U.S. bishops discuss Church problems, vote on two major texts

ST. LOUIS (CNS)—The U.S. Catholic bishops discussed serious problems facing the U.S. Church and voted on new directives for catechetics and deacon formation at their June 19-21 spring meeting in St. Louis.

Three of their five half-day sessions were closed to the media, but reporters were briefed on the general nature and content of those sessions.

The first afternoon, they held a closed meeting with researchers and lay leaders appointed to oversee their ongoing efforts to combat clerical sexual abuse of minors. The researchers answered questions about the aims and methodology of the current study they are conducting in all U.S. dioceses to determine the nature and scope of such abuse over the past half-century.

The bishops spent the entire day behind closed doors on June 20 in structured discussions to reflect on what they regard as three of the highest-priority issues in the U.S. Church: the identity and spirituality of bishops and priests, the decline in sacramental practice and lack of adequate faith formation among U.S. Catholics, and challenges facing Catholic laity in today’s culture.

The day of reflection was the first major step in an 18-month process initiated last November to determine whether the bishops should convene the first plenary council of the U.S. Church since 1884 and, if they do, what themes and issues they would determine to be the nature and scope of the study they are conducting in all U.S. dioceses.

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Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, makes a point at a June 19 press conference in St. Louis, as Kathleen McChesney, director of the Bishops’ Office for Child and Youth Protection, and Bishop Joseph A. Galante, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Communications, listen. At their annual spring meeting, the bishops discussed their continuing efforts to deal with clergy sexual abuse.

Year-round school gets an ‘A’ from teachers, students

Two elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis with year-round school calendars are citing improved student performance.

ISTEP scores for students at All Saints Central Catholic School in Indianapolis have improved 18 percent for all grades over last year, said principal Mary Pat Sharpe.

Central Catholic School, also in Indianapolis, cites increased student enthusiasm about learning and the teachers’ ability to cover more curriculum areas than before.

Central Catholic won’t be able to compare ISTEP scores until next year because its eighth-grade test scores were declared null due to last year’s tornado that happened while students were taking the test.

The improvement in All Saints’ ISTEP scores is more than Sharpe initially anticipated because the school just launched the year-round calendar.

“I would say by starting school Aug. 5, we were able to have an extra two weeks of review for the ISTEP test than we normally would,” Sharpe said. “We had kids in the building earlier than we had in the past.”

Sharpe also cited another reason she believes ISTEP scores increased at All Saints School that has nothing to do with year-round school—the emphasis that the school places on reading.

Cathedral Kitchen feeds the poor

By Margaret Nelson

Dozens of people wait huddled near the doors of the old SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral School building in Indianapolis every morning. Most of them are minutes away from their only hot meal of the day.

The basement of the former grade school at 1350 N. Pennsylvania St. now houses the Cathedral Kitchen. The building is also home to the Damien Center, which provides HIV/AIDS education, counseling and support services.

Almost 200 men and women file in at 8:45 a.m. for cereal, milk, orange juice, fruit, salad, rolls and bread—and even decorated cookies, when available.

Whatever hot food the volunteers can collect and prepare—chunky chicken soup with wide noodles, chili, spaghetti, lasagna—goes fast.

Many of the people are homeless, and they’re not just only grateful for a nutritious meal, but also happy just to have a chair and table to sit at.

The guests get their own chairs and stack them back up after they’ve eaten. Many of the people come to the Cathedral Kitchen on a regular basis and they look out for each other—especially those with obvious physical or emotional problems.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the able-bodied men help unload supplies for the 10 a.m. food pantry before getting in line for breakfast themselves. Food comes from Gleaners Food Bank, Commodity Foods of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Second Helpings and major food chains, as well as individuals.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society pays part of the bills with help from private donations. Some of the volunteers come one day a week, others every day.

Bert Batic of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg started helping people back during World War II when she volunteered with the Red Cross overseas. She came back to serve the Indianapolis Police Department in the juvenile court system before “retiring” to the kitchen. Pat Kronoshok works alongside her fellow parishioner.

Mary Wilson of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus Parish in Indianapolis, who now works for the Indianapolis Police Department, helps prepare the favorite hot dishes. Cindy Stiehl started bringing fresh produce from her own garden and ended up helping in the kitchen.

Haydee Gloria of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis goes to morning Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral before her active mornings in the kitchen.

Gary Favrot drives in every morning from Zionsville, Ind., for daily Mass at the cathedral then works as a volunteer until noon. Rick Sparks of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis can be seen carrying milk, bread and rolls in from the cars.

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, makes a point at a June 19 press conference in St. Louis, as Kathleen McChesney, director of the Bishops’ Office for Child and Youth Protection, and Bishop Joseph A. Galante, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Communications, listen. At their annual spring meeting, the bishops discussed their continuing efforts to deal with clergy sexual abuse.
Cathedral Kitchen volunteer finds a home in the Church

By Margaret Nelson

For eight years, Marion Dinkins has felt at home at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis. At this year’s Easter Vigil, he made it official—becoming a member of the Catholic Church there.

Baptized as a child in the Baptist Church, Dinkins received the sacraments of confirmation and first Communion from Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on April 19 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

Dinkins’ interest in the Catholic Church began when he was going through a rough period in his life. Having struggled with alcohol, he turned to the Cathedral Kitchen for his daily breakfast. The food service is offered from the basement of the former Cathedral grade school building, just across the street from his apartment.

Soon he was helping unload food from cars and serving trays of doughnuts and breads in the dining room.

He began attending Christmas and Easter Masses at the cathedral.

“The choir sounded like angels,” Dinkins said. “I felt like God was calling me—like heaven was opening up. It was awesome.”

Pauline Bernhart, long-time coordinator of the Cathedral Kitchen, and Providence Sister Joan Frame were among the many people who made him feel welcome.

Later, kitchen coordinator Lucia Corcoran asked Dinkins if he would be interested in working in the kitchen.

“I needed something to keep me out of trouble—to give me motivation and inspiration,” said Dinkins. He needed to have a routine, so the volunteer job and his new friends helped him through a difficult period of his life.

“They were there for me,” Dinkins said.

“Father Rick [Ginther] always treated me like one of the family,” he said of the pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

“When Pauline [Bernhart] died, he asked me to be a pallbearer.”

Having lived with foster parents from age 7 to 13, Dinkins said he was indirectly associated with Catholic Church activities since his high school days. As basketball team manager for Shortridge High School, he accompanied the team for games at Cathedral High School when it was located at 14th and Meridian streets.

Later, he worked as a teacher’s aide at the former St. Rita Child Development Center in Indianapolis. And he attended some dances at the Peter Claver Center in the late 1970s.

He always felt welcome at SS. Peter and Paul Parish receptions after Mass, soup and bread suppers, pancake dinners and other parish activities. Benedictine Brother Howard Stavert made sure he had rides to parish picnics. He also helped with the Cathedral Parish’s annual Black Exposition.

As he was participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process this year, he said, “It dawned on me that God was leading me here all that time.”

He remembers a time when things were generally chaotic at the kitchen. He suggested to Corcoran that the volunteers and any of the hungry clients who wanted to join them all pray together before they ate breakfast.

He said his idea was that they would settle down for at least a few minutes and it would focus their thoughts more on the Lord—the source of their gifts.

“Every since then, they say a prayer in the morning,” Dinkins said. “It made all the difference. It totally changed the atmosphere,” said Corcoran.

Dinkins is glad Dinkins came to the Cathedral Parish.

“I hope it continues to bring joy to his heart. He was always sincere in his love of God,” she said.

“A lot of things drew me to the Church—the Holy Spirit, of course,” said Dinkins. “Everthing seemed to come together. Actually, I didn’t put it all together so that it made sense until I became Catholic.”

Last October, he talked with Nora Cummings, chair of the parish RCIA process, about his interest in becoming Catholic.

“I told her I believed the Lord was moving me to join the Catholic Church,” he said.

Cummings encouraged him to join the RCIA sessions then. When he hesitated, she said, “Think about it.”

The next week, when Dinkins told Cummings he had decided to join the RCIA group, he felt “really welcomed.”

Sister Joan, who helps with RCIA at Cathedral Parish, said Dinkins was very good in the classes, contributing to the discussions and sharing his knowledge of the Bible.

“I saw that he has a different outlook on life than in earlier times,” she said.

“He is doing very well at trying to do what a good Catholic should do. He wants to be involved—that’s in his favor,” she said.

Gary Favrot, who drives in from Zionsville, Ind., each day to volunteer at the kitchen, is what Sister Joan calls “a diligent sponsor” for the new convert.

“She was always there when I talked with him ‘all the time’ as he was helping in the kitchen. They discussed the Bible, with Sister Joan asking questions to see what I retained.”

Now that he is Catholic, he tries to attend daily Mass at the cathedral.

“I feel complete going to Mass every day,” said Dinkins. He said that the atmosphere helps him block out all the distractions and cares of the day.

“I can focus on Jesus for that 30 to 45 minutes,” he said, adding that he has already seen the results in his life in the short time since he was confirmed.

He recently learned that one of his friends had been baptized in the Catholic Church as a child.

“I hope my experience helps her go back to her faith,” he said.

Dinkins likes to serve as disc jockey at parties and receptions when he can get transportation to the events. He said that he wants to serve the Church, perhaps in the hospitality ministry.

“I need something to do,” Dinkins said.

Cummings is encouraging Dinkins to use his talents to help the Church.

“What is doing is what everyone should be doing,” she said. “It was brought out in the (RCIA) sessions that they should live what they’ve learned.”

(Margaret Nelson is a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.)†

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Pfc. Jesse Halling gave his life to save other soldiers

By Mary Ann Wyand

HEROIC. Courageous. Selfless.

Army Pvt. Jesse Halling of Indian- 
apolis, who died while saving the lives of fellow soldiers ambushed on June 7 in Tikrit, Iraq, was remembered for his bravery and concern for others during a mili-
tary funeral on June 17 at St. Christopher Church in Indianapolis.

Halling became an American hero after telling his friends to take cover while he continued to operate a machine gun to defend their position from enemy fire.

His parents, Al and Pamela Halling of Indianapolis, said their son looked out for others and tried to do the right thing throughout his young life.

"Jesse was a remarkable young man, and he believed in what he was doing," Al Halling said three days after his only son was buried near a tree in the military section of Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

"We’re proud of what Jesse did for his friends and for his country," he said, “but his death left a big void in our hearts. He paid the ultimate price with his life.

"He was a good son," Halling said.

"He didn’t get into trouble. He wanted to be in the military as a career, and he was very focused on his career. He cared about his friends and the [Army] buddies he served with."

For his courage and heroism, Pvt. Halling was promoted to Private First Class and received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Medal of Valor posthum-
ously during graveside services.

Halling said his son was sent to Kuwait on March 22, 2003, and deployed to Iraq in early May after major conflict ended there.

During their last telephone conversa-
tion, he told his father about his peacekeeping duties as a military policeman and said he enjoyed helping the people.

"He knew he had to be careful because of all the ambushes," Halling said. "At the end of our conversation, I asked him if he had any regrets about joining the Army or what he was doing, and he said no. He said he knew he was doing something good, he was among his fellow soldiers and they were taking care of each other, and they knew they were on a mission to help other people out of a bad situation."

Burying his son was heartbreaking, Halling said, but Father Michael Welch, pastor of St. Christopher Parish, "did a tremendous job with the funeral service. I couldn’t have asked for anything more."

Pamela Halling said her son wanted to be a pilot and enlisted in the Army as a way to achieve this goal after graduating from Ben Davis High School in Indian-
apolis. But his eyesight wasn’t good enough for flight school, so he was trained as a military policeman instead.

"I know it’s my faith that is going to get me through all the rough times in my life. And I know, in time, that things will get better, but I miss Jesse so much."

Until the end of our conversation, I asked him if he had any regrets about joining the Army or what he was doing, and he said no. He said he knew he was doing something good, he was among his fellow soldiers and they were taking care of each other, and they knew they were on a mission to help other people out of a bad situation. Burying his son was heartbreaking, Halling said, but Father Michael Welch, pastor of St. Christopher Parish, “did a tremendous job with the funeral service. I couldn’t have asked for anything more. Pamela Halling said her son wanted to be a pilot and enlisted in the Army as a way to achieve this goal after graduating from Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis. But his eyesight wasn’t good enough for flight school, so he was trained as a military policeman instead.

"I know it’s my faith that is going to get me through all the rough times in my life. And I know, in time, that things will get better, but I miss Jesse so much."

During the homily, Father Welch said Catholics believe that God grieves with people. "We believe in a God who can bring good out of evil, victory out of defeat, life out of death and Easter out of Good Friday. He did it with you and the other guys who freely ... chose to die for us in his son, Jesus, and who said there is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 

“Jesse brings us together to remember that freedom is never to be taken for granted,” he said. "Freedom is costly. Jesse died for his country. He literally gave his life for his friends, and there is no greater love than this. He died as a brave man, protecting his fellow soldiers, and by his actions prevented many more casualties. I marvel at the courage of this 19-year-old man."

"How do we make sure that Jesse did not die in vain?” Father Welch asked.

"Jesse went to Iraq to help people gain freedom, live without fear and be at peace. That has to happen here in our homes. May we all become peacekeepers."

In the days after Jesse Halling’s death, Father Welch said, many St. Christopher parishioners have called the parish office to find out how they can help the Halling family.

And when he introduced Pamela Halling at the conclusion of the Mass on June 15, Father Welch said, parishioners tearfully responded with applause that lasted for more than five minutes.

Two area programs prepare nurses for parish ministry

By Jennifer Lindberg

Firm of three parts

To take these college classes, a job has to be waiting on you. You also need a sponsor to pay for the classes.

The reason: the path to becoming a parish nurse isn’t only about learning, but also about establishing a ministry in a faith community.

This is something the nurses don’t pay for,” said Carole Lee Cherry, coordi-
nator of parish nursing at Marian College in Indianapolis. “We want to see the faith communities may have a commitment.

Many times, St. Francis or St. Vincent hospitals in Indianapolis offer grants for the parish nursing programs located at Marian College and the University of Indianapolis.

Parish nursing programs are becoming more popular after a Lutheran minister, Granger Westberg, approached the Lutheran General Health System in Park Ridge, Ill., with the idea of partnering with local congregations in a parish nurse project.

From there, six nurses were hired to work in six congregations. Two were Catholic churches and four were in the Lutheran and Methodist Churches.

Today, the concept has grown with increasing numbers of churches hiring parish nurses.

Becoming a parish nurse has certain criteria.

Those entering the programs have to be a registered nurse with at least three years of experience and have a partner-
ship with a faith community that has agreed to make parish nursing a part of its ministry.

The programs at Marian College and the University of Indianapolis are both ecumenically based.

However, spirituality plays a large role, Cherry said.

“We really infuse a lot of spirituality,” Cherry said. “It’s spirit-based, and we talk about prayer, grief concepts, and how to be still and have presence.”

Students often pray together and talk about how their faith is important to them.

The curriculum also discusses the role of a parish nurse as a health educator, referral agent, coordinator of volunteers and integrator of faith.

It also takes students through discus-
sions about ethics in parish nursing and everyday skills such as how to deal with difficult people.

At the University of Indianapolis, the program is similar.

Marian College began its program in 2000, and the University of Indianapolis started its program in 1996.

Cheryl Larson, parish nurse coordinator for the university, said the most difficult lesson in switching from regular nursing to parish nursing is a change in focus.

“The hardest part is not to do hands-on care,” Larson said.

While parish nurses give referrals, administer blood pressure checks and per-
form other health promotion needs, such as setting up weight-loss programs, they don’t provide hands-on medical care.

“It’s a whole new way of looking at nursing,” Larson said. “You are used to being with people every day, but this is about a holistic practice. It’s body, mind, and spirit, not hands-on.”

While the programs don’t discuss Catholic teaching, parish nurses coming from the programs do know their faith and are able to incorporate it, said Julie Trocchio, director of long-term care for the Catholic Health Association in Washington, D.C., which represents more than 2,000 Catholic health care sponsors, systems and facilities.

“I’ve not heard parish nurses saying, ‘I need more information about my faith,’ but that they need to know how to set up programs, need assessments and how to recruit volunteers,” Trocchio said.

Ann Hill, who completed the course at Marian College and volunteered as a parish nurse at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, said the courses prepared her for her new role.

“I think just the whole structure of the program addressed the spiritual and prag-
matic issues” of being a parish nurse, she said.

Hill said she was taught about budgets, paperwork, and even the role of a liaison and how “to put it all together in holistic health.”

(For information about parish nursing programs, call Marian College at 317-915-6132 or the University of Indian-
apolis at 317-788-3206.)

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The Criterion Friday, June 27, 2003

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during the past 18 months, Catholics in the Archdiocese of Louisville have experienced the shock of a seemingly endless barrage of lawsuits filed by victims of clergy sex abuse. In these suits, the plaintiffs claimed that the Archdiocese of Louisville was negligent in its handling of Church personnel accused of child abuse and/or other forms of sexual misconduct. On June 10, the Archdiocese of Louisville announced that it has agreed (through mediation) to pay $25.7 million to victims and their attorneys in settlement of 243 separate cases. This settlement was reported to be the second largest in U.S. Church history—exceeded only by the Dallas Diocese’s settlement of 243 separate cases. This settlement will not bankrupt the Archdiocese of Louisville (as the Archdiocese of Louisville has agreed to pay approximately $63,000. What kind of justice is this? Equally unsettling is the fact that the $25.7 million settlement the Archdiocese of Louisville has agreed to pay will greatly impair the Church’s ability to carry on its ministry to those who are poor—materially and spiritually. This settlement will not bankrupt the Archdiocese of Louisville (as might have been the case with a protracted legal battle), but it will certainly have a substantial and long-lasting impact on the Louisville Archdiocese’s ability to carry out its mission. We wonder who wins here and who loses. And whether the victory is worth the price. Like most Catholics, we find the whole issue of sexual abuse by Church personnel to be unsettling in the extreme. We pray for the Church in central Kentucky and for the victims of abuse everywhere. We pray for healing, for hope and for an end to all forms of abuse—especially those involving children. Finally, we also pray for an end to the kind of litigation that robs the poor of today and tomorrow to redress yesterday’s wrongs. Surely there must be a better way to provide for the legitimate needs of those who have been terribly wronged. — Daniel Conway

Church leaders in Louisville, Ky., announce a $25.7 million settlement the archdiocese will pay to plaintiffs alleging sexual abuse of children by priests and others associated with the archdiocese. Chancellor and chief administrative officer Brian Reynolds and Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly addressed the media at the June 10 press conference.

Letters Policy
Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful. The editor reserves the right to edit and cut the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity, and content. Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld. Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

Research for the Church

James D. Davidson

What effect does the Church have on civic participation?

Does involvement in the Catholic Church stifle or contribute to other forms of civic involvement? Do parishioners withdraw from community life or become more active in their communities? Are highly committed Catholics any more involved in civic organizations than Catholics who are not as committed to the Church?

I recently explored these issues using data from my 1999 national survey of American Catholics. In that survey, colleagues and I asked Catholics if they belong to any religious and/or civic organizations. Sixty-two percent said they belong to no such groups, 21 percent named one group, and 17 percent mentioned two or more groups.

Who listed one or more groups were asked to describe these groups, which I put into two categories. The “religious/Catholic” category includes a wide variety of groups, such as the Knights of Columbus, Altar Society, Right to Life, Legion of Mary and RENEW. The “other” category is made up of fraternal/sorority, sports/fitness, education/cultural, political/volunteer, business and other groups.

I then compared the responses of registered parishioners with those of people who identify themselves as Catholic, but who are not registered in a parish. I also compared people who scored high, medium and low on a three-item index of religious commitment (measuring the importance people attach to the Church, their unwillingness to ever leave the Church and their frequency of Mass attendance). Here’s what I found.

Surprisingly, parishioners and highly committed Catholics are much more likely to belong to religious/Catholic organizations. Fifteen percent of parishioners, but only 1 percent of nonparishioners belong to a religious/Catholic organization. Thirty-one percent of highly committed Catholics belong to a religious/Catholic organization compared to only 4 percent of people who scored low in commitment.

What about Catholics’ involvement in other civic organizations? Parishioners and highly committed Catholics are more likely to belong to fraternal/sorority groups. Thirty-one percent of parishioners, compared to 25 percent of non-parishioners, and 30 percent of highly committed Catholics, compared to 27 percent of Catholics who are low in commitment, are involved in other civic groups. But, they are more involved in some spheres than others. They are considerably more involved in fraternal/sorority groups. Nine percent of parishioners, compared to only 4 percent of nonparishioners belong to groups such as the Elks, Women’s Guild, singles groups and women’s clubs.

Parishioners and highly committed Catholics are not much different from nonparishioners and less committed Catholics in terms of education/cultural groups, political/volunteer groups, and business groups. Being a parishioner or highly committed to the Church does not foster these activities as much as it fosters membership in fraternal/sorority groups.

There is one area where parishioners and highly committed Catholics are noticeably less involved: sports/fitness groups. Parishioners and people who score low in religious commitment are more likely to belong to sports/fitness groups than parishioners and highly committed Catholics are. These findings raise a number of questions that Church leaders might want to explore with laypeople. For example, what is it about being a parishioner and being committed to the Church that fosters participation in fraternal/sorority groups? Why are parishioners and less committed Catholics less inclined to participate in sports/fitness groups? What more could the Church do to strengthen the connections between Church participation and other forms of civic engagement?

(James D. Davidson is a professor of sociology at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. His most recent book is American Catholics: Gender, Generation, and Commitment, published by Alta Mira Books in 2001.)
The history of the Rosary and its link to Mary

La historia del Rosario y su vínculo con María

Cuarto de la serie

A historia do Rosário data de la época medieval. St. Dominic is credited with its authorship in the 13th century. An extreme heretical sect, the Cathars, also known as the Albigensians because they flourished in the city of Albi in France, appeared in the 11th century. The sect believed that all life on earth was the work of the devil and, therefore, was evil. This strange belief led to an anti-life attitude and evolved into a cult of death, even promoting suicide as virtuous. Needless to say, the group rejected the sacraments of the Church.

Tradition has it that St. Dominic preached valiantly but unsuccessfully to convert the Albigensians to authentic Christian faith. One day, while he was lamenting this failure in prayer to the Blessed Mother, she asked him to preach the Rosary to the people as the remedy against evil and error. St. Dominic went straight to Toulouse in France, an Albigensian stronghold a few miles southwest of Albi, where he explained the importance and value of the Rosary to the people. The Rosary was embraced by most of the people, who then renounced their false beliefs.

In 1569, the Dominican Pope, St. Pius V, wrote: “The Albigensian heresy, then raging in a part of France, had blinded so many of the laity that they were cruelly attacking priests and clerics. Blessed Dominic opened their eyes to heaven and turned them toward the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. Dominic invented this method of prayer, which is easy and suitable to everyone and which is called the Rosary.

It consists of venerating the Blessed Virgin by reciting 15 angelic salutations, the same number as the Psalms of David, interrupting them at each decade by the Lord’s Prayer, meanwhile meditating on the mysteries, which recall the entire life of our Lord Jesus Christ. After having devised it Dominic and his sons spread the form of prayer throughout the Church” (cf. Robert Feeney, The Rosary, “The Little Summa,” Aequinas Press, 1991, p. 19).

In the Middle Ages, the psalms were the normal form of prayer, but a largely uneducated population did not know them. The people sought some kind of prayer for themselves. They knew the Hail Mary and the Our Father.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger believes the medieval embrace of the Rosary as a popular prayer touches a fundamental need of the human spirit throughout all the ages.

“The people had to work hard. They could not expect to accomplish great intellectual tasks in prayer as well. On the contrary they needed a prayer to bring them calm, to take them out of themselves, away from their troubles, and set before them consolation and healing. I think this basic experience in the history of religion, of repetition, of rhythm, of words in unison, of singing together, which carries me, soothes me and fills my space, which does not torment me and sets me free, this basic experience has here become fully Christian, in that people pray quite simply in the Marian context and in that of the appearance of Christ to men, and yet at the same time let this prayer be internalized in them—going beyond the intellectual level to where the soul becomes one with the words” (God and the World, p. 319).

Robert Feeney traces the history of the Rosary in his book, The Rosary, “The Little Summa.” He states, “The Church, through her popes, has given us this papal tradition of the true origin and history of the Rosary. This papal tradition is declared in no less than 214 papal bulls, decrees and encyclicals of no fewer than 39 popes” (p. 25).

St. Dominic is credited with authoring the Rosary, but he did not compose it in its definitive form. “The fixing of definite mysteries was a long process which took centuries to evolve and determine. That was done by Pope St. Pius VI in 1569” (cf. Feeney, op. cit., p. 37). In our own time, with his new apostolic letter, Pope John Paul II has offered yet an additional set of mysteries.

At Fatima, Portugal, the Blessed Mother announced herself as “the Lady of the Rosary” and urged the praying of the Rosary. Other saints, notably St. Louis Marie de Montfort, in his classic The Secret of the Rosary, and recently canonized Padre Pio, did much to promote the devotion.

Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young adult who John Paul II called a “model of athletes” at his beatification in 1984, prayed the rosary three times a day and encouraged his peers to pray it. When hiking in the mountains with his young friends, he would lead them in the Rosary.

A recently beatified husband and father, Blessed Bartolo Longo, wrote: “The Rosary is a trilogy; it recalls the joys, sorrows and triumphs of Jesus and in perfect symmetry... The Rosary could very well be called the poem of human redemption” (cf. Feeney, op. cit., p. 73).

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.

La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para junio

Mujeres Religiosas: que su amor por Dios y carisma religioso sean apreciados y alentados por todas partes.

Fourth in a series

The history of the Rosary dates back to the Middle Ages. St. Dominic is credited with its authorship in the 13th century.

An extreme heretical sect, the Cathars, also known as the Albigensians because they flourished in the city of Albi in France, appeared in the 11th century. The sect believed that all life on earth was the work of the devil and, therefore, was evil. This strange belief led to an anti-life attitude and evolved into a cult of death, even promoting suicide as virtuous. Needless to say, the group rejected the sacraments of the Church.

Tradition has it that St. Dominic preached valiantly but unsuccessfully to convert the Albigensians to authentic Christian faith. One day, while he was lamenting this failure in prayer to the Blessed Mother, she asked him to preach the Rosary to the people as the remedy against evil and error. St. Dominic went straight to Toulouse in France, an Albigensian stronghold a few miles southwest of Albi, where he explained the importance and value of the Rosary to the people. The Rosary was embraced by most of the people, who then renounced their false beliefs.

In 1569, the Dominican Pope, St. Pius V, wrote: “The Albigensian heresy, then raging in a part of France, had blinded so many of the laity that they were cruelly attacking priests and clerics. Blessed Dominic opened their eyes to heaven and turned them toward the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. Dominic invented this method of prayer, which is easy and suitable to everyone and which is called the Rosary.

It consists of venerating the Blessed Virgin by reciting 15 angelic salutations, the same number as the Psalms of David, interrupting them at each decade by the Lord’s Prayer, meanwhile meditating on the mysteries, which recall the entire life of our Lord Jesus Christ. After having devised it Dominic and his sons spread the form of prayer throughout the Church” (cf. Robert Feeney, The Rosary, “The Little Summa,” Aequinas Press, 1991, p. 19).

In the Middle Ages, the psalms were the normal form of prayer, but a largely uneducated population did not know them. The people sought some kind of prayer for themselves. They knew the Hail Mary and the Our Father.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger believes the medieval embrace of the Rosary as a popular prayer touches a fundamental need of the human spirit throughout all the ages.

“The people had to work hard. They could not expect to accomplish great intellectual tasks in prayer as well. On the contrary they needed a prayer to bring them calm, to take them out of themselves, away from their troubles, and set before them consolation and healing. I think this basic experience in the history of religion, of repetition, of rhythm, of words in unison, of singing together, which carries me, soothes me and fills my space, which does not torment me and sets me free, this basic experience has here become fully Christian, in that people pray quite simply in the Marian context and in that of the appearance of Christ to men, and yet at the same time let this prayer be internalized in them—going beyond the intellectual level to where the soul becomes one with the words” (God and the World, p. 319).

Robert Feeney traces the history of the Rosary in his book, The Rosary, “The Little Summa.” He states, “The Church, through her popes, has given us this papal tradition of the true origin and history of the Rosary. This papal tradition is declared in no less than 214 papal bulls, decrees and encyclicals of no fewer than 39 popes” (p. 25).

St. Dominic is credited with authoring the Rosary, but he did not compose it in its definitive form. “The fixing of definite mysteries was a long process which took centuries to evolve and determine. That was done by Pope St. Pius VI in 1569” (cf. Feeney, op. cit., p. 37). In our own time, with his new apostolic letter, Pope John Paul II has offered yet an additional set of mysteries.

At Fatima, Portugal, the Blessed Mother announced herself as “the Lady of the Rosary” and urged the praying of the Rosary. Other saints, notably St. Louis Marie de Montfort, in his classic The Secret of the Rosary, and recently canonized Padre Pio, did much to promote the devotion.

Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young adult who John Paul II called a “model of athletes” at his beatification in 1984, prayed the rosary three times a day and encouraged his peers to pray it. When hiking in the mountains with his young friends, he would lead them in the Rosary.

A recently beatified husband and father, Blessed Bartolo Longo, wrote: “The Rosary is a trilogy; it recalls the joys, sorrows and triumphs of Jesus and in perfect symmetry... The Rosary could very well be called the poem of human redemption” (cf. Feeney, op. cit., p. 73).

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.

La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para junio

Mujeres Religiosas: que su amor por Dios y carisma religioso sean apreciados y alentados por todas partes.
Cardinal Ritter High School, 3360 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis, will host an open house at 7 p.m. on June 30. There will be a tour of the school and registration packets will be available. For more information, call the school office at 317-927-7825 or log on to www.cardinalritter.org.

St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services, 2500 Churchman Ave., in Indianapolis, will host an open house at 7 p.m. on June 30. There will be a tour of the teen residential and maternity facility, an opportunity to learn about the programs offered at St. Elizabeth’s and information about how to volunteer. An RSVP is required. For more information or to RSVP, call Kristen Grills at 317-787-3417, ext. 39, or e-mail karli@stelizabeths.org.

Msgr. Stuart Sweetland, chaplain of the Newman Foundation at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, will present “Conquering the Divide: Bringing Faith and Life Together” from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on July 16 at Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis. The program, sponsored by the local chapter of Catholics United for the Faith, will begin with Mass, then a light supper and fellowship, followed by the presentation and a time for questions and answers. Leon Suprenant Jr., president of Catholics United for the Faith International and editor of Lay Witness, will speak from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on July 30 at the parish. For more information, call 812-342-9550 or e-mail CUF-Abbas@earthlink.net.

The Frasassi Society of Young Adult Catholics invites young adults ages 18-35 to the sixth annual Frasassi Awards.

Daughter of Charity Sharon Richardt, senior vice president of mission services at St. Vincent Health, was recently honored as a community service leader at the 2003 Indiana Rural Health Association Awards dinner in French Lick. Sister Sharon was the recipient of the Distinguished Community Service Award at the state level. She has devoted more than 30 years of service in various health care positions with the Daughters of Charity and currently coordinates mission services for the St. Vincent Health ministries in more than 40 counties in central Indiana.

The Catholic Women’s Ministry of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in St. Louis, Mo., announced the 10-part series “The Power of the Eucharist” on Monday evenings in the St. Joseph Church in St. Louis. The course will present an overview of the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. The course is part of the Lay Ministry Formation Program that the archdiocese offers to lay staff, volunteers and other Church agencies and ministries.

Father ELMER BURWINKEL and Schoenstatt Sister Carol Winkler will host a four-day pilgrimage to Schoenstatt International in Waukesha, Wis., from July 18-21. The pilgrimage will also include a visit to the Exide Shrine and Movement House and St. Palotti Church in Milwaukee as well as the Rosary Campaign Headquarters. The cost of the trip, including room and board, is $235 per person. For more information, call Father Burwinkel at 812-689-3551 or e-mail eburwink@seidata.com.

For more information or to register, call the Indianapolis Office of Saint Meinrad School of Theology at 317-955-6451.

Father DAVE WAHN, director of the Newman Center at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, will host a one-day retreat titled “How to Conquer the Divide” on Saturday, July 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Covenant Church in Indianapolis. The retreat will include a visit to the Exide Shrine and Movement House and St. Palotti Church in Milwaukee as well as the Rosary Campaign Headquarters. The cost of the trip, including room and board, is $235 per person. For more information, call Jenny Matthews at 317-968-7316 or e-mail jmattthews@hymnary.org.

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

Alex and Emma (Warner Bros.)
Rated A-III (Adults) because of sexual situations, including a shadowy sexual encounter, minimal violence and profanity.
Rated PG-13 (Parents are strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13) by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).

The Heart of Ms (Thinkfilm)
Rated A-IV (Adults, with reservations) because of several sexual encounters with nudity and an ambivalent attitude toward adultery.
Rated R (Restricted) by the MPAA.

Conference titled “Conference 2003: Coraggio! Finding the Courage to be Catholic.” The conference will take place on July 25-27 at St. Mary Cathedral, 1200 South St., in Lafayette, Ind., in the Diocese of Lafayette. The featured speakers include author Matthew Kelly, Deacon Jonathan Keating and Michael Cumbie. The weekend will also include opportunities for prayer and fellowship. For more information, log on to www.frasassi.org.

The National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved is offering a three-day conference titled “Facing the Pain of Loss: Competence, Commitment” on July 10-12 at the Clarion Hotel Westgate in Toledo, Ohio. The event is designed to provide an opportunity to empower participants with the tools necessary to begin or enhance the ministry of consolation in their parishes. The first track of the conference is a training seminar based on the book “A Time Like This: Your Journey to Christ’s Funeral.” An R.S.V.P. is required. For more information, log on to www.frasassi.org.

VIPs . . .

Theodore and Helen Munn, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on June 22 with a Mass and renewal of vows at their parish. The couple was married on June 18, 1933, at St. Patrick Church in Indianapolis. They have four children: Katherine Green, David and Ronald Munn and the late Shirley Ann Munn. They have 19 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren.

Harry and Viola (Singer) Kaiser, members of Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Cedar Grove, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on June 28 with family. The couple was married on June 26, 1943, at St. Joseph Church in St. Leon. They have 10 children: Monica Bischoff, Barbara Reed, Regina, David, John, Joseph, Ken, Maurice, Steve and the late Tom Kaiser. They have 22 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

R. Dale and Patricia Hawkins, members of St. Therese of Lisieux Parish in Elwood, Indiana, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on July 25, 1953, in Elwood. They have five children: Monica, Mary, Richard, Steven and Michael. They have 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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Seventh-grade boys enjoy pilgrimage to Saint Meinrad

By Brandon A. Evans

Thirty-five seventh-grade boys recently got a chance to understand the priesthood a little better.

The boys, from 11 Indianapolis-area Catholic schools, traveled with members of the Serra Club of Indianapolis and Father Joseph Moriarty, archdiocesan vocations director, to Saint Meinrad Archabbey and Seminary on May 1. The idea was based on a program that some parishes have tried.

“We want to expand awareness of vocations to the priesthood and religious life,” said Kevin O’Brien, president of the Serra Club of Indianapolis, “and increase the opportunity for young people to spend a day at a seminary, convent or mother-house. If we can plant a seed that life as a priest, sister or brother is worth considering, and encourage young people to be open to God’s call, then we will have accomplished our objective.”

The Saint Meinrad trip was organized as a way to try the program. It was such a success that the Serra Club would like to offer it again next year as well as plan a trip for young girls to visit a convent. Almost 60 boys wanted to go, but space was limited to one bus.

“Other schools wanted to send more [students], and we had to hold them off,” Father Moriarty said.

On the ride down to Saint Meinrad, the boys were given rosaries blessed by Father Moriarty, then they prayed five decades at different parts in the trip, which actually was a pilgrimage.

“I think it gets them focused on the religious aspect of this pilgrimage,” O’Brien said.

That was exactly the point. Father Moriarty said that the rosary is a good way to teach young people to pray and to meditate on their faith. Also, he said, it is a chance to foster devotion to the Mother of God.

At Saint Meinrad, the boys were given a tour through the Benedictine monks’ cloister, the abbey church, the monks’ garden and the chapter room. They attended noonday prayers with the monks and received a personal welcome from Benedictine Archabbott Lambert Reilly before lunch.

One of the highlights of the day was the chance to meet Scott Nobbe, a seminarian for the archdiocese.

O’Brien said that it gave them an opportunity to see a candidate for the priesthood in a more personal light. He told them that they are lucky to be enrolled in a Catholic school and urged them to take advantage of that opportunity.

Nobbe also said that inviting the boys from seventh-grade classes is a good idea because by high school the seeds of a vocation may be harder to plant.

And that’s what this trip was about. As Father Moriarty put it, it was intended to plant seeds, not recruit prospective seminarians. The goal was to give the boys a sense of what seminary life is like as well as what it is like to live in a religious community.

The boys also got a chance to join Father Moriarty for Mass at the nearby Monte Casino Shrine as well as to hear about the life of Blessed Junipero Serra, an 18th-century Franciscan missionary who helped found missions in California.

Then the boys got back on the bus and prayed two more decades of the rosary on the way home.

“Saint Meinrad was beautiful,” said John Fell, a student at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis. “I’m really glad that I took advantage of this opportunity. It was great to visit and interact with the monks.”

Will Brown, also a student at St. Thomas Aquinas School, said that he liked being able to go behind the scenes at the monastery.

“The three-hour drive would have been worth it even if we only stayed for an hour,” he said.

By all accounts, the boys enjoyed the day and learned more about religious vocations.

Nobbe said that programs like this are a good start toward reaching Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein’s stated goal of having 50 new seminarians by 2006.

Archbishop Buechlein announced that goal during the 50th-anniversary dinner of the Serra Club of Indianapolis.

The Serra Club … has been involved in what many of the local parishes do throughout the archdiocese in trying to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life,” O’Brien said.

The organization also sponsors religious vocations essay contest each year and provides prizes with awards for altar servers. Taking the group to Saint Meinrad is their latest venture.

“We’re certainly praying that next year it will only grow,” O’Brien said. “And we’re blessed that we’re able to do this.”

“I explained to them that it’s kind of like a college,” Nobbe said, “except without the girls.”

He thinks it is important for a priest and the young men in the parish to get to know each other.

He shared with them an account of how he has come to understand his calling to the priesthood, and told them to look to Jesus as their role model and always be open to whatever God may ask of them.

By Brandon A. Evans
Issues it should address.
Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, who led the session on Catholic unity, told a small group of bishops that before deciding on whether to convene a plenary council the bishops should examine the recent history and history of Church councils and on possible alternative ways, such as a national synod, that would deal with the problems they want to address.

At noontime and afternoon press con-
ferences on June 19, Archbishop Gary M.
Gregory of Washington, D.C., Archbishop Gregory of Belleville, Ill., President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, stressed that the plan that received the great deal over the past 18 months to address the clergy sexual abuse crisis and that they are prepared to engage in that process.

“It is a serious moment in the life of the Church,” he said, “and I think only the most courageous of us would have allowed it would have been solved in the twinkling of an eye. It took time ... and it will take more time to complete the process of healing and the restoration of confidence and trust.”

In a report to the bishops on June 21, Archbishop Harry J. Flynn of St. Paul- 
Minneapolis, chairman of the USCCB Ad
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Pope calls on Catholics to bring Christ to others

By Daniel S. Mulhall

The Gospel tells of Jesus appearing to his disciples, showing them his hands and feet, and eating with them (Lk 24:33-48). This passage raises the important question: "Why do we believe?"

"And he appeared to the apostles," says the resurrected Jesus. The rest of us believe because of what we’ve seen and heard from other believers.

The act of explaining what we believe and why we believe is known as “apologetics,” from the Greek word “apologia,” which means to provide a reason, an answer or an explanation.

This word appears in the first Book of Peter (1 Pt 3:15): "Always be ready to give an explanation ["apologia"] to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope." Other translations use the words “defense” or “answer.”

Apologetics has been practiced in Christianity from its beginning. The early Church fathers attempted by reason to explain what Christ believed and the importance of believing it. The Church fathers hoped to help nonbelievers or people struggling with faith to come to know and love Christ.

St. Augustine of Hippo’s work, “On Christian Doctrine,” and his sermons are excellent examples of early apologietics, which was seen as a way to evangelize and edify the believers.

As Christianity became an established religion, apologietics fell out of style. Once “everyone” was baptized, the need for evangelization lessened as theological and moral instruction were emphasized.

With the Protestant Reformation (which began in 1517 with Martin Luther and his 95 theses), apologietics came back into popular practice. This time, however, apologietics focused more on argumentation than evangelization.

The purpose of this new “apologetics” was to present Catholic beliefs over and against the beliefs of the newly emerging Protestants. Neither side was above twisting the other’s beliefs to make its own argument more convincing. Both were fighting, literally and figuratively, for believers’ hearts and minds.

This style of apologietics is familiar to older Catholics as the style they learned prior to Vatican Council II (1963-65). With Vatican II’s call for ecumenism and dialogue, such hard-edged approaches to apologietics quickly disappeared. Gone were the books and manuals as well as the street preachers and orators who for so long had argued against the faith of others.

Recently, a number of Catholic bishops have written and spoken about the need for a “new” apologietics today. Both Cardinal Francis George of Chicago and Archbishop William Levada of San Francisco have called for an apologietics that returns to the style once practiced by St. Augustine.

This new apologietics is once again to be both an act of evangelization and catechesis. Rather than arguing against what another Church believes and teaches, this new apologietics offers compelling arguments to believers and nonbelievers alike to help them learn about Christ and the Catholic Church.

This new style of apologietics takes its lead from the writings and teaching of Pope John Paul II when he calls for a new evangelization.

The pope points out that while many people in the world today have never heard the saving message of Christ, there are also many who are baptized who never have heard this message or who long since have forgotten it. The new evangelization, then, calls for new ways to introduce the world to Christ.

From their writings, I believe the new apologietics called for by Cardinal George and Archbishop Levada would combine the new evangelization with an effective means of catechesis, especially of adults as presented in the U.S. bishops’ 1999 pastoral plan for adult faith formation, “Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us.”

This approach would, through reason, persuasion and witness to the ways faith takes root in the lives of people in this new age and culture, help people come to know Christ and to the Catholic Church, and fall in love with them.

As a parent of two young adults and a young teen, I am particularly interested in this new apologietics. I would love assistance in explaining convincingly to my children what I believe and why I believe it. Once I succeed with them, then I’d be better prepared to work on the rest of the world.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is assistant secretary for catechesis and inculturation for the U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Education. Archbishop Levada’s text can be found online at www.uchicago.edu/CatholicConference/apologies.html. Cardinal George’s article is at www.catholiceducation.org/articles/apologetics/ap0052.html.)

Church participation helps us grow in faith

By Sheila Garcia

Why do you go to church? The question, or some variation of it, catches us by surprise, hints at deeper questions about faith and often leaves even the most faithful Catholics tongue-tied.

Although our faith is strong, we may wonder how to express spiritual realities in language that people in a materialistic age will understand.

At its core, faith involves an intimate relationship with God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We may hesitate to talk about that relationship or proclaim our beliefs because society emphasizes freedom of choice and religious diversity.

But we do not need to offer elaborate theological explanations for why we participate in the Church. For most of us, the reason is simple: The Church offers a set of beliefs that gives meaning to our lives and gives us what we need to live out those beliefs in the home, workplace and community.

Recently I spoke with a young woman who had been drawn to a co-worker’s vibrant faith. This woman said that when she spoke with her colleague, she felt as if Christ had touched her. She is now in the class for inquirers at my parish.

Participation in Church life—Mass, sacraments, devotions, adult education, volunteer activities—helps us grow in love for Christ and our neighbor, and offers community support, encouragement, practical ideas and resources.

Active participation in Church life deepens our faith and helps us to commu- nicate it better in words and deeds.

Young adults, who especially value authenticity, see that our belief in Jesus Christ translates into a daily attempt to model his compassion, kindness and patience.

They may approach us, perhaps hesitantly, to ask about the faith that motivates us. This may catch us by surprise, but we need only talk about what we know best: God’s work in our everyday lives.

(Sheila Garcia is assistant director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth.)

Discussion Point

Church offers comfort, support

This week’s question

What would you tell a nonpracticing Catholic about why you participate in the Church?

“I was inactive myself for 20 years, and my return to the Church has had a great influence on my lifestyle. Although going to church and being active in various activities does not stop bad or troublesome things from happening to me and my family, it sure does give me the spiritual and emotional support I need to get through those things. I can’t imagine facing some of the perils of life without having the Church family and a firm belief in God’s salvation and promise of heaven.” (Charlotte Grove, Madison, S.D.)

“I participate ... because God has blessed me so much. I want to do as much as I can to let him know how grateful I am.” (Ruby T. Martinez, Ranchos de Taos, N.M.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Where—in what area of concern—would you most like the Church’s prophetic message of hope or love to be heard?

To respond for possible publication, write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
**Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes**

**Is God made in the image of humans?**

People used to be so afraid of God the Almighty that they didn’t even dare pronounce his name aloud. They made up words to take its place, and not very complimentary ones. That’s because they knew he was, well, almighty compared to them.

So here we are today with God portrayed as a character in movies. We’ve come a long way, baby. To quote a recent newspaper article by Anthony Breznican on this very subject, “Oh, how the Almighty has fallen—if you consider it a diminution to be brought down to Earth by the movies.”

Well, yes, I do. In fact, besides the disrespect possible in this phenomenon, what’s worse is that today many actors often chose to portray him. George Burns, for example, or, of course, that was the point of his movie, Oh, God.

Morgan Freeman, who plays God in the current Bruce Almighty film, is a much more dignified deity. He was usually cast in movies as a strong wind, a baritone voice emanating from the clouds, or some other vague but impressive presence.

That’s because, as the article explained, the Second Commandment forbids the creation of graven images. And “the 1930s Hays Code, precursor to the current movie ratings system, set standards forbidding the ridicule of religion and faith.”

And it went on to say about the humanizing of God in Bruce Almighty and other recent films, “Movie gods are usually created to help humanists who don’t favor those who worship under the crucifix, Star of David, the cross or any of the other symbols that reflects Church/state division, the idealized value of tolerance in our society, and the diminishing presence of religion in culture.”

It’s also rather New Age. If we think of God as a kind of big brother who mentors and protects us, he’s certainly more easily portrayed in movies.

Aside from the magical powers sometimes ascribed to him, why do we bother to believe that God exists? I mean, if I’m so smart, why should we be coping out and depending upon some unseen power personified as a friend or father? Or to blame when things go wrong?

Well, if we can tear ourselves away from our daily lives just for a moment, perhaps we’ll understand.

The other day, I was admiring the peonies from my garden. The flowers were layered in heavenly shades of color, and the white blossoms revealed tiny red touches here and there, as though someone had taken a child’s paintbrush and artfully dabbed them in just the right places. The, I thought, was a strange, generous, even extravagant in their beauty and wonderful scent.

They reminded me that God is indeed almost too much, not only because he created these wonderful flowers, but also because he scatters them about with indiscernibility. Just as God’s delight in the “celestial clouds, or some other vague but impressive presence.”

To mention all the other wonders of our world.

Now, whenever I finally figure out how to create a peony just for its own sake, that’s when I’ll think of God as human.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion. †)

**Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister**

**Following the footsteps of good physicians**

A short time after my father interned died, I received a letter from Dr. Mary Amundtten’s family and staff with two keepake cards. The first was a charming photo of the doctor as I remember her best; the other was this quotation from Mother Teresa of Calcutta:

*The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service.*

The letter said that was one of Dr. Mendenhall’s favorites, expressing “their thoughts on the privilege of being a physician.”

Blessed are we who are privileged to have such a physician in our midst and to do with.

Through the years, I’ve never always been as fortunate. Like some friends and family members, I’ve often too much felt like the woman in the Gospel of Mark (Mk 5:25-34) “who had suffered many illnesses under many doctors and physicians... and was not but worse...” Even though I believed in God, I was consumed with physical problems lingered—and I grew weary of both the illness and the search for help. (Also please read my article “The Search for Help” in the Summer issue.)

We don’t know the reasons for illness and suffering other than it falls under the “human condition” as understood by original sin and a puzzling part of Christ’s work of salvation. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Our experiences of evil and suffering, injustice, and death, seem to contradict the God we believe in; they shake our confidence and become a temptation against it” (1614).

Jesus also suffered the “human condition” from which came salvation. Since earliest times, men and women have tried to relieve suffering. They are known by many names, according to the culture in which they work—physician, healer, midwife, shaman, doctor, medicine man and more. Doctors take on dozens of specialty titles that reflect their varied areas of expertise. During his lifetime, Christ was a miraculous healer of both bodies and minds, and his legacy, the Christian faith, now has spiritual and physical problems. Dr. Mendenhall’s early death shocked patients, but survivors remember her kindness, “just another of the world who remembers the late Mother Teresa and her ongoing Missionaries of Charity, who minister to the poor and the sick. I made contact with Mother Teresa will be beaufiied on Oct. 19.

In our own roles as healers, we have the opportunity to emulate Jesus and Mother Teresa as well as those who diligently follow their vocations as doctors, nurses and other professionals in related fields. For those wanting to know more about Mother Teresa (including her own personal prayer life), log on to the Internet site www.americancatholic.org.

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion. †)
Feast of SS. Peter and Paul/ Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, June 29, 2003

• Acts of the Apostles 12:1-17
• Matthew 16:13-19
• Acts of the Apostles 12:1-17-18
• Matthew 16:13-19

The Acts of the Apostles is the source of the first reading on this important feast, with its rich references to the very beginnings of Christianity. In this reading, Herod, the puppet king, arrests Peter and confines him in prison. This arrest is only the latest development in a persecution of Christians undertaken by the king. It is the feast of Passover. Although heavy security was ordered around Peter, an angel appeared and freed the Apostles. Not even a double set of chains could restrain him. The chains literally fell from his wrists. Peter escaped. But the escape was not due to any accident and certainly not to Peter’s own inventiveness or boldness under the circumstances. The angel of God freed Peter. The prayers of the Christian community had power. The Christians prayed for Peter’s escape, and God heard the prayers.

There are interesting associations between this event and both the trial and execution of Jesus. The Lord had stood before this unscrupulous king. The Lord had been arrested on Passover. Jesus and the Apostles are at Caesarea Philippi, now the modern community of Banyas, roughly situated in the Golan Heights, an area often in today’s news.

Jesus asked the Apostles to explain what they know of the Redeemer. They reply that some believe Jesus is a prophet. Others see Jesus as a reincarnated John the Baptist. The Lord then asks the Apostles for their opinion. Peter, speaking for the other 11 Apostles, states that Jesus is “the Messiah” and “the Son of the Living God.” Jesus blesses this response. Peter possesses this insight not by human deduction, but by God’s power. Jesus then gives Simon a new name, “Rock,” which translated as “Peter” in English is the language has developed. Further, the Lord gives Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, saying that whatever Peter binds on earth is bound in heaven. The reference to the keys is interesting. It has a clear and strong message.

At the time, kings had officials who acted in the royal name, much as today the British prime minister discharges authority to the language has developed. Further, the Lord gives Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, saying that whatever Peter binds on earth is bound in heaven. The reference to the keys is interesting. It has a clear and strong message.

Reflection

This feast offers us a profound historical fact. The faith in Jesus, which we hold as a matter of course. It is celebrated later, without the body present. A memorial Mass or other service after death, which is what usually happens. Nothing else but prayer. The faithful Jesus or other service is celebrated later, without the body present.

The gift of all or part of one’s body is encouraged by others, among others, all religious denominations. Pope John Paul II calls it an act of Christian generosity and an expression of human solidarity, which can “inspire men and women to make great sacrifices in the service of others” (April 30, 1990).

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen

Organ donation doesn’t affect use of open casket

We have been urged in recent years, even by the pope, to donate our bodily organs to someone else when we die. I would have thought that, but am told that we could not not have an open casket. Is that true? Maybe that’s why many people have a problem with these gifts.

A globe is beyond our comprehension. We have to recognize that we are involved here with at least two great mysteries, which means they are ultimately beyond our comprehension. One is the mystery of God’s knowledge of all things, along with his unconditional faithfulness and tender love in our regard. The other is the mystery of free will by which we somehow work together with God in shaping our individual lives and destinies. Our freedom of choice, which is a genuine personal freedom, involves, above all else, a personal relationship with God. It includes sharing with him our joys and sorrows, our hopes and disappointments, and our worries and regrets, all of which is nothing else but prayer. It is not entirely possible to say that our lives are not altered by prayer and by our acts of love. Our actions are not always our prayer but are made possible by our prayer.

Is that true? Maybe that’s why many people have a problem with these gifts.

(Florida)

No, that is not true. When organs (heart, lungs, kidneys, etc.) or tissues (heart valves, bone, skin, etc.) are donated, they are removed immediately after death, and no disfigurement or other problem would prevent a customary visitation. If one’s body is donated for medical research, obviously more can be done if the body is delivered shortly after death, which is what usually happens.

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Reflection

This feast offers us a profound historical fact. The faith in Jesus, which we hold as a matter of course, is beyond any mere human knowledge. It is the feast of Passover. Although heavy security was ordered around Peter, an angel appeared and freed the Apostles. Not even a double set of chains could restrain him. The chains literally fell from his wrists. Peter escaped. But the escape was not due to any accident and certainly not to Peter’s own inventiveness or boldness under the circumstances. The angel of God freed Peter. The prayers of the Christian community had power. The Christians prayed for Peter’s escape, and God heard the prayers.

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Reflection

This feast offers us a profound historical fact. The faith in Jesus, which we hold as a matter of course, is beyond any mere human knowledge.

Don’t be alarmed. This is the only writing in the Gospel which can “inspire men and women to make great sacrifices in the service of others” (April 30, 1990).

Q in a recent Bible class, we discussed why we pray since God already knows what will happen, and we won’t change his mind. So prayer should be not for things, but only to praise God. Do you agree? (Oklahoma)

A Praising God, thanking and honoring him for what he is and for his goodness, is certainly the highest form of prayer.

However, intercessory prayer is not so much a matter of changing God’s mind as of recognizing his providence and care for us include his awareness of our prayers, desires and longing.

It is easy to recognize that we are involved here with at least two great mysteries, which means they are ultimately beyond our comprehension.

One is the mystery of God’s knowledge of all things, along with his unconditional faithfulness and tender love in our regard. The other is the mystery of free will by which we somehow work together with God in shaping our individual lives and destinies. Our freedom of choice, which is a genuine personal freedom, involves, above all else, a personal relationship with God. It includes sharing with him our joys and sorrows, our hopes and disappointments, and our worries and regrets, all of which is nothing else but prayer. It is not entirely possible to say that our lives are not altered by prayer and by our acts of love. Our actions are not always our prayer but are made possible by our prayer.

What is all this down to is that, while a full understanding of the way this works is beyond us, we believe what Jesus taught by word and example, that God’s providential care on our behalf is in some way intimately related to our prayerful expressions of hope and trust in his goodness.

(Q free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about receiving the holy Eucharist is available by sending a stampede to Father John Dietzen, Box 325, Peoria, IL 61651. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jdietzen@ol.com)
The Criterion Friday, June 27, 2003

The Active List

The Criterion welcomes announcements of archdiocesan Church and parish open-to-the-public activities for “The Active List.” Please be brief, listing date, location, event, sponsor, cost and time. Include a phone number for verification. No announcements will be taken by telephone. Notices must be in our office by 10 a.m. Monday the week of (Friday) publication: The Criterion, The Active List, 1400 N. Meridian St. (hand delivery), P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 (mail); 317-236-1593 (fax); mklein@archindy.org (e-mail).

June 27
Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis Catholic Charismatic Renewal, prayer meeting, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-927-6900.

June 27-29
Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis Saint Meinrad School of Theology, “Fundamental Moral Theology,” session one, 8:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m. Information: 812-357-6692 or 800-634-6723.

June 29
Catholic Single Adults Club, Charlestown. Miniature golf, 3 p.m., pizza, 5:30 p.m. Information and directions: 812-284-4349.

Mary’s Kingdom’s Village Schoenstatt, Rexville (located on 925 South, 3 miles east of 421 South, 12 miles south of Versailles), Covenant Sunday Holy Hour, 2:30 p.m., Mass, 3:30 p.m with Father Elmer Burwinkel. Information: 812-869-3551 or e-mail eburwink@schoenstatt.org or log on to the Schoenstatt Web site at www.schoenstatt.com/eburwink.

June 30
Holy Rosary Parish, Parish Council Room, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis “Reading the Bible with Understanding from Beginning to End,” Mass, 5:45 p.m., class, 6:30-7:45 p.m. Information: 317-226-1521 or e-mail diana@archindy.org.

St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services, 2500 Chauchman Ave., Indianapolis. Open house and presentations about teen-age residential and maternity facility, 7 p.m. Information and reservations: 317-787-9412 ext. 39.

Mary’s Kingdom’s Village Schoenstatt, Rexville (located on 925 South, 3 miles east of 421 South, 12 miles south of Versailles), “Family Faith Talks!” 7 p.m., Mass, 8 p.m., with Father Elmer Burwinkel. Information: 812-869-3551 or e-mail eburwink@schoenstatt.org or log on to the Schoenstatt Web site at www.schoenstatt.com/eburwink.

July 1

July 6
St. Maurice Parish, 1963 N. St. John St., Greensburg. Parish festival, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., chicken and roast beef dinners, games, quilts, country store. Information: 812-663-4754.

July 10-12

July 11-12

St. Benedict Parish, 111 S. 9th St., Terre Haute. Community FunFest and parish festival, Fri.-Sat. 9 a.m.-midnight, music, games, food, flea market. Information: 812-232-8421.

July 11-13
St. Lawrence Parish, 542 N. Indiana St., Indianapolis. Tridentine Mass, 9:30 a.m. Information: 317-353-9404.

July 13
Harrison County Fairgrounds, 541 Capitol Ave., Corydon. St. Joseph Parish, Parish picnic, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., chicken dinner, quilts. Information: 812-738-2742.

Fireworks and Chili Dogs
Come and enjoy the Downtown Fireworks, away from the crowds, at St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey Street. We will offer chili dogs and refreshments beginning at 5 p.m. Bring your own lawn chair and we’ll provide the refreshments. Mass at 5:00 p.m. in the Church.

The Criterion Friday, June 27, 2003

ST. MAURICE, INDIANA
Decatur County
Annual Picnic Sunday, July 6
Mass Time: 10:00 AM
Chicken or Roast Beef Dinners
Mock Turtle Soup
Serving from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (EST)
Adults $7.00 — Children under 12 yrs. $3.50
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The Active List, continued from page 12

Wednesdays
Divine Mercy Chapel, 3354 W. 30th St. (behind St. Michael Church), Indianapolis. Marian prayer for priests, 3-4 p.m. Information: 317-271-8016.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, Chapel, 337 E. Meridian St., Greenwood. Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 7 p.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5692 Olive Branch Ave., Indianapolis. Marian Movement of Priests prayer cenacle for laity, 1 p.m. Information: 317-253-1678.

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, between Masses, noon—3:30 p.m. Information: 317-636-4788.

St. Francis Hospital & Clinics, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Workday for life. Join the family of joyful service and respect for life. Information: 317-244-9002.

SS. Francis and Clare Church, 5901 Olive Branch Road, Greenwood. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.—9 p.m., rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet, 11 a.m. Information: 317-859-HOPE.

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Young adult Bible study, 6:15-7:15 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Chapel, 46th and Illinois streets, Indianapolis. Prayer service for peace, 6:30-7:15 p.m.

St. Thomas More Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. Mass, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317- 831-4142.

St. Thomas More Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. Mass, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317- 831-4142.

St. Lawrence Church, Chapel, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.—5:30 p.m. Benediction and Mass.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Spanish prayer group and conversation, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-346-4065.

Saturdays
Clinic for Women (abortion clinic), 3607 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Pro-life rosary, 9:30 a.m.

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Triduum Mass, 9 a.m.

St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. Mass in English, 4 p.m.

St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. “Be Not Afraid” holy hour, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Monthly
Fourth Wednesdays
St. Thomas More Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. Mass and anointing of the sick, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317- 831-4142.

Fourth Sundays
St. Patrick Church, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute. Triduum Mass, 3 p.m. Information: 317-346-4065.

Last Sundays
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 11:15 a.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

First Sundays
St. Paul Church, 218 Scheller Ave., Sellersburg. Prayer group, 7-8:15 p.m. Information: 812-246-4555.

St. Mary Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.—5:30 p.m. Benediction and Mass.

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Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Triduum Mass, 9 a.m.

St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. Mass in English, 4 p.m.

St. Joseph Church, 1040 N. Post Road, Indianapolis. Eucharist, 1 p.m. Information: 317-638-8416.

St. Joseph Church, 1040 N. Post Road, Indianapolis. Eucharist, 1 p.m. Information: 317-638-8416.

Holy Cross Church, 125 N. Oriental St., Indianapolis. Mass for Catholics in recovery, 5 p.m. Information: 317-637-2620.

First Mondays
Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Guardian Angel Guild, board meeting, 9:30 a.m.

First Tuesdays
Divine Mercy Chapel, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Confession, 4:45 p.m. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, 7:30 p.m.

St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. Holy hour for religious vocations, Benediction and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after 7 p.m.

First Fridays
St. Vincent de Paul Church, 1723 “T” St., Bedford. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after 8:30 a.m. Mass—9 p.m., reconstitution, 4-6 p.m.

Holy Name Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Mass, 8:15 a.m., devotions following Mass until 5 p.m. Benediction. Information: 317-784-5454.

St. Peter Church, 1207 East Road, Brooksville. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after 8 a.m. until Communion service, 1 p.m.

Holy Guardian Angels Church, 405 U.S. 52, Cedar Grove. Eucharistic adoration after 8 a.m. Mass—5 p.m.

Christ the King Church, 1827 Kessler Blvd. E, Dr., Indianapolis. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after 7:15 a.m. Mass—5:30 p.m. Benediction and service.

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after 5:45 p.m. Mass—9 a.m. Saturday. Information: 317-636-4478.

Our Lady of Lourdes, 533 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, prayer service, 7:30 p.m.


St. Joseph Church, 1375 S. Mickey Ave., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 4 p.m., rosary, 5 p.m., Benediction, 5:30 p.m., Mass, 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Sacred Heart devotion, 11 a.m., holy hour, 6-7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

Sacro Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7:30-10:30 a.m. Mass, 6:30 a.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

New Albany. Adoration concluding with confessions at 6 p.m. Benediction, 6:45 p.m.

St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany. Eucharistic adoration, reconciliation after 9 p.m. Mass—nighttime.

St. Joseph Church, 113 S. 5th St., Terre Haute. Eucharistic adoration, 9 a.m.—4:45 p.m. Benediction, rosary, noon, Mass—15 p.m. Information: 812-235-4996.

Holy Angels Church, 740 W. 28th St., Indianapolis. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 11 a.m.—noon.

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The Criterion Friday, June 27, 2003

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Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger gave the homily for the Fourth Degree Mass of St. Peter at Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Meehan's first assignment was as an assistant pastor at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis in 1937.

He was born on Feb. 17, 1911, in Vincennes, Ind., and entered Saint Meinrad Seminary in 1927. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 18, 1935, at the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.


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Classified Directory

U.S.

Group of Dallas Catholics urges replacement of Bishop Graham

DALLAS (CNS)—Thirty-five Dallas Catholics have called for the replacement of Dallas Bishop Charles V. Grahmann in a letter to the Archdiocese of Dallas, Montalvo, papal nuncio to the United States. The letter, signed by a group calling itself the “Committee of Concerned Catholcics,” noted the clergy crisis in the Diocese of Dallas has become a scandal and an embarrassment to the Church,” they wrote, adding that Bishop Grahmann’s quick replacement would help to end the crisis. If the nuncio were to meet with the group, they promised to begin a media campaign and to establish a Web site to “solicit the signatures of our fellow lay people and devoted clerics and religious in Dallas in support of our petition.”

Vatican backs U.S. effort to work on convention on rights of disabled

UNITED NATIONS (CNS)—An effort to develop an international convention on the rights of people with disabilities got Vatican support in a statement on June 19. “These persons are rich in humanity,” said Archbishop Celso Molinari, prefect of the Dicastery for Justice and Peace.

But, unlike a declaration, a convention for countries ratiﬁed it would carry the force of international law. At the initiative of Mexico, the General Assembly adopted a Declaration on Disability Rights in 2000. Since 1993, the Vatican had called for a number of changes in the declaration to make it stronger.

The directory must also receive a resolution in 2001 to set up a convention for countries ratiﬁed it would carry the force of international law. At the initiative of Mexico, the General Assembly adopted a Declaration on Disability Rights in 2000. Since 1993, the Vatican had called for a number of changes in the declaration to make it stronger.

Mail ballot needed to complete bishops’ vote on deacon directives

ST. LOUIS (CNS)—Near the end of their June 19-21 meeting in St. Louis, the U.S. bishops voted on a new National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States. With approval of two-thirds of all active U.S. bishops required for the vote, the passage was inconclusive and will have to be re-evaluated by the bishops at the next biennial meeting in 2005. The directory came up for a vote on the final morning only about 175 voting members were still around. But, unlike a declaration, a convention for countries ratiﬁed it would carry the force of international law.

Religious Education Coordinator

The parishes of St. John the Baptist, Osogood, of Ripley County, Indiana, and St. Mary Magdalene, New Marion, of Ripley County, Indiana, are seeking a full-time coordinator of religious education to oversee parish formation programs at all levels beginning on or after July 14, 2003.

Experience in parish formation programs is preferred. All applications must be submitted on or before July 7, 2003. Please direct any inquiries or resumes to:

Harry Dudley
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Office of Catholic Education
1400 N. Rose Street
Indianapolis, IN 46206
1-800-382-9836 ext. 1446
The school started “All Saints Always Reading” to encourage students to read. The school library has access to the Indianapolis and Marion County library card catalog that has made the circulation of books taken out of the All Saints library triple, Sharpe said.

“I believe that reading scores and scores in general have made some improvement,” Sharpe said. “Reading has a great impact on any subject area.”

The premise of year-round school was to improve educational opportunities and needs for students. The year-round students attend 180 days of school like traditional school students, but they don’t have the long summer break. Also, they have the option of intersession classes and remediation classes to give them more school time. For example, All Saints students leave school on June 20 and come back on Aug. 4, but the school offers two weeks of intersession classes in July.

This year’s intersession will focus on remediation work, mainly in reading and math, Sharpe said. The intersession classes are optional, however 30 percent of All Saints students attended them.

“The idea is that students will be able to return to the building when they don’t have to be here,” Sharpe said. “So actually they get more than 180 days of school. The fact that 30 percent came back for 14 days is a big deal.”

Intersession classes have varied uses. Some focus on remediation and others on enrichment activities. They are usually centered on a theme, such as a country, as an enriching activity. They are usually for students who are below grade level in a particular subject.

Central Catholic begins school on Aug. 4, but the school offers two weeks of intersession classes in July.

For example, one girl in an intersession class was struggling with math. By the third day, she caught on and took the new knowledge into a regular classroom setting.

The value of intersessions is that they allow teachers to go more in-depth on some subjects. Tichenor said. “Really, though, the main thing I’ve noticed is the teacher enthusiasm,” Tichenor said. “If you have excited, enthusiastic and energy-driven teachers across the board, you are going to have improvement.”

The schedule also has allowed teachers to do more in-depth work for students. Fifth-grade teacher Sara Browning has seen the biggest difference in math class. “I’ve been able to teach more concepts than before and have been able to cover more different concepts,” Browning said. “It seemed I never got to the end of the book. Now, I seem to be able to go farther into the curriculum.”

Browning attributes it to year-round school because the students don’t seem to lose as many skills over the summer by the time they return to school.

“Part of the idea for having year-round school is to enlist kids back into the building when they don’t have to be here,” Browning said. “So actually they get more than 180 days of school. The fact that 30 percent came back for the extra two weeks of school is a big deal.”

Central Catholic begins school on July 30 and will have their intersession classes in October.

“We are able to move faster, and I don’t have to spend as much time reviewing,” she said.

Year-round school also gives her a chance to plan better for her class. “It seems that instead of being one step ahead of where you need to be, I can take more time and look at where we have been and where I want to be with the class for the next break,” Browning said.

Tichenor also notes a new enthusiasm about school that she hasn’t seen before. Students seem more excited about school because there’s something new to offer, Tichenor said, and they are more open to new ways of learning.

I hate leaving while there’s still work to do. There are still children in our parish who need hats and gloves, and shut-ins who need the sacraments. I know our work here will never be finished. But that won’t stop me from helping as long as I can.

The Catholic Community Foundation has a number of financial tools for helping you help the Church carry on its mission. Bequests, for example, are simple one-time charitable gifts. To learn more, ask for Sandi Behringer at 800-382-9836.

For further information: www.usml.edu/liturgicalinstitute

The Liturgical Institute is a Catholic Center for Liturgical Leadership, located on the campus of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. It offers a variety of programs, including a Master of Arts in Liturgy, a Master of Arts in Sacred Theology, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Sacred Liturgy.

The Liturgical Institute is governed by the Liturgical Institute Board of Directors, which is composed of members of the Liturgical Institute Advisory Board and other representatives of the Catholic Church. The Board of Directors is responsible for the overall direction and management of the Liturgical Institute.

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