.m. The cost is $10 per person and includes a game ticket. For more information or reservations, call 317-635-2021.

Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis, is having its 20th annual Italian Street Festival from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 6-7. There will be Italian foods and music. For more information, call 317-636-4478.

St. Gabriel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., in Indianapolis, is having its International Festival from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. on June 6, from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 7 and from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. on June 8. There will be food, games and rides. For more information, call 317-291-7014.

Holy Angels Parish, 740 W. 28th St., in Indianapolis, will have its 100th Anniversary Summer Festival from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on June 6, from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on June 7 and from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. on June 8. There will be a children’s pavilion, gospel explosion and food. For more information, call 317-926-3324.

St. Paul Parish, 218 Scheller Ave., in Sellersburg, will have its parish picnic and festival from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 7. There will be a chicken dinner, game booths and refreshments. For more information, call 812-246-3522.

St. Paul Parish, 814 Jefferson St., in Tell City, will have its parish picnic and fundraiser from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on June 8. There will be quilts and games. For more information, call 812-547-9901.

St. Michael Parish, 519 Jefferson Blvd., in Greenfield, is having its parish festival from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on June 12, from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 13 and from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 14. There will be games, music and food. For more information, call 317-462-4240.

St. Bernadette Parish, 4838 E. Fletcher Ave., in Indianapolis, is having its parish festival from 11 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 12, from 5 p.m. to midnight on June 13 and from 3 p.m. to midnight on June 14. There will be rides and Howard’s famous ribs. For more information, call 317-356-5867.

The second annual Summer Breeze event, sponsored by Catholic Social Services Adult Day Services, will be from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. on June 21 at Marian Inc., 1011 E. St. Clair St., in Indianapolis. There will be a social hour at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. and dancing at 8 p.m. The cost is $50 per person. R.S.V.P. by June 14. For more information, call Providence Sister Susan Dinnen at A Caring Place at 317-466-0015.

Martin University, 2171 Avondale Place, in Indianapolis, will host a community day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on June 7. The day will consist of many events for prospective students, families, adults and children.

Awards . . .

Jane Lee, who served as director of publications and graphics for The Criterion for 10 years, earned a third-place award for “Best Illustration” in the 2003 Communications Contest sponsored by the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada. The design award, for the cover of the 2002 Christmas Supplement, was announced on May 30 in Atlanta. The award-winning design featured Nativity sets that were on display at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey library in St. Meinrad.

Mary Ann Wyand, assistant editor of The Criterion, earned a first-place award for “Best Supplement” in the Woman’s Press Club of Indiana’s 2003 Communications Contest. The award was presented on May 17 at Clifty Woman’s Press Club of Indiana’s 2003 Communications Contest sponsored by the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada. The design award, for the cover of the 2002 Christmas Supplement, was announced on May 30 in Atlanta. The award-winning design featured Nativity sets that were on display at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey library in St. Meinrad.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, 2618 W. St. Clair St., in Indianapolis, will celebrate his 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood with a 2 p.m. Mass on Trinity Sunday, June 15, at the parish. The Mass will be followed by a dinner in Rockhold Hall. Father Taylor served as associate pastor at St. Monica Parish and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, both in Indianapolis. He was chaplain at the Newman Center at Butler University in Indianapolis; administrator and pastor at the former St. Bridget Parish in Indianapolis; and chaplain at the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Newman Center in 1996. He was named director of the Office of Multicultural Ministry for the archdiocese.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting movie ratings

Bruce Almighty (Universal)
Rated A-III (Adults) because of an instance of rough language, minimal profanities, some crass humor and an implied sexual encounter.
Rated PG-13 (Parents are strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13) because of a benign portrayal of theft, an implied sexual encounter, an instance of rough language, some profanities and brief instances of violence.
Rated PG-13 (Parents are strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13) by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).
Catholics United for the Faith start chapter in the archdiocese

By Jennifer Lindberg

People interested in learning more about their faith are starting a Catholics United for the Faith chapter for the Faith chapter in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Catholics United for the Faith, or CUF, started in 1968 to support, defend and advance the teachings of the Church in accord with the teachings of Vatican II.

CUF is based in Steubenville, Ohio. It has chapters across the nation that gather fellow Catholics that I look forward to
to meet at 6:30 p.m. on June 12 at Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis beginning with Mass celebrated with Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar for the 2003 celebration was "The version of the truth," Lyvers said.

She also thinks the chapter will help
people to live and explain the faith better to others.

"There is so much negativity toward the Church in the media and even among fellow Catholics that I look forward to making friends who see and appreciate the truths of our Catholic faith," Lyvers said.

"We are hoping that CUF will enrich our lives, providing an avenue for growth in the fullness of the faith as found in the Church, and that this faith and knowledge will translate to love and service which will bring others closer to Christ," said Lourdes Padilla of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

Attending a CUF meeting or event does not mean you have to join the group. Meetings are open to everyone from people interested in organizing the local chapter or those who just want to attend various activities the group plans to sponsor.

It will also act as a network for other events in the archdiocese and help join together members of the national CUF apostolate who live in the archdiocese.

CUF offers faith facts to help Catholics understand their faith or explain to others free to anyone who calls 800-MYFAITH (800-693-2484). The group also publishes a magazine, Lay Witness, that delves into faith issues more deeply.

The local group has decided that some of its prayer activities will be directed toward support of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who is an adviser for the national board of CUF directors and has written the magazine Lay Witness, and priests and religious of the archdiocese.

The chapter also wants to conduct a Bible study, encourage local cable companies to make EWTN and Catholic Family Land available in the area, and network with various other archdiocesan activities, especially in the pro-life area.

Meetings will not be common for the chapter, except in the beginning stages. Instead, it will focus on holding activities that people can choose to attend.

(For more information about Catholics United for the Faith, call St. Bartholomew parishioner Ellen Hartman of Columbus at 812-342-9550.)

Pope says media can help peace by favoring reconciliation, respect

The pope said that, 40 years after the hotline and "the monolithic, "It is more important than ever to have the window, the pope invoked a special blessing, founding, truth, justice and love and freedom.

"In effect, the communications media can make a valuable contribution to erasing the barriers of mistrust, encouraging understand-

Pope John Paul II

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope John Paul II, marking World Communications Day, said the mass media can serve the cause of peace by favoring reconciliation, understanding and mutual respect.

Speaking from the balcony of the mass media in the construction of a peaceful world, founded on truth, justice, love and freedom.

The communications media can make a valuable contribution to erasing the barriers of mistrust, encouraging understanding and mutual respect, and, even more, promoting reconciliation and mercy," he said.

Therefore, it is by virtue of their voca-
tion and their profession that those working in the mass media are also called to be peacemakers," he said.

In his written message for this year’s World Communications Day, issued in January, the pope said the media often shape attitudes about such global problems as terrorism, conflict in the Middle East, injustice and assaults upon the sanctity of human life.

He said the media’s power “is such that in a few days they can create the posi-

The group chose the chapter name, Abba, Father, to commemorate that

Everybody does most of the things a deacon does (“the
do most of the things a deacon does (“the
does not mean you have to join the
group. Meetings are open to everyone from people interested in organizing the local chapter or those who just want to attend various activities the group plans to sponsor.

It will also act as a network for other events in the archdiocese and help join together members of the national CUF apostolate who live in the archdiocese.

CUF offers faith facts to help Catholics understand their faith or explain to others free to anyone who calls 800-MYFAITH (800-693-2484). The group also publishes a magazine, Lay Witness, that delves into faith issues more deeply.

The local group has decided that some of its prayer activities will be directed toward support of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who is an adviser for the national board of CUF directors and has written the magazine Lay Witness, and priests and religious of the archdiocese.

The chapter also wants to conduct a Bible study, encourage local cable compa-

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“The Criterion Friday, June 6, 2003 Page 7
Phoenix bishop apologizes, avoids prosecution in sex abuse cases

PHOENIX (CNS)—In an agreement to avoid criminal prosecution, Bishop Thomas J. O’Brien of Phoenix has given up some of his diocesan administrative duties and apologized to two priests he knew were suspected of sexual abuse to continue working with minors.

The agreement was signed by the bishop and Maricopa County Attorney Richard Romley on May 29, permitting the bishop to delegate to a “moderator of the curia” certain administrative duties, including response against an accused cleric and enforcing diocesan sex abuse policies.

The plan is to audit approximately 11 dioceses a week between late June and late August to determine how well each of the 195 U.S. dioceses is complying with the provisions of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The charter has been in use in the archdiocese for several months.

“Those changes have been ongoing for many months,” said Father Oliver. “What became clear in the early part of 2002 was that the appealing cleric, who has allegations of sexual misconduct. I further acknowledge that priests of sexual misconduct by Roman Catholic priests under my supervision were transferred to other groups. I also further acknowledge that priests who have allegations of sexual misconduct made against them were transferred to other clergy, civil authorities, hardship or harm caused to the victims of sexual misconduct by Roman Catholic priests assigned to the diocese.”

The agreement signed on May 3 and announced on June 2 required that the bishop audit approximately 50 diocesan personnel or volunteers as consultants in the audit process. The audits will not include an evaluation of the dioceses’ pre-charter policies or actions, the USCCB said.

The Gavin Group, headed by William Gavin, an experienced compliance auditor formerly with the Bureau of Investigation, has been hired by the USCCB as consultants in the audit process. The audits had been under way since May 19-22 for their on-site audits of the dioceses. The Gavin Group sent a letter to the president of the Archdiocese of Phoenix stating, “I acknowledge that I allowed Roman Catholic priests under my supervision to work with minors after becoming aware of allegations of sexual misconduct. I further acknowledge that priests who have allegations of sexual misconduct made against them were transferred to other clergy, civil authorities, hardship or harm caused to the victims of sexual misconduct by Roman Catholic priests assigned to the diocese.”

Boston Archdiocese issues new policy to prevent clergy sex abuse

BOSTON (CNS)—The Boston Archdiocese, where investigations of clergy sex abuse are among the main concerns this year, has announced that six priests were being transferred to other parishes or Church posts this month and that a formal name for an Eastern Catholic Diocese of the United States will be approved overwhelmingly by the U.S. bishops at their June 26-27 meeting.

The 13-member board, appointed by Cardinal Law in May and incorporating the recommendations of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, includes papal observers, and is charged with the creation of the Cardinal’s Commission for the Protection of Children, the bicardinal commission for the study of sexual abuse in the Church, and the revision of the 1993 charter that now require archdiocesan personnel or volunteers to report suspected clergy sex abuse.

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Archdiocese is helping people set up donor advised funds

By Brandon A. Evans

The Catholic Community Foundation (CCF), which normally deals with endowments, is letting people know that they have another option for setting up special funds that they have another option for setting up special funds.

The CCF is encouraging more widespread use of what are called “donor advised funds,” said Sandra Behringer, director of gift planning for the CCF. A donor advised fund is a relatively simple way to set up a fund with “a private foundation, which is a more complicated vehicle to establish and manage,” Behringer said.

Private foundations can be difficult and are heavily regulated. A donor can start a fund with, for the most part, a minimum of $25,000. From there, the donor may advise the archdiocese on how to give out the money and in what amounts.

The main difference between one of these funds and a private foundation is that the archdiocese has final discretion as to where to direct the money. Behringer said the archdiocese will see that the funds are distributed according to the donor’s wishes, but must ensure that the money does not flow to organizations that oppose the teachings of the Church.

Donors may give their funds to local parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies, and to any charity whose purpose is in line with the mission of the Church.

While endowments are limited to allocations of 5 percent each year, donors may advise any amount of their fund to be allocated at any time.

One limitation in the donor advised fund program has been changed recently, Behringer said. “We did not have policies in place that would allow a donor’s children to continue advising on the fund after their death,” she said. That is no longer the case.

One benefit of the fund is that donors will be in a position to assist the archbishop in meeting unexpected financial problems,” Behringer said. “Individuals with donor advised funds can, at their discretion, advise distributions to relieve pressing needs.”

She said that the CCF is trying to educate people about donor advised funds through brochures, seminars and presentations to parish finance councils.

“Currently, the [CCF] has only two donor advised funds, and we want to increase the understanding that Catholics have of these funds,” she said.

She also called them “very popular gift vehicles” that “have become increasingly popular with local community foundations and Catholic foundations in other dioceses and archdioceses.”

The CCF began setting up these funds in 1990, and while they have only a couple now, as the Church in central and southern Indiana moves into the 21st century they hope to further spread the news about these unique funds.

For more information about donor advised funds, call Sandra Behringer at 317-236-1427 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1427.

First junior high jamboree helps youth learn about their faith

By Kristin Huber

The First Junior High Jamboree last month at Huber Orchard and Winery, near Starlight, gave junior high students from across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis a chance to learn about their faith and have fun doing it.

About 300 junior high and high school students from across the archdiocese attended the event on May 4.

The idea for the jamboree was developed last year by the Archdiocesan Youth Council, which is made up of high school-age youth. The council members thought it would be good to get junior high youth introduced to an event that high school youth participate in every year.

They helped carry out the idea this year, with each council member working on a separate piece of the day along with an adult committee.

The schedule for the day consisted of a keynote speaker, Casey Moss, as well as workshops, liturgy and dinner. Moss talked about how we should live our lives for God. The workshops consisted of games, Scripture, a hayride and sing-along, and a tent revival with music and a speaker.

It was a great day for junior high youth to get a taste of what is yet to come, and how they can get involved with awesome Catholic faith experiences throughout their high school years.

My brother, Travis Huber, a sixth-grader, attended the jamboree. “I did not want to go, but my sister made me,” Travis said. “I am really happy I decided to go through. The day was really fun, and I met a lot of new people. It was cool to see all of those junior high kids my age there that were also Catholic.”

My mom, Lisa Huber, was a chaperone for the day. “I thought the youth council did an excellent job planning and carrying the day,” she said. “I know they worked really hard, and despite the rain and bad weather, I had a great time. It was awesome to see so many youth excited about their faith.”

(Christin Huber is a member of the Archdiocesan Youth Council and St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floydia, Knobs.)
CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Congratulations to the Class of 2003!

Ninety-eight percent of the Class of 2003 will be attending 45 different colleges and universities next fall.

VALEDICTORIAN: Matthew Zore

SALUTATORIAN: Ashley Garber

JOE DEZELAN AWARD WINNERS: Kathleen Roesinger, David Lauck

ATHLETES OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS: Christine Cossell, Zach Decatur

Board of Trustees Award Winner: Julie Malone

Senior Scholarships – Over 7 Million Dollars

Several scholarships were still pending at the time of printing and therefore could not be included on this list.
Several Catholic groups receive grants for summer youth programs

By Jennifer Lindberg

Helping youth learn valuable skills during the summer is the goal of various Catholic organizations. For example, Marian College, the Catholic Youth Organization, Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School, St. Francis Healthcare Foundation, Catholic Social Services and Martin University, all based in Indianapolis, received money from the Summer Youth Program through Lilly Endowment Inc.

Marian College will use its $8,000 grant for the National Youth Sports Program from June 20-25. The program hosts youth from low-income homes on its campus. Instead, it will instill the values of fair play and sports.

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Miracles confirm a link between this life and the next

By John Thavis

If saints are models for everyday living, miracles confirm a link between this life and the next—a demonstration that the divine can touch upon human affairs.

But in a modern age dominated by scientific scrutiny and logical explanation, the Church is extremely careful in what it proclaims as a "supernatural" event. Just like the alleged virtues of saints, miracles must pass an authenticity test.

The reason that saints and miracles go together is simple. From the Church’s earliest centuries, Christians have prayed to holy people who have died, asking for their help with earthly problems. The prayers are offered for the saint’s intercession with God in the belief that those who lived holy lives in this world surely will have God’s ear in the next.

God grants the grace or miracle, not the saint. People pray to these holy figures for all kinds of reasons, including illness, family and marital conflicts, and a host of other woes.

Miracles submitted to the Vatican for verification almost always concern unexplained recovery from illness. The reason is that such healings are typically well-documented by professionals who have no special interest in promoting a sainthood cause. In some cases, the doctors’ amazement ends up being a key part of the Church’s record.

But it’s not enough to show that a healing is inexplicable by science. The Church must also verify that a particular saint is responsible for obtaining God’s grace—in other words, that specific prayers were answered.

Vatican rules for saint-making require one miracle for beatification and a second for canonization. The only exception is for those declared to be martyrs, who do not need a miracle for beatification, but do need one for canonization.

Each sainthood cause moves at its own pace, and a miracle can be a key factor. Scores of causes have languished for decades or centuries, waiting for a miracle to be verified. Some would-be miracles are rejected after study by experts, and that can cause deep disappointment among those promoting the cause.

The sainthood process works like this: After a cause passes through diocesan-level review with a favorable judgment, it is forwarded to the Vatican. In most cases, two decrees are needed before beatification occurs: one confirming the person’s heroic virtues and another verifying a miracle attributed to the person’s intercession.

When an alleged miraculous cure is submitted, the Vatican overviews a detailed review of the facts. If two Vatican-appointed medical experts think the case is substantial enough, it is considered by a full six-member medical board called a “consulta.”

The experts must make sure the disease or ailment was serious and medically verified, that other treatments failed to cure it, and that the cure was instantaneous, lasting and inexplicable by modern medical intervention.

Already at the diocesan level, doctors who treated the patient have been called as witnesses, and often they are asked to write a report on the disease and its progress. The Vatican reviews this information and then checks it out with one or more of the approximately 100 medical specialists on its roster of consultants.

Once the medical scrutiny has confirmed a wondrous cure, the case passes to a group of theologians. They make sure that prayers for healing were indeed offered to the would-be saint—attesting to the link between a cure and prayers for a cure.

When both medical and theological experts have given the miracle a thumbs-up, it is forwarded for approval by the pope, who issues a decree while meeting with the cardinal-members of the Congregation for Sainthood Causes.

St. Katharine Drexel was beatified in 1988 after a teenage boy miraculously regained his hearing. She was canonized in 2000 after the Vatican verified another miraculous cure of deafness in a U.S. toddler. In both cases, the people cured were among those attending the beatification and canonization Masses.

In the rare cases of a non-medical miracle—for example, someone’s life inexplicably saved in what should have been fatal circumstances—the Vatican consults other scientific experts to rule out a natural explanation of the event. There is no special Vatican office for miracles, and the sainthood congregation only studies miraculous events as they relate to pending causes. It would not investigate alleged miracles after a saint has been declared or look into extraordinary happenings, visions or prophecies among people who are not active in its sainthood files.

Miracles are basically a way for the Church to see a divine “seal of approval” on its judgment of a person’s sanctity. Despite the central importance of miracles in the sainthood process, however, the miracles are not spotlighted during canonization ceremonies.

Usually, miracles are not even mentioned during these ceremonies. The reason, Vatican officials say, is that in canonizing a certain person the Church is elevating a model of holy living, not promoting miracles.

At the same time, Vatican officials know that verification of miracles reminds people that God works in wondrous ways.

“Behind the whole process,” a Vatican official said, “is the conviction that the Lord does intervene and act in human affairs.”

(John Thavis is the bureau chief of Catholic News Service’s Rome office.)

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Discussion Point

Miracles happen in daily life

This Week’s Question

Describe a time you strongly felt that God was actively working in your life.

“This was a time I was looking for a nurturing place for my mentally handicapped son. I found a wonderful facility and, even though they had many applications for very few openings, I just knew that God would take care of us, and he did. In the midst of all the turmoil and concerns, I felt a calmness inside, and I know that it was because of God.” (Olga Bowen, Plymouth, N.H.)

“I was a CCD teacher for 18 years, and I’m a scoutmaster now for 28 years. Through both of these experiences of working with young people, I feel that God has been active in my life.” (Jolise Loveless, Jackson, Miss.)

“I feel that God is actively working in my life constantly.” (Judi Belew, Salt Lake City, Utah)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What resources do you draw upon when you have a question about faith?

To respond for possible publication, write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
In 1376, St. Catherine of Siena convinced Pope Gregory XI to leave France and return to Rome, but he never made it. Catherine was a remarkable woman—a saint in every sense of the word. In 1352, petty tyrants dominated the Papal State and Innocent had to flee Rome to Florence and Perugia in a revolt against the Holy See. His successor, Pope Urban V, did manage to return for a while—for three years. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State. He and his curia left Avignon on April 30, 1367, and landed in Corneto in the Papal State.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, June 8, 2003

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
John 20:19-23

This weekend, the Church celebrates the feast of Pentecost. Together with Christ’s Resurrection and Easter, it is one of the principal feast days of the Church’s liturgical year. The Acts of the Apostles provides the story of the first Pentecost. The story is familiar. It is about the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles.

In this story, the imagery is very important, since the images would have spoken volumes to the persons in the first century A.D. in Palestine who heard the story.

Suddenly, as the Apostles and the communion of Christians were gathered in a secluded place in Jerusalem, a strong, loud wind seemed to come from the old Testament, God often appeared with, or in the midst of, a strong, loud wind. So, in hearing this story, persons aware of the Old Testament immediately would have connected this phenomenon with the arrival of the Almighty.

Then, the divine presence manifested itself in fire. God also was depicted in the Old Testament as coming in fire on sev-

eral important occasions. One such occasion was the coming of God to Moses. God spoke from a burning bush. This ele-

ment of flame also associated the event of the burning bush with God. Hearing this story, persons aware of the Old Testament would have immediately connected this phenomenon with the arrival of God.

This is an important moment that since the life of Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, remains one and indivisible as it dwells within each Christian, then Christians are united in their very beings. They are not ships passing in the night, or even moving on parallel courses. They are one, as one body is one but composed of parts having different functions.

For the last reading, this Christ weekend presents St. John’s Gospel. It is a compilation of written ordinances and the Gospel Resurrection nar-

rative, it recalls the visit by Jesus, cruci-

fied but risen, to the Apostles. They are afraid, huddled together in disarray and self-interest. Jesus, underderted by locked doors, appears in their midst. He brings them peace, which obviously the world cannot give them. Indeed, they cannot find it for themselves.

The Lord gives them a solemn com-

mission. He links their calling as Apostles to the Redeemer. He is with them in their apostolic work. They continue the Lord’s work.

Then, Jesus bestows the Holy Spirit. Jesus is God. No mere human should command the Almighty.

Finally, Jesus calls upon them that most divine powers. He empowers them to forgive sins, and to judge the actions of others.

Reflection

For weeks, the Church joyfully has celebrated the Resurrection. It has pro-

claimed the glory and divinity of Jesus, crucified but victorious over death. Throughout the process, the Church has been careful to say that Jesus did not come to go and find God in human history. He is still alive.

Now, in this dramatic moment of remembering Pentecost, the Church tells us how the Lord remains with us. He remains with us, through the Holy Spirit, in the community of the Church, and specifically with the assistance and guidance of the Apostles.

Pentecost is, in a sense, the only ancient Jewish feast that Christians still celebrate. Long ago, this feast arose among the Hebrews. It came to be the day when they recognized, and rejoiced in, their national identity and ethnic cohesive-

ness.

For Christians, the new Pentecost cele-

brates their cohesiveness. It is the result of the bond created by the common real-

ization of life in God, of life in the Spirit. No ethnic or national characteristics are

important. All humanity is in the mind of God.

Indeed, all barriers created by human sin or human limitations, such as varying languages, fall before the will of God that in Jesus all should have eternal life.

Q: Would you discuss the Catholic Church’s stand on Word and Communion services, mentioned often in the bulletin of parishes in our area.

A: Such a service allowed is a com-

mon practice in the Church or just in our area? (Wisconsin)

Q: How do you understand the Church’s ceremonies con-

sisting of the Liturgy of the Word followed by holy Communion? (Ohio)

A: The ritual to be followed in these cere-

monies is found in the liturgical manual of the Church. As the title of this relatively new ritual suggests, the need for such a rite was occa-

sioned by the decline in the number of priests to the point where many parishes are without priests for the Sunday celebra-

tion of the Eucharist.

The purpose, therefore, was to provide a rite over which lay people, religious sis-

ters or brothers, or deacons could preside in the absence of a priest.

The ceremony resembles the Mass without the eucharistic prayer. It includes an introduction, a “litany in praise of God’s mercy” (penitential rite), opening prayer, usual Scripture readings, homily or reflection on the readings, intercessions and profession of faith.

The reflection on the readings is done by a deacon or by a layperson delegated by the bishop to present a brief explanation of the Bible texts to assist the people’s faith.

The Liturgy of the Word with Communion may be used on other days than Sunday. Some bishops provide guidelines govern-

ing in what circumstances these liturgies may be celebrated.

A Liturgy of the Word without Communion is even more common. Rituals for the public celebration of penance, baptism, marriage and anointing of the sick, for example, all require cele-

brations of the Word of God similar to the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

Q: If I want to confess and receive absolu-

ation, will I still wonder if the priest is orthodox or too lenient. Can you tell me what is a sin against the Holy Spirit? I want to get back to Communion. (Ohio)

A: The Church’s stand on Word and Communion similar to the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

My Journey to God

In Him I Believe

“Our faith is a solid basis for living All gifts and graces are blessed for us So I may learn and grow. Love is given in all things, And faith from grace receives His love is given in all things, And faith from grace receives How joyful are the souls that have known the Lord’s mercy” (penitential rite), opening prayer, usual Scripture readings, homily or reflection on the readings, intercessions and profession of faith.

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A: The Church’s stand on Word and Communion similar to the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.
Hey, I think I found everything in this page! Here's what I found:

- **St. John's Night with the community**
- **Parish picnic** at St. Paul Parish, 218 Scheller Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46222.
- **Italian Street Festival** at 1400 N. Meridian St., $5. Information: 317-291-7014.
- **St. Gabriel Parish** at 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis, IN 46208.
- **St. Luke Church** at 7575 Holliday Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46254.
- **St. James Church** at 3522 S. W. 26th St., Indianapolis, IN 46222.
- **St. John's Day** at the St. John the Evangelist Parish, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.
- **St. Lawrence Church** at 6944 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46222.
- **St. Mary's Church** at 89 N. 17th St., Indianapolis, IN 46225.
- **St. Joseph's Church** at 7577 S. 42nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46227.
- **St. Lawrence Church** at 6944 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46222.
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Priests, sisters and brothers dedicate their lives to serving God and others

By Winston Fitzgerald

By fulfilling their call from God to a religious vocation, priests, sisters and brothers commit their lives to the Lord. Though they have diverse occupations, they all have a common desire. Their ambition is to express their love relationship with the Lord through numerous avenues by extending their hands and hearts to help all who are in need.

Our priests, Christ’s representatives, are the spiritual hands in the Church. Through their hands, the seven sacred sacraments are administered, signs of God’s love for us. Upon receiving the sacraments, we grow closer to God and also inherit supernatural graces.

Their personal interaction with us also reveals their love of the Lord, especially when, as altar servers, we help serve Mass with them.

Spending time with a priest builds a firm foundation for a friendship that can last a lifetime. They are always willing to discuss any matter, imparting wisdom throughout.

Being patient with people is another way our priests show Christ’s love. Their deep understanding of God’s love for them helps to keep them holy.

St. Paul proclaimed to the Corinthians, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). Holy priests, being the earthly symbol of Christ, act as superior role models for all people.

Sisters display their love relationship with Christ by acting as the physical hands of God. They are always helping those in need, even if they do not have sufficient materials for themselves.

Like the priests, the sisters are kind, compassionate and sympathetic. Caring for the unfortunate and ailing builds a friendship that could have the power to reveal or confirm Christ’s love.

Many people would suffer and die without knowing the Lord if it were not for the intercession and faithfulness of women religious.

Additional hands of Christ belong to men religious. Brothers reside in communities where they work and pray. Praying for the problems of the world and the souls of mankind, that they may hear the Word of God and be saved, is a priority in the life of brothers in religious communities.

Just as sisters have different ministries that demonstrate their love for God, brothers also have varied ministries. They educate some of the men that advance into the seminary, and they labor in hospitals helping ill and injured people.

Brothers, though not as visible as priests and sisters, play an immense part in enlightening religious and lay people concerning the faith.

The sacred vow that priests, sisters and brothers take gives them a unique and intimate vocation in the Church. By accepting their call to religious vocations, they receive the obligation to please the Lord. They hope to draw us closer to the Lord by extending their hands and hearts to us, so that we might come into union with them and God.

By joining our hands together with the hands of God’s religious, the Body of Christ is strengthened and enlarged.

(Winston Fitzgerald is a student at Lumen Christi School in Indianapolis and is a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis. His essay won the seventh-grade division of the Indianapolis Serra Club’s annual vocations essay contest.)

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