Audits find most dioceses now comply with bishops’ sex abuse norms

Archdiocese of Indianapolis is in full compliance

WASHINGTON (CNS)—By the end of 2003, nearly 90 percent of U.S. Catholic dioceses were in compliance with the bishops’ national policy to protect children and respond to clergy sexual abuse of minors, according to the first national audit report released on Jan. 6.

On most elements, the report said 98 percent to 100 percent of audited dioceses were judged to be in compliance with the 17-article Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People adopted by the bishops in June 2002.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is in full compliance with the charter, said Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

“The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has taken immediate steps to address the problem of sexual misconduct against persons ministering on behalf of the archdiocese,” said Buechlein.

“Audits find most dioceses now comply with bishops’ sex abuse norms”, Archdiocese of Indianapolis in compliance with charter

A message from Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

We're pleased to report that the Archdiocese of Indianapolis was found to be in full compliance. During the audit, which was conducted Aug. 4-8, 2003, two auditors examined archdiocesan records and conducted interviews to determine whether the archdiocese was in compliance with the 17 articles contained in the charter.

The National Review Board on Jan. 6 issued a report that contained the results of audits of all Catholic dioceses in the United States. The audit was conducted to determine whether the dioceses were in compliance with the charter.

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“We have provided education on those policies and procedures to people who minister to children within our archdiocese. We have safe environment training for children in our school and religious education programs. Last year, we revised our policies and procedures to incorporate the language and requirements contained in the charter. Those revised policies and procedures can be found at www.archindy.org. Printed copies are available upon request.”

Nationwide, there were only two mandates on which compliance was lower than 98 percent: having comprehensive safe environment programs in place throughout the diocese (91 percent), and conducting background checks on all Church employees and volunteers who work with minors (93 percent). Most of the dioceses not in compliance were under instructions to conduct similar training sessions in 2004. They did not find documentation that the archdiocese had a safe environment training program for adults. Before and after the audit, the archdiocese has conducted several training programs for adults that have dealt with safe environment issues. The archdiocese will continue to conduct similar training sessions in 2004. After the archdiocese provided documentation of the training sessions to the Gavin Group, Inc., which conducted the audit, the auditors found the archdiocese to be in full compliance with the charter.

We realize this has been a difficult, painful time. We are blessed that healing and reconciliation are part of the mission and ministry of our Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Arrest Buechlein, O.S.B.

—Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein,

O.S.B.

Auditor William A. Gavin explains the results of a nationwide review of diocesan practices and policies mandated by the U.S. bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. He was among those addressing the Jan. 6 press conference in Washington. Looking on is Kathleen McChesney, executive director of the bishops’ Office for Child and Youth Protection.

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Father Patrick Kelly was Cathedral High School ‘legend’

By Mary Ann Wyand

There are so many great stories about Father Patrick J. Kelly that his relatives and friends could write several books about his life.

He has been described as “a legend in his own time” by those who knew him and “nothing short of an icon” at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, where he served first as a teacher in 1978 then as principal and chancellor.

Father Kelly died of complications from cancer on Dec. 30 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis, where he had been recuperating following surgery in November. He was 72.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein celebrated the funeral Mass at 11 a.m. on Jan. 6 in the Robert V. Welch Student Activity Center at Cathedral High School. Father Joseph McNally, a longtime friend, was the homilist.

Burial was held at Our Lady of Grace Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Father William Munschower, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and another longtime friend, assisted with a Jan. 5 memorial service attended by Cathedral students.

At the time of his death, Father Kelly served as chancellor of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, sacramental minister for St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, and chaplain for the Indianapolis Colts.

He was the principal of the private Catholic college preparatory school from 1984 until 2002, when he was named chancellor. In the fall of 2002, he received the Bishop Chardar Award, the school’s highest honor.

Stephen J. Helmich, president of Cathedral High School, said Father J. Joseph McNally, a longtime friend, was a “legend in his own time” and a “true friend to the players. He was a counselor.”

Terpening said Father Kelly usually stood on the sideline during Colts games and was knocked down by off-side plays several times, but he always got up and continued cheering for his beloved NFL team.

“During the playoff game on Sunday,” Terpening recalled, “somebody turned to me and said, ‘Do you think Father Kelly will be a word in for us today?’ because everything was going so well and we won 41-10.”

Holy Cross Brother Joseph Umile, president of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, lived with Father Kelly for 10 years, first at St. Matthew Parish and then at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish.

“I always refer to it as ‘the north side miracle,’” Brother Umile said, “because the president of Bishop Chatard High School and the principal of Cathedral High School lived together. He loved cathedral, but also was one of Bishop Chatard’s biggest fans. He donated to our annual fund every year and rejoiced when the Trojans won state championships.”

Patrick Joseph Kelly was born on July 10, 1931, in Indianapolis. He attended St. Anthony, St. Joan of Arc and St. Thomas Aquinas schools then completed his secondary education at the former Saint Meinrad Minor Seminary in southern Indiana.

He was ordained to the priesthood by the late Archbishop Paul C. Schulte on July 3, 1958, at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, and celebrated his first Mass on May 4, 1958, at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

During 45 years of ministry as a dieucon priest, he held a variety of parish and administrative posts in Indianapolis.

In 1958, Father Kelly was named associate pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis and the year after that he held the same ministry position at St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.

In 1970, he was named associate pastor of St. Patrick Parish and the year after that he held the same position at the Cathedral Basilica.

In 1973, he was named director of St. Mary Child Center in Indianapolis. The next year, he was named pastor of St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis while continuing as director of the archdiocesan Catholic Charities agency for at-risk children.

Four years later, he began his long association with Cathedral High School.

In 1993, he was named administrator pro-tem of St. Matthew Parish in Indianapolis. In 1995 he was appointed sacramental minister for St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

His aunt, Martha Kelly, died a few days after her nephew. Surviving are two sisters-in-law, Barbara Kelly of Denver and Edna Kelly of Henderson, Nev., as well as three nieces, a nephew and several great-nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Cathedral High School, 5225 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, IN 46226.
Vatican highlights plight of world’s children on Epiphany

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Celebrating its annual world missionary day for children, the Vatican highlighted forms of suffering that continue to plague young people in many countries—including hunger, disease and exploitation.

About 200 million children go to bed hungry every night, 211 million under age 14 work instead of going to school, and an estimated 13 million under age 5 die each year from easily preventable diseases, according to a report published by the Vatican’s missionary news agency, Fides.

The report coincided with the Jan. 6 celebration of the feast of the Epiphany, when the Church gives special attention to the situation of children around the world.

The Holy Childhood Association, one of four pontifical mission societies, finances and supports some 4,000 projects aiding the neediest children, including AIDS sufferers in Africa, street children in Latin America and Asia, and child-soldiers in several countries.

The Vatican report, based primarily on U.N. statistics, said more attention should be given to the “countless small voices that are crying from every corner of the planet.”

Some forms of children’s suffering are hidden, transpiring daily in a climate of secrecy, intimidation and exploitation, it said.

But it said facts about child hunger and illnesses are well-documented and often ignored:

• In 25 of the poorest countries, more than 15 percent of babies die before reaching age 5. The main causes are diarrhea, measles, tetanus, whooping cough and pneumonia—diseases that, in most cases, are easily treatable or prevented by low-cost medicines.

• More than half a million children died in 2002 from AIDS, and the number of AIDS orphans has reached 13 million.

• In 23 countries, more than 30 percent of children suffer from chronic malnutrition.

• An estimated 20 million babies die each year shortly after birth because of malnutrition of the mother during pregnancy.

The report said war is increasingly hard on the world’s children, and frequently engages them as direct combatants. Today, more than 300,000 youths under age 18 are fighting in guerrilla or regular conflicts.

In the last decade, it said, more than 2 million children have been killed in war, more than 6 million have been disabled or seriously injured, 1 million have lost their parents and about 20 million children have been made homeless.

The growing problem of human trafficking has hit children especially hard, it said. Every year, more than a million children are victims of trafficking, often exploited as low-cost labor. In some extreme cases, it said, they are killed so that their bodies can furnish organs for transplant. Trafficking in children is now thought to be a $1.2 billion-a-year industry, it said.

Children are routinely taken advantage of in the workplace, a phenomenon that is tolerated even in many European countries, it said. In Italy, for example, illegal child-workers are estimated to number somewhere between 145,000 and 435,000.

In some countries, particularly in Asia, child exploitation in the sex industry remains rampant. Many of these children end up dying from AIDS or other diseases, it said.

The Holy Childhood Association operates in 150 countries, and aims to promote a sense of cooperation in the world and a sense of cooperation in the Church’s missionary activities.

The report said every year about 9,000 children are killed or mutilated by anti-personnel mines. In Myanmar, it said, children have been sent to run through minefields in “the most horrible system of ‘mine removal’ imaginable.”

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Using our gifts in service to the Church

Next week is Vocations Awareness Week across the nation. As our part in its observance, we present our annual Religious Vocations Supplement beginning on page 9. You will meet some truly inspiring people who are living enormously fulfilling lives.

It’s true that all of us have a religious vocation because God is calling all of us to use the gifts he has given to us to achieve his will for us in this world. But he calls some people to service in the priesthood or as religious brothers or sisters.

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta once told the writer of this editorial, “You cannot do what I do. But I cannot do what you do. The important thing is that we all must do something beautiful for God.”

That is best done in the priesthood or religious life for the people God calls to that way of life and it is best done in other ways for those who are called to a different way of life.

St. Paul wrote explicitly about the different gifts given to us through the Holy Spirit. In the 12th chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians, he told us that there are different kinds of spiritual gifts and different forms of service and that the Spirit distributes his gifts to each person as he wishes.

Paul says that we, individually parts of Christ’s body and none of the parts of a body can do the same thing. The eye cannot do what the ear does, or the foot what the hand does, but all parts of the body are important.

Similarly, some people have been gifted with the skill to be auto mechanics, or nurses, or teachers, or lawyers, or plumbers or journalists. Some people are called to use their gifts in marriage or the single state in serving the poor.

There are some people, Paul says, who are individually gifted with the skill to be auto mechanics, or nurses, or teachers, or lawyers, or plumbers or journalists. Some people are called to use their gifts in marriage or the single state in serving the poor.

It is not too late to recapture its true meaning. Focus on the blessings of peace and joy that surround Jesus Christ. If you do, joy will prevail over sorrow.

May the new year bring you a fresh awareness of God’s unchanging love. This love has been compared in Scripture to the love between a young husband and his bride. It implies that God loves each one of us passionately, the way a young husband or father loves his bride.

The metaphor may not be perfectly apt because the bride in this case is not an individual but a collective entity, namely, the entire assembly of the struggling people of God. That includes everyone.

Some members of the Church are desperately sick. To love the Church is to have a sorrowing love for them as well. God brings healing and forgiveness to one and all. We are all under the mantel of his compassion. No one is excluded. Even though no one is entirely innocent, everyone is invited to the banquet.

Many scientists and intellectuals

Letters to the Editor

Praying for peace in the Holy Land

The Dec. 19, 2003, edition of The Criterion contained an editorial, “No peace in Bethlehem.” A sentence in that editorial seemed at least thoughtless or impertinent, to wit, “Isn’t it time for Americans to demand that the Palestinians and Israelis negotiate a just peace?”

To be effective, a demand requires contingent penalties. Surely the editor did not intend to treat the Holy Land as another Iraq. We can wish for, hope for, or better, pray for peace—but we cannot demand it. That would be the approach of Imperial Rome.

Charles Riché, Clarksville

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of views.” Letters may be submitted from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastured sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months.

Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to: “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org

Spirituality for Today/Rev. John Catoir

Christ in the new year

A figurine of the Christ Child lies in straw during Christmas Day Mass at St. Catherine Church in Bethlehem. The church is adjacent to the Church of the Nativity, widely believed to have been built on the site where Christ was born.

reject the entire mystery of Christ’s incarnation because they have no inner disposition to make the leap of faith. They do not have nor do they want the gift of faith.

Those who do believe, but faintly, may have gotten caught up in the commercialism of the recent Christmas celebration and lost some of their fervor.

I repeat: It is not too late to recapture it. Each of us has to find his or her own way. To benefit from God’s love, however, one must not only believe in it, but also respond to it with trust.

The doctrine of the Incarnation makes us able to proclaim Christ’s entry into our world. However improbable this revelation may seem to some, for the believer it is without doubt the greatest event in human history.

Unaided reason cannot come to understand this truth. Only faith can bring the wisdom that leads to exquisite joy, a precious gift that makes all the difference in helping us to cope with life.

In this valley of tears in 2004 and beyond, we need all the help we can get.

(Father John Catoir is a columnist for Catholic News Service.)
La oración nos ayudará a responder nuestro llamado a la santidad

La próxima semana nuestra iglesia celebra la Semana de la Conciliación Vocacional, que tiene como propósito el "vocare" deriva del verbo en latín vocare, llamar. Le damos una importancia especial al llamar a los hombres a la vida religiosa, pero siempre en el contexto del llamado universal a la santidad que todos los bautizados reciben de Dios. Este llamado fundamental no es exclusivo de los hombres, mujeres religiosas o de los sacerdotes diocesanos y diáconos. La mayoría de las personas viven el llamado a la santidad en el matrimonio y algunos como solteros.

Esta domingo, en el marco de la celebración del bautismo del Señor, es el momento ideal para reafirmar nuestro llamado universal a la santidad que recibimos en nuestro propio bautismo. Nadie se siente solo ni sin la gracia de Dios y debemos decirle a esa gracia un "amén". Es un momento para que nos unamos de manera genuina a los demás que también nos han recibido a nosotros queridos en el seno de la Iglesia. Al compartir nuestro llamado, es una oportunidad particular para la unión y el enlace con los demás. La Oración es el modo que Dios eligió para que seamos sus hijos. El llamado universal es personal y auténtico, ya que Dios nos llama como seres individuales.

Ante la vida y la obra de Cristo, no hay escape. La vida es un regalo que Dios nos ha dado, un regalo que nos llama a ser santos. ¡Caminemos juntos por este camino de la santidad! Y que Dios nos dé fuerza para seguir adelante.

Prayer will lead us to answer our call to holiness

In other words, the Holy Father points to the reality that our youth are influenced by the contemporary secular and materialistic culture. The pope cites the prevailing importance of the influence of family life and the impact of education on our youth.

The second difficulty for young men to enter the seminary is their understanding of the priesthood ministry itself. “For several generations, the ministry of priests has evolved considerably in its forms: at times, the very convictions of many priests regarding their own identity have been violently shaken,” the pope said. “In fact, in the eyes of the public the priestly ministry has often been devalued. Today, the form of this ministry might still seem unclear, difficult for youths to perceive, and lacking in stability. Therefore it is necessary to support the ordained ministry, to give it its full place in the Church, in a spirit of communion that respects the differences and their genuine complimentarily with the laity.”

The third difficulty, and “the most fundamental”, according to the Holy Father, affects the relationship of our youth with the Lord. “Their knowledge of Christ is often superficial and relative, amid a multiplicity of religious proposals, while the desire to be a priest is nourished essentially from intimacy with the Lord, in a really personal dialogue which is expressed above all by the desire to be with him,” Pope John Paul II said.

Clearly, if we wish to help our young respond to the unique call to the priesthood or the consecrated life as religious we will do our best to foster among our children, our youth and our young adults the authentic discovery of the person of Jesus, which is experienced in the sacramental life of the Church, in personal prayer and in service to our sisters and brothers.

In a sense, the first "vocation directors" in the Church are parents, grandparents, catechists, youth ministers and teachers alongside our priests and religious women and men. The duty we share is to model the call to holiness and to lead our youth and young adults in prayer.

Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for January

Parents: that they may remain faithful to their vocations and encourage their children to consider God’s call to service in the Church, especially as priests and religious.

Padres: Que ellos puedan permanecer fieles a su vocación y puedan alentar a sus hijos a considerar la llamada de Dios para servir en la iglesia, especialmente como sacerdotes y gente religiosa.

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en enero

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis
The Terre Haute Deeney Pastoral Center is presenting “A Mini-Retreat” from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Jan. 12, 19 and 26 at St. Joseph University Parish, 113 S. 5th St., in Terre Haute. There is no cost for the event.

For more information or to register, call 317-865-2092.

The monthly Francisc2 program, held at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center in Floyd County for young adults aged 18-30, will take place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Jan. 11. The topic is “Hell...Purgatory...Really?” There will be prayer, a discussion session, social time and home-cooked food. For more information, call Conventual Franciscan Father Jim Kent at 812-933-4439 or e-mail francvec@aol.com.

“Poetry and Prophecy” is the theme for a one-day retreat from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Jan. 24 at the Providence Center at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods as part of the SpiritPro Series. The retreat will be led by Christine Brother Barry Donoghue and Providence Sisters Marie McCarthy and Rosemary Nudd. It will focus on poets as those who often first read the signs of the times with compassion and language. There will be time to read and write poetry as well as relieve stress and tension, and resolve conflicts and dilemmas. The cost is $20 per person (NRDC) and $15 for Providence students.

The Saint Meinrad Abbey Guest House in Saint Meinrad will offer a retreat titled “The Tools of the Trade from The Rule of St. Benedict” from Jan. 30 to Feb. 1. Benedictine Father Eoghan Kelly will lead the retreat, which will examine the practicality of the Rule of St. Benedict and how to use those time-tested tools to get closer to God. The suggested donation for the retreat is $175 per person or $300 for two people in a double room. For more information, call 812-357-6585 or 800-581-6905.

The Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Art Gallery will host its annual faculty show on Jan. 14-31. Various faculty members from the college’s Performing and Visual Arts Departments will display their work in the gallery. The opening reception will be held from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Jan. 14. Refreshments will be served and musical accompaniment will be provided by members of the department. For more information, call 812-535-5266.

The Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, will present a retreat titled “Tools Matter” from Jan. 18-24. Benedictine Sister Mary Margaret Funk will lead the retreat, which will be a chance to practice guarding the heart, manifestation of the Jesus Prayer, the Little Way, Colloquy, manual labor and the Emptiness Practice of the Cloud of Unknowing, among other things. The cost is $375 for residents or $525 for commuters. For more information, call 317-788-7581.

Charles Gardner, secretary of spiritual life and worship for the archdiocese, will teach a three-hour course on “Music in Catholic Worship” on Tuesday evenings from Jan. 13 to April 13 at St. John College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis. The course will examine the theory, history and present practice of music as an integral part of Roman Catholic worship. For more information or to register for the course, call Gardner at 317-236-1479 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1479, or e-mail gardnerj@archindy.org.

The Richmond Catholic Community will host a Pro-Life Vigil on Jan. 9-10. The event will begin with a prayer service at 7 p.m. on Jan. 9 at St. Andrew Parish, 235 S. 8th St., followed by a candlelight procession to Holy Family Parish, 815 W. Main St., where there will be a presentation to the high school students on the nation’s expansion of the Blessed Sacrament until 8 a.m. on Jan. 10. There will be a chance for reconciliation at 12:30 a.m. and other activities for teenagers throughout the night. There will be a Mass at 9 a.m. on Jan. 11. A presentation about the Elizabeth Ministry at 9:15 a.m., a living Rosary at 10:15 a.m., a presentation about Natural Family Planning at 11 a.m., lunch at noon and a community talk at 1 p.m. Crosses in memory of babies killed by abortion will be placed on the lawn at 2:30 p.m., which will be followed by a walk to St. Mary Parish, 720 N. A. St., in Richmond, where there will be a youth liturgy at 4 p.m. For more information, call Cathy Fushko 765-983-3914.

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (New Line)
Rated A-II (Adults and Adolescents) because of a discreetly implied affair, occasional toilet humor and brief slapstick violence.
Rated PG (Parental Guidance Suggested) by the MPAA.

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The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (New Line)
Rated A-II (Adults and Adolescents) because of a discreetly implied affair, occasional toilet humor and brief slapstick violence.
Rated PG (Parental Guidance Suggested) by the MPAA.
How to report an abuse complaint

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis urges people to report misconduct so that we can reach out to the victims with pastoral care. Anyone who believes that she or he has been a victim, or knows of anyone who has been a victim—of scheduling difficulties, but they are scheduled for audits this year.

The Diocese of Davenport, Iowa, was “cooperative,” but the nature of current lit-igation it faced led the auditor and bishop to agree “that a full and fair review could not be completed without interference from outside entities,” the report said. The California-based Chaldean Eparchy of St. Peter the Apostle, just formed in July 2002, was not included in the first round of audits. The report also noted that three Latinrite and three Eastern-rite dioceses did not participate in the nationwide survey by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice on the nature and scope of clergy sexual abuse of minors in the last 50 years. A report on the John Jay survey is scheduled for release in late February. Those not participating in the John Jay survey were the dioceses of Davenport, Iowa; Fresno, Calif.; Lincoln, Neb.; Newton, Mass. (Melkite); Our Lady of Deliverance in New Jersey (Syriac); and St. Maron of Brooklyn, N.Y. In the audit report, two areas proved particularly difficult for dioceses to comply fully with charter requirements: implementa- tion of safe environment programs across the diocese, and full background checks on all diocesan employees and volun-teers who work with minors.

A complete safe environment program would include training sessions for Church employees and volunteers on the Church’s abuse policies, appropriate boundaries to maintain in dealing with minors, and how to recognize and report signs of possible sexual abuse. It would also include parish-based education on sexual abuse for parents and other adults and age-appropriate education for children and youth on recognizing improper conduct and reporting it. Twenty-eight dioceses received instruc-tions on safe environment programs, indicat- ing that what they had in place so far was inadequate, and 47 received recommenda-tions for further improvement.

Thirty-two dioceses received instruc-tions on implementing the charter’s requirement of background checks for all Church employees and volunteers who work with minors; 39 received recommen-dations for improvement in that area. Excluding dioceses that subsequently reached compliance, however, by the time of the final report only 9 percent of dioc-eses were not in compliance on safe envi-ronment programs. Only 7 percent were still not in compliance in the area of back-ground checks on employees and volun-teers.

William A. Gavin, president of the Gavel Group, said the audit was initially a source of concern to many bishops, but it turned out to be extremely helpful in demonstrating some difficulties that were not yet known to them. It provided best practices from bishops and others and perhaps introduced diocesan and episcopal leaders to new ways and methods of achieving results.”

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, discusses the results of a national audit of diocesan policies and practices mandated by the bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Bishop Gregory, the lead auditor and other rep-resentatives of the U.S. bishops’ conference gave the briefing in Washington on Jan. 6. They said nearly 90 percent of U.S. dioceses have fully complied with the requirements set forth to better protect minors against clerical sexual abuse.
Sex abuse audit report includes national recommendations

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The nationwide audit of sexual abuse policies and practices of Catholic dioceses went beyond assessing each diocese’s current performance against the standards of the bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. As a result of their meetings with bishops, diocesan personnel, abuse victims, law enforcement and social service personnel and other interested persons, the independent auditors came up with a substantial list of nationwide recommendations to improve the Church’s response to the sexual abuse issue in the future.

Its recommendations included a number of proposals that could strengthen the charter itself or its implementation procedures when the bishops consider possible revisions later this year. It also recommended that the bishops sponsor a new national study — an external study of voluntary or mandatory reports of sexual abuse — for this year.

Most of the report on the audit findings, released in Washington on Jan. 6, was devoted to assessing each diocese’s performance in light of the current charter.

In an important eight-page chapter at the end of Section One, however, the report says the audit process also helped uncover additional ways to make Church environments safer for children and improve the Church’s response to victims and their families. It said stronger ways to assure future accountability were also found. Topping the list of recommendations was a proposal to strengthen sexual abuse awareness, prevention and response at all levels of parish, school and other local Church facilities nationwide.

This is particularly important because children and young people are most involved in Church activities at the parish level, the report said.

It recommended that the bishops’ national Office for Child and Youth Protection prepare guidelines for dioceses to adopt and use all aspects of the charter at the parish level. It called for dioceses to take affirmative action to achieve such integration where it does not yet exist. It urged that a mechanism be established to audit such parish participation in future years.

It also suggested identifying and instituting national effectiveness measurements for safe environment programs within the next two to three years.

It recommended that the Office for Child and Youth Protection develop programs to train diocesan and independent board members and safe environment coordinators.

It noted that the Chicago Archdiocese has already conducted training conferences for victim assistance personnel from other dioceses and suggested that the national office work with the archdiocese to provide more training for victim assistance coordinators across the nation.

It said the national office should also identify “model forms, checklists and record-keeping systems” for dioceses to use on matters relating to child abuse and its prevention.

It said the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse should consider ways to help dioceses determine “the appropriate supervision and sustenance that should be provided to priests and deacons who have abused minors.” It added that information on Church policies in this area should be communicated to the people.

The report noted that, aside from safe environment guidelines developed by the national office and the language of the charter itself, dioceses do not have written standards for implementing the charter. It recommended that the national office develop such standards, adding that these would have helped both the dioceses and the auditors in 2003.

The audit report had more than 50 specific recommendations on the charter’s 17 articles, highlighting additional ways to strengthen the charter or improve its implementation.

Among eight recommendations on victim healing, outreach and reconciliation, for example, the report included a suggestion that dioceses support and encourage more research into effective therapies for victims. Another recommendation was that each bishop identify every victim who has not yet met with the bishop or his designee and ask for a meeting.

Among 14 recommendations on response and reporting procedures were proposals to exclude diocesan attorneys and assistance coordinators from membership on diocesan review boards and to inform the complainant promptly of results of an investigation and any actions taken or planned. There were also recommendations to develop national standards for review board deliberations and to identify model board practices and incorporate them into training programs for members.

The report asked bishops to assure that priests do not wear clerical garb, as has happened in a small number of cases in the past year, when appearing as defendants in criminal cases involving sexual abuse of a minor.

It asked for clarification of the meaning of “prayer and penance” in the article referring to the lives of priests who were removed from ministry because of abuse but were not laicized.

It recommended additional assistance to bishops on ways to assure that priests from foreign countries accepted for ministry in the United States have not been accused or found guilty of abusing minors.

Other recommendations addressed particular issues in reporting allegations to civil authorities, communications, investigating allegations, safe environment programs, the role and effectiveness of the youth protection office, background evaluations of employees and volunteers, transfer of clergy, cooperation with religious orders of men, seminary formation and cooperative research on child sexual abuse.

The report recommended that the on-site audit procedure used in 2003 be used again for the 2004 audit.

It recommended that future audits include information on the number of new allegations during the year in each diocese, the number of actions taken against clergy based on admitted or established acts of abuse, the number of victims and financial costs.

It suggested that these yearly data be gathered and maintained at the national office.

On the recommendation for a national study of victims’ views on Church handling of their cases, the study noted that auditors had interviewed some victims and the findings were valuable. But it said that tight time schedules and the limited mandate to audit diocesan performance since the charter led the audit teams to restrict their victim interviews to those who reported the abuse after the charter was adopted.

It said a broader study could uncover valuable information on the Church’s best responses to victims following an allegation.†
Lives of Grace

By Father Joseph B. Moriarty
Director of the archdiocesan Office of Priestly and Religious Vocations

"Father, as you made springs in valleys to form streams between mountains, so you made living streams of grace flow from the Apostles that their teaching may bring salvation to all the nations. May we have a practical knowledge of their doctrine, be obedient to their commands, obtain remission of our sins through their prayers, and finally receive the reward of eternal happiness."" 

Psalms of the Catholic Church

As you read these supplement pages, I pray that you will witness "Lives of Grace" and be inspired to support priestly vocations.

As our Holy Father reminds us, "Faith, certainly, is a gift, a divine grace" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 485, 2003, 4).

We are called to in life.

As Father Joseph B. Moriarty, Archdiocese of Indianapolis will focus on A New Moment of Grace—2007 for the next four years.

This new spiritual initiative will "cooperate with Divine Providence," the archbishop said, "to seize this new moment of grace that is being offered to us.

In a statement issued last June, Archbishop Buechlein also encouraged perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

"Perpetual adoration for vocations is based on the premise that nothing is more powerful than the activity of prayer," Archbishop Buechlein said. "Praying before the Blessed Sacrament is a premier way of expressing our dependence on the grace of God, especially in carrying out our shared responsibilities for vocation recruitment to the priesthood."" 

Franciscan Father Francis Bryan, Marian College chaplain, center, leads morning prayer under the crucifix at the Marian College Chapel in Indianapolis. Archdiocesan seminarians Zac Karanovich and Eric Hodde, at right, pray with other Marian students.

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In addition to his ministry as archdiocesan vocations director, Father Joseph Moriarty also serves as sacramental minister for Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis and Catholic chaplain for the Indianapolis Fire Department.
Seminarian is open to God’s path for his life

By Brandon A. Evans

It’s only appropriate that someone nick-
named “Pope Zac” in high school would find his way to the priesthood. Of course, his grandfather will attest to the special something that Zac Karan-

ovitch has always had.

The young man, now in his first year of
undergraduate studies at Marian College
in Indianapolis as a seminarian for the
Archdiocese of Indianapolis, began his life
in Catholic school, but after the fourth
grade he transferred to public school and
went to Mass only on Christmas and Easter.
But, he admitted, it all started to change in
the eighth grade. He was in public school
watching the televised coverage of Pope
John Paul II’s visit to St. Louis when the
thought entered his mind—the thought
that would not leave him again—that he
should be a priest.

About that time, he decided to go to
Mass with his maternal grandparents, who
wanted to visit a new parish across the
river in Illinois. They all lived in the
Clinton area at the time, and still do.

Going to church with them became
more and more common, and by his senior
year, Zac was going to Mass every day.
And he found himself surrounded by a
group of friends that he called, well, “a
very different group of friends.”

Strong in their faith, they helped keep
him accountable to a life of virtue.
As college stretched out before him,
that thought of being a priest, of helping
people, was in his mind.

He shared all these thoughts with his
grandmother, who contacted Father Joseph
Moriarty, the archdiocesan vocations
director. Each month, Father Moriarty met
with Zac to talk with him about the call
that was becoming clearer and clearer.

By the spring of his senior year, Zac
began affiliating with the archdiocese. By
last summer, everything was arranged and
he had officially become a seminarian of
the archdiocese.

He even secured an academic scholar-
ship as a Lilly Scholar, which means that
the archdiocese does not have to pay for
this part of his education.

Father Moriarty said that the money
that Karanovitch has saved the archdi-
cese “can be used to help others who are
considering a vocation and are in forma-
tion. He shows himself to be a good steward
of what God has given him by using it to
the best of his ability.”

“He witnesses to God’s call alive in his
heart by embracing so much responsibility
at such a young age and by being willing
to give himself so completely,” Father
Moriarty said.

Karanovitch’s grandmother, who is
now deceased, always had a special love
for her oldest grandson, said Edward
Whitaker, his grandfather.

And Karanovitch looked up to her in a
unique way.

“To this day, I haven’t found anything
that she taught me or told me that was
wrong,” he said.

Whitaker shares his late wife’s admira-
tion of their grandson, and thinks the
world of him. He said that the young man
has always been well-mannered and
always had “good common sense.”

Those virtues, he said, “just shined up
in him.”

Whitaker said that Karanovitch has
long wanted to be a priest, and that since
he was young something sparkled in
him—something about Catholicism caught
hold of him.

He was, Whitaker thinks, always bound
towards the priesthood. Eric Hodde is also an arch-

diocesan seminarian. They gather with
other Marian students to discern the
priesthood. Eric Hodde is also following, in a
certain manner of speaking, his grandfa-
ther’s advice to wait a few years before
leaping into the seminary—just for good
measure.

Even though Karanovitch is a declared
seminarian, he still is making sure that the
priesthood is right for him.

“I don’t think we can ever truly be sure of
what God is telling us,” Karanovitch said.

“That’s where faith comes into play.”

He came to Marian also majoring in
music, but ended that course of study
when he couldn’t see himself in such a
career. Staying open to all of God’s paths
is imperative to him.

“It’s important to always keep your
options open and to never stay stagnant,”
he said. “You want to keep moving and
you want to keep pursuing your goals,
even though you are looking at many
different goals.”

He prays constantly that God will show
him the way that he is supposed to take,
and said it helps that other Marian stu-
dents are grappling with the same ques-
tions.

Other Marian students are discerning
the priesthood. Eric Hodde is also an arch-
diocesan seminarian. They gather with
other students for morning prayer every
day, and Karanovitch said that they hang
out together quite a bit.

Karanovitch wishes that more seminari-
ans would enroll at Marian College to
make it have even better.

While friends can be a support, he said,
another form of encouragement, in an odd
sort of way, is the ongoing clergy sex-
abuse crisis that has made headlines and
caused headaches for good priests.

Seeing such bad publicity for the priest-
hood, but convinced that it is still a
respected vocation—and having known “a
million more good priest” than bad—
Karanovitch said that it motivates him to
be a good priest and to show people what
the priesthood is all about.

And as far as celibacy is concerned,
Karanovitch isn’t. He sees youth to his
advantage, figuring that he cannot miss
what he never had—and also knowing that
as a man he will still be living a life of
committed and true love, directly to God.

Prayer can be a challenge at times,
though. He said that some mornings there
can be a feeling of dread, of not wanting
to get up and go to prayer—and, as a sem-
inarian, it concerns him that he feels like
that.

But, in the end, those times do pass
and there are even better times. No mat-
ter how difficult it gets, things can always
be made better, he said. Young
men as well as older men, especially
those considering the idea, need to hear
that and not turn away from thoughts
about the priesthood.

“It never hurts to look into becoming a
priest, he said, as any amount of discern-
ment will be time well spent.

As Karanovitch continues to discern,
one man that he will continue to look up
to is Pope John Paul II, whose visit to
St. Louis several years ago helped spark
his thoughts of a priestly life.

“He’s my hero,” Karanovitch said.

As the young man continues to discern,
Whitaker will continue to enjoy the fine
example that he said Karanovitch sets for
his cousins.

And Whitaker won’t worry. After all,
his grandson’s got some good guardian
guards and a good head on his shoulders,
Whitaker said. “I really do believe that
he’ll be a good priest.” †
Benedictine loves her life as a ‘woman of grace’

By Mary Ann Wyand

BEECH GROVE—Four inspirational postcards illustrate the story of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery with a few well-chosen words and pictures.

“Seasons of Grace” depicts tree-lined pathways on the monastery grounds in the spring, summer, fall and winter. Images of Grace” shows Marian statuary and the large outdoor crucifix that inspire prayer at various locations on the monastery’s scenic 50-acre grounds in Beech Grove.

“Faces of Grace” offers a closer look at the carved images of Mary, Jesus, an angel and St John the Evangelist.

“Enter into Grace” invites people to visit Our Lady of Grace Monastery and the monastery chapel as well as St. Paul Hermitage, the sisters’ ministry to the elderly, and the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, their educational ministry for people of all ages and faith traditions.

Our Lady of Grace Monastery is home to 16 Benedictine sisters who live in community and follow The Rule of St. Benedict in their daily lives. Twenty-one other sisters practice The Rule at various ministry locations and return to the monastery for visits as often as possible.

“Benedict tells us in his rule to seek God in everyone and everything,” Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones explained. “Benedict also says that whatever you do, you should do it for the honor and glory of God.”

As Benedictines, she said, “our primary work is prayer, but we can do any kind of ministry as long as we do it for God’s honor and glory, and it is genuine.”

Sister Mary Luke enjoys talking about St. Benedict, the sisters’ ministries and the blessings of monastic life because she has experienced many years of happiness as a Beech Grove Benedictine.

The former Barbara Jones grew up in St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and decided to join the women's religious order when she was only 6 years old because she loved her first-grade teacher, Benedictine Sister Jeannie Voges, who currently is a religious education associate at St. John the Baptist Parish in Newburgh, Ind.

“I had the opportunity of having Benedictine sisters as my teachers for all eight years at St. Ambrose School,” Sister Mary Luke said. “I was just fascinated with the sisters. At that time, they wore the old full-length habit, and I thought they were beautiful. The sisters were always happy, and I loved them.”

She had hoped to attend the former Our Lady of Grace Academy in Beech Grove then become a sister, but her parents wanted her to live at home for a few more years. Her four years at Seymour High School were “a great time,” Sister Mary Luke said. At her father’s urging, she enrolled at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., to earn a pharmacy degree so she could work at her grandfather’s drugstore.

During her senior year in high school, her mother gave her a-vocations prayer card. She prayed that prayer often and, shortly before classes started at Purdue, felt a strong call to join the Benedictines because she realized that was the life that God had chosen for her.”

“I realized I could join Our Lady of Grace Monastery so I came here in 1966,” she said. “I entered the community with no reservations, and I’ve never looked back.”

Sister Mary Luke was never a convent at the north side parish.

Those were great times,” she recalled. “I enjoyed my years at Christ the King School. It’s a great parish.”

In 1986, Benedictine Sister Mary Margaret Funk, a former prioress, asked her to serve her community as director of development and help with communications, a position she held for 15 years.

As development director, Sister Mary Luke had plenty of opportunities to share the good news of the Beech Grove Benedictines.

“We welcome each person as Christ,” she said, “and seek God in all the experiences of our lives. Our goal as Benedictines is always to seek and find God in daily life, and our [elder care and retreat] ministries enable us to help other seekers so they can feel closer to God.”

“It was part of my responsibility to tell the Our Lady of Grace story,” she said, “and to invite people to participate in our ministries through our retirement and nursing care facility, through the retreat and conference center ministry, through the sisters who work in various ministries in the archdiocese and places beyond, through our retired sisters, and through our formation program, which invites new members into the monastery to continue our ministries into the future.”

Three years ago, Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, the current prioress, asked her to serve as the administrator of the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center.

In retreat ministry, Sister Mary Luke said, she sees many examples of God’s graces flowing into the world.

“The Benedict Inn is connected physically and spiritually to Our Lady of Grace Monastery,” she said, “and the sisters pray for everyone who comes here. Whenever I welcome a group to the Benedict Inn, I tell them that the retreat center is owned and operated by the Sisters of St. Benedict, and the sisters know that we are here and are praying for them. Everyone likes to be held in prayer, and that is what distinguishes the Benedict Inn from many retreat centers.”

The Sisters of St. Benedict like to refer to themselves as “women of grace,” Sister Mary Luke said. “Grace is a gift, a blessing, from God. We also would hope that our relationships with others are grace-filled for them.”

“This life has certainly been a blessing for me,” she said. “Although I know that religious life is not for everybody, it is a good and holy life, and I am grateful for it.”

In 30 countries throughout the world, the Little Sisters of the Poor strive to live their consecration in the spirit of the Beatitudes. By caring, for the aged poor and becoming “one family” with them, they experience the joy of a total gift of themselves to Christ and to his Church.
Tell City pastor finds happiness 17 miles down the road

By Patricia Happel Cornwell

TELL CITY — He is as comfortable talking about a $5.5 million renovation project as about the Holy Spirit. He has a master’s degree in business administration and holds short, stand-up staff meetings. He can deliver a homily to the accom- paniment of a canary and never skip a beat. Staff and parishioners trust him. Volunteers work alongside him. Nursing home residents return him blessing for blessing.

But Trudy is his most faithful follower. He is Benedictine Father Carl Deitchman, a monk of Saint Meinrad, pastor of St. Paul Parish in Tell City and dean of the Tell City Deanery. Trudy is his 7-year-old Golden Retriever.

Father Carl is the pastor of St. Paul’s 1,300 families. Benedictine Father Barnabas Gillespie also resides at St. Paul Parish and is the pastor of the small Perry County parishes of Sts. Pius V in Troy and St. Michael in Cannelton. The three priests share pertinent liturgies and some staff members.

Born in Denver in 1957, Father Carl is the middle child of nine. His family moved to Indianapolis when he was 8. He grew up at St. Pius V Parish, where he was a server.

He first entertained the idea of becom- ing a priest in grade school and began to think seriously about it in college. He also considered teaching and business, but as a college sophomore he “checked out” the seminary at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. From that moment, he said, he was certain of his vocation.

“I never thought of going anywhere else,” Father Carl said. “St. Meinrad is a strong abbey with a rich history.”

In 1995, Father Carl considered staying in the continuing education department, that it would remain a part of me.”

He said the greatest influence on his vocation was his parents’ emphasis on “living the faith.” His mother and father, Lambert Reilly and was given permission by Saint Meinrad’s archabbot, to try diocesan work again.

In January 2002, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who is also a Benedictine monk at Saint Meinrad on the Aura of St. Thomas Aquinas in Sunburst with 75 households.

Father Carl considered staying in Montana, but ties to Saint Meinrad brought him back to Indiana.

In June 2000, Father Carl returned to Saint Meinrad. For 18 months, he worked in the continuing education department, where he fulfilled his duties but found no fulfillment in them. He began to question why he had become a priest.

Then 9-11 happened,” he said. “I was struck with the whole sense of the fragility of life. I thought, ‘I need to make a change.’ ”

He appealed to Benedictine Archabbot Lambert Reilly and was given permission to try diocesan work again. In January 2002, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who is also a Benedictine monk from Saint Meinrad, appointed him pastor of St. Paul Parish and, in July of that year, dean of the Tell City Deanery.

Even then, Father Carl was not sure that he would stay.

Trudy, whom he calls a “pipe and slip- pers dog,” dozed beside his chair as he told his story.

“For the first part of my priesthood, I was very unhappy,” he admitted. “I needed parish experience. What I’ve learned in business is you want a good fit, like a good pair of shoes, like when you’re hiring an employee. I was helping everyone else make a good fit, but I didn’t fit.”

At St. Paul Parish, he was welcomed by parishioners because, he said, “I showed my humanness. I feel very appreciated here, very loved.”

After a planning period in which parishioners had “a lot of input,” the parish has undertaken a long-term plan to improve its physical plant, beginning with demolition of the old school, which was closed in 1999. Re-roofing, lighting and tuck-pointing of the church and activity building will follow. Eventually, the parish hall will be expanded.

“If anything,” Father Carl said, “what I brought to St. Paul’s was, ‘Let’s look at the big picture.’ “

While he is able to apply his business skills to parish management, that’s not the source of his contentment.

“The joy is being with the people and sharing the faith with them,” Father Carl said. “I have a business manager, a litur- gist and a director of religious education. With those in place, I really do spend my time doing priestly work.”

“God has answered my prayers in a super-abundant way,” he said. “All those steps along the way have brought me here. I have real happiness in the priest- hood now.”

“What’s so different in my life this time around?” Father Carl explained, “is that I’m relying on the Holy Spirit. I have learned that I cannot control people. It’s up to the Holy Spirit to move people’s minds and hearts. It’s not my work, it’s God’s work.”

On a brisk winter morning, Father Carl led Trudy on her red leash into Beverly Healthcare. Residents leaned out of their wheelchair to stroke Trudy’s ginger fur as she passed them.

In the nursing home’s activity room, the dog and master made the rounds of resi- dents, volunteers and a few parishioners from the neighboring countryside gathered there for the twice-monthly Mass.

When Father Carl put on his white, hooded alb for Mass, activity director Shelley Lawalin, her pocket full of liver treats, escorted Trudy down the hall to visit other residents in their rooms.

Several volunteers assisted with the liturgy. Sam Reed is Father Carl’s regular server at Beverly. St. Paul parishioners Paul and Kay Etienne provide music, with Kay at the piano and Paul leading the hymns. They are the parents of Father Paul Etienne. Earl LeClere serves as lec- tor. Rose Zieglergruber keeps track of which residents are able to receive Holy Communion, which residents receive a blessing instead, and which residents will receive Communion in their rooms after the Mass.

As Paul Etienne led the assembly of two dozen people in the opening hymn, “America the Beautiful,” a canary in the activity room’s aviary began singing, too. Later, the canary trilled loudly throughout the “Our Father.”

Father Carl celebrated Mass in a strong, clear voice, undistracted byavian accompaniment, laughter from the nurses’ station, pages on the public address system and occasional outbursts from a resident.

He is equally at home in the makeshift accommodations of the nursing home and the Gothic sanctuary of St. Paul Church.

What Father Carl loves about Tell City, he said, is “the simplicity of the people, their humility and rootedness. It’s a mod- est place with people of modest means. It’s like Nazareth. My happiness was just 17 miles down the road. For me, it’s been salvation.”

(Patricia Happel Cornwell is a freelance contributor to The Criterion.)
By Mary Ann Wyand

Carmelite nun follows God’s call to Terre Haute

From Switzerland to New York to Indiana, Discalced Carmelite Sister Veronica de Stockalper followed God’s call to the Monastery of St. Joseph in Terre Haute.

Sister Veronica’s cloistered life in Carmel provides countless opportunities to grow closer to God, and she has found happiness in the international contemplative community that studies the teachings of St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross and St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

As a young woman, she never dreamed that she would walk away from careers as a concert pianist and a professional dancer in New York City to become a Carmelite nun in a Midwestern state.

Her late father was Swiss and her mother is Scottish. The eldest of three girls, she was born in her father’s 17th-century ancestral home in the little frontier town of Brig, nestled deep in the scenic Rhone Valley in Switzerland. She grew up in the French-speaking region of the small, mountainous country near Lake Geneva.

“Family circumstances prompted the family to move to England,” Sister Veronica explained. “I was 5 at the time, and it was in English schools that I was educated until the age of 15. We then returned to Switzerland, where I graduated and it was in English schools that I was educated until the age of 15. We then returned to Switzerland, where I graduated from a Catholic boarding school run by the French Sisters of St. Clotilde.

During her childhood, piano lessons “opened up a new world of beauty for me,” she said, “and seemed to reveal a gift that was immediately encouraged and fostered through my teachers. I really fell in love with music and with the piano, in particular. The idea of beauty, the daily striving to surpass myself, presented me with a challenge that occupied all my energies and was a tremendous inspiration of life to me.”

As a teen-ager, she won many musical competitions and graduated from a music conservatory with top honors. Family members and teachers expected her to become a concert pianist, so she studied piano in Milan, Italy, with an eminent Hungarian music professor. Her studies led to recitals and radio performances.

After reaching the finals in a national piano competition, a well-known conductor, Pierre Colombo, advised her to move to a “big city” such as Paris, London or New York to make a “name” for herself there.

“At the time, I began to feel the need for a break from the intensity of years of sustained effort,” she recalled. “I thought it would help to take up ballet again for a while. I had taken classes on and off throughout my youth. In class, I met and became friends with a dancer from the New York City Ballet, [the] principal dancer with the Geneva Opera Ballet [at the time], who invited me to New York, where I was able to give myself to both music and ballet.”

She was offered the opportunity to play for company ballet classes at the Met, American Ballet Theater and Joffrey Ballet as well as at professional dance schools and for solo performances.

“Meeting and interacting with some of the great artists of the time was an unforgettable and enlightening experience,” she said. “I was also dancing, taking two ballet classes a day and performing with a newly formed group of seven dancers. It was the doing, the striving, the pursuit of an artistic ideal, that continued to feed and fulfill me. Little did I dream that the future would hold such a drastic change of direction and that America would become my permanent home.”

Her family members were “just plain, good Catholics,” she recalled. During her teen-age years, she “felt drawn to God, to what is beyond the seen and tangible” in life.

“I loved to think about God,” she said, “and to go for walks alone to talk to him, inspired by the spiritual books I read, the stories of the saints and, later on, deeply influenced by my close friendship and spiritual conversations with a wonderful older person I called ‘Aunt.’ Was it only a call to the religious life? I struggled with this and its incompatibility with what I thought was already the obvious path of life for me, in everyone’s mind and in my own since childhood—music.”

“In New York, the ‘still small voice remained subdued’ for several years, she said. ‘I guess the Lord was being patient, letting me do my own thing for a while. A few years later, I began to get in touch once again with the inner urgings through attending some inspiring spiritual conferences. These rekindled the dormant flame, and I finally decided to get help to discern seriously.

“In my early 20s, when I was still struggling with the idea of religious life, I always felt an attraction to the contemplative way,” she said. “I guess what attracted me was the idea that prayer ‘could do all things’ and be ‘everywhere,’ transcend all notions of time and space, though, of course, its fruitfulness would remain hidden, a matter of faith. I also obscurely ‘knew’ the Carmelite way was somehow ‘right.’ One day, meaning to buy [St. Thérèse’s] ‘Story of a Soul,’ I was advised by [St.] Teresa of Jesus’ complete works instead without realizing it. Then, when I read her autobiography, I was convinced that if ever I chose that path, Carmel was the right one. There was an instant attraction to her personality, her ideals, her spiritual way to God.”

After discerning her vocation during a private retreat at a Manhattan retreat center operated by the Sisters of Mary Reparatrix, she visited several Carmels in the New York area. A nun gave her a booklet about the Terre Haute monastery, and she immediately sensed that she had come home.

“As a contemplative nun, Sister Veronica has found great joy in ‘silent presence to the Lord’ and in ‘striving to make each moment, everything I do, a prayer’,” a source said. “She especially enjoys praying the Divine Office each day.

“The thought that we are a part of this ancient prayer that is still being recited and sung all over the world, at every hour of the day and night, praying God and interceding for the needs of the world, is a deep inspiration for me,” she said. “I also appreciate our quiet times for prayer and the unstructured ‘hermit days,’ and I enjoy our fun times, our laughs and festive meals for a feast day.”

Music is still an important part of her life, Sister Veronica said. “I play the organ and piano, and am liturgy coordinator and choir mistress.”

She also serves as webmaster of the Terre Haute Carmel’s new Web site, which she created and designed aided by prayer, the Holy Spirit and more than 30 computer program manuals.

“In Carmel,” she said, “I realized how enriching the New York experience had been for me—opening up new vistas, the boundless inner horizons of beauty, friendship and compassion that were to inspire and sustain life in the cloister and living in community.

“Little by little, God purifies us,” Sister Veronica said, “so that at last he can ‘build the house’ as he wills. A simple lifestyle, cultivating a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, gradually changes one’s whole perspective on life. We witness to the firm belief that this life is not all there is. There is fulfillment in believing that prayer does make a difference in our world, that my life reaches far beyond my own self and my own interests, to reach out mysteriously, in union with all who pray and through the grace of God, to our world and its needs.”

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Our Lady of Grace Monastery
By Dave Cox

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS—Maybe the seed was planted when Providence Sister Janice Smith attended the aspirancy program of the School Sisters of Notre Dame as a high school student. Maybe the seed germinated into a sprout when she attended a seminar called “God, are you talking to me?” Maybe the sprout was nourished as she watched the movie The Green Mile about the death penalty.

And maybe the sprout blossomed when she said in prayer, “God, if you are there, find me, because I can’t find you.” She knew she was at a turning point in her life when she looked around her. Californian condominium one day and realized that something was missing.

“I worked for Hewlett-Packard for 14 years as an instructor and manager,” she said. “I had a very lucrative salary, a company car, a nice little condo, all of these things. There was nothing wrong. That’s the biggest part. Everything was right. I was doing a lot of parish work as a volunteer in different parish ministries. Everything was fine, but I was still really restless.”

Then came the realization.


She was doing a lot of parish work as a volunteer in different parish ministries. Everything was fine, but she was still really restless.”

Perhaps it was then that her desire to become a woman religious was being rekindled, even though she may not have realized it at the time.

“I entered the aspirancy when I was 13,” Sister Janice said. “I stayed for two years. They were going to close the school, so I escaped, never to be heard from again for the next 30 odd years.”

“Maybe the feeling never really left,” she said. “It wasn’t the right time for me. It was something that stayed in the back of my mind, and I pushed it way back there.”

Then came the seminar.

“It led me to another prayer invitation called the Ignatian Exercises,” she said. “We were told to not be surprised if these prayers and meditations made a major change in our life. I sort of dismissed it. I got to the end of the cycle then this thing started gnawing at me. I said, ‘Nah, nah, nah, I can’t do this. This is crazy. Maybe I can do another ministry at the parish.’ ”

She put off registering for another religious education conference to see what would happen with Y2K mania. After the new year began in 2000, she called and found an opening in the seminar schedule for the next week.

“I thought, ‘This is it. It’s all roads are leading to Rome now,’” she said.

A different sprout from the stem of the plant offered yet another twist.

“I have this thing about Ireland,” she said. “I don’t know if I have any kind of Irish ancestry, but I just love Ireland.”

She called the vicar for religious life in the Diocese of Orange [Calif.] to have her discernment to follow a logical path, but it didn’t. She heard something speaking to the turmoil, but couldn’t grasp it. She prayed her personal prayer and asked God to find her. Gently, God did.

Eventually, the flower of discernment bloomed and Janice Smith became Providence Sister Janice Smith.

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Sept. 14, 2000, but even then she kept one foot in the secular door by taking a year leave of absence from Hewlett-Packard.

“I didn’t have to make the decision until after my first full year,” she said. “By that time, I was seeing a little more of what community life is like and what religious life is like. The first year was pretty rough. It’s a shock to your system, even if it’s good.”

I was leading this status-quo existence for a while,” Sister Janice explained. “I wasn’t really focused on those things that are truly the most important things in going through this life. What does God mean to me? Where is God in everything we do? What about social issues like the death penalty? I had compartmentalized my faith. It wasn’t integrated into my whole life.

“Coming to the Sisters of Providence, I am so much more aware,” she said. “It’s hard to contain it. When I see other people, I want to say, ‘Look! Look what’s going on. Open your eyes.’ I can say that because I was walking the same path.”

Having stretched her own boundaries, her message to women in discernment is, “Stay open [to the process]. Keep looking. Keep searching. You can’t force it. Stay open to the movement of the Spirit within you, and don’t try to prescribe what might happen.”

“I couldn’t have picked a better congregation,” Sister Janice said. “The sisters are so connected to God. They all have different ways of expressing it. Everyone seems willing to accept you for who you are.”

Now, Sister Janice is in the process of planting new seeds by ministering in adult education and faith formation for San Francisco Solano Parish at Ranch Santa Margarita, Calif.

(Dave Cox is the media relations manager for the Sisters of Providence at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.)

Providence sister trades corporate life for religious life

Pro-life prayers

Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocese’s Office of Pro-Life Activities in Indianapolis, prays during a monthly Helpers of God’s Precious Infants Mass on Aug. 16 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis. In October, she moved into the new Holy Rosary Convent at Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.
Franciscan sister enjoys mission work, retreat ministry

By Brandon A. Evans

Franciscan Sister Ann Vonder Meulen isn’t quite sure where God will lead her next, but knows that direction will come through those around her. She has seen her ministry as a woman religious wind a path through retreat ministry, spiritual direction and mission work in a Third World country. After spending 12 years in ministry in Papua New Guinea with a young Franciscan community, Sister Ann is now serving the new Oldenburg Franciscan Center as a retreat leader, spiritual director and artist. Her ministry grows out of her desire to support people spiritually. She said providing opportunities where people can step back and have time to reflect on their lives fills a growing need for many people.

“Most often, those attending retreats engage each other in dialogue about their life journeys and common desire to live the Gospel message in our time,” Sister Ann said. “Women sharing across generational lines is always enriching.”

Franciscan Sister Janet Born, director of the center, which the sisters also call the Spirituality and Learning Center, is glad that Sister Ann is focusing her talents on their retreat ministry. Sister Janet said that she hopes the center can be “a catalyst for change and development of spirit, mind and body. I would hope that we, as a community, could assist people in their personal growth in a variety of ways.”

Some of the retreats that Sister Ann has directed have made a strong use of art, such as creating pottery. “People find that is a mode of relaxation,” she said, “and a path leading to a more peaceful and centered life.”

Sister Ann said it also helps the retreatants experience their creative potential and the creative possibilities that enrich their lives.

Sister Ann enjoys watercolor and pottery. She attended Marian College in Indianapolis for art training. Art has always been more than a hobby, Sister Ann said. It is part of her ministry. She illustrated a religious education curriculum for people with disabilities, and more recently designed teaching aids during her time in Papua New Guinea.

Sister Ann had wanted to go to Papua New Guinea to do missionary work for a while when her superiors asked her to go in 1988—except she was not quite sure if she could commit to the 10 years that they requested of her. In the end, of course, she did, and stayed two years past that.

She spent her time helping to guide, educate and prepare a relatively new community of Franciscan sisters for ministry. As they assumed more responsibility for their own leadership and formation, Sister Ann had more time for other ministries, including helping people with addictions and training village and health personnel with skills to assist those who have AIDS.

Though she left Papua New Guinea in 2000, she continues her involvement in “reverse mission” by offering presentations in parishes and schools. She still writes to the people there, and assists in marketing the baskets and bags of those involved in a village cooperative.

Sister Ann joined the Franciscan community in Oldenburg in 1967 during a time of growing change. She had been inspired by her Franciscan teachers from grade school through college—inspired by their spirit of welcoming, of joy, of dedication.

In her time with the community, Sister Ann taught school and served the Archdiocese of Cincinnati as the assistant director of religious education, specializing in special education—a concern still close to her heart. Sister Ann has a sister with Down syndrome so she has a keener understanding of disabilities. She has delighted in the opportunities to assist people with disabilities to take a more active role in the Church.

Sister Ann wants to spend more time taking students from Oldenburg Academy to work with people in the inner city and in Appalachia.

She also anticipates the possibility of linking the wisdom and experience of the soon-to-be-retiring Baby Boomer generation with the enthusiasm of youth.

Whatever that future is, Sister Ann wants to spend time with people and continue to accompany those who want to tend to their spiritual growth. She believes it is through such people that the Spirit will reveal the next steps of her own path and ministry.

She said that throughout her life, despite all other changes, her ministry has come out of “the call of the people.”

And looking back over her life, she is happy.

“I have enjoyed this life,” she said, “and deeply appreciate the opportunities that have been mine.”

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Each Christian vocation comes from God and is God’s gift

By Mary Ann Wyand

PLAINFIELD—God calls men to the priesthood in many ways through a variety of life circumstances.

For Father Kevin Morris, pastor of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, the call to the priesthood came after his wife, Carol, died of cancer at age 34.

The former member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis was understandably heartbroken over the death of his wife and the end of their happy marriage. He began searching for consolation in his time of grief and, in the process, also found a religious vocation as a diocesan priest.

He was ordained to the priesthood at age 34 by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on June 7, 1997, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Father Morris brings a love for God and a desire to serve God’s people to his pastoral ministry. His smile, personality and sense of humor have endeared him to parishioners of all ages in Richmond and Plainfield.

Following his ordination six years ago, Father Morris was named associate pastor of Holy Family, St. Andrew and St. Mary parishes in Richmond. He served members of the Richmond Catholic Community for two years then was appointed pastor of St. Susanna Parish, where he also ministers to Catholic men incarcerated at the Plainfield Correctional Facility located a few miles from the church.

Father Morris often shares stories about his late wife, sometimes even as part of his homilies, to the surprise of others, who often tell him, “Father, you were married. You’ll laugh, tell him your plans.”

“He and I used to argue about religion every night, there was a message from my late wife’s sister, who had happened at Mass. When I got home from work that night, there was a message from my late wife’s sister, who lives in Cincinnati. I called her back, and she said, ‘Yesterday at Mass, I heard the words “It’s time to get back in the game.” I was the only person in the pew, and I was afraid to turn to my right because I knew Christ himself was sitting there with a big smile on his face. I thought, “It’s about time you got it, Kevin.”

The next day at work, a co-worker came into his office.

“His name is Bob Stiles, and he’s a Methodist,” Father Morris said. “He and I used to argue about religion every once in a while. And he said, “Yesterday at services, it dawned on me that maybe you ought to think about being a priest.” I said, ‘Bob, that’s really weird,’ and I told him what had happened at Mass. When I got home from work that night, there was a message from my late wife’s sister, who lives in Cincinnati. I called her back, and she said, ‘Yesterday at Mass, I heard the words “It’s time to get back in the game.” I was the only person in the pew, and I was afraid to turn to my right because I knew Christ himself was sitting there with a big smile on his face. I thought, “It’s about time you got it, Kevin.”

Three months later, he called the archdiocesan vocation office to arrange a meeting with Father Paul Koetter, who was the vocation director at the time.

“I was 35, and I really thought they’d tell me that I was too old to be a priest,” Father Morris said. “But one thing led to another, and if you had told me 20 years ago that I was going to be a priest in Plainfield, I would have laughed at you. There’s an old adage, “If you want to hear God laugh, tell him your plans.”

When people seek counseling for marital problems, he said, they often tell him, “Father, you were married. You’ll understand.”

However, he and Carol had a loving, happy marriage for 10 years and never experienced serious marital problems, so he relies on his theology training to help people in broken relationships.

“I think the seminary, and what you are taught and what you learn about, slows you down enough so that you can hear the call a little bit better,” Father Morris said. “Now that I am a priest, I can’t believe how dependent I am on God. The mystery of it gets bigger. You can feel God in your life. God is there for all of us. We’re all trying to get home. I feel like it’s my job to help people see that. I plant seeds, but the Holy Spirit makes them grow. I tell people to embrace life. It is God’s gift. If you share your life and your gifts with others, they will be able to see their own gifts and realize how much God is a part of life. We do that by the way we live our lives. We do that by invitation.”

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By Mary Ann Wyand
Accelerated pace of change is a fact of life

By Father Robert L. Kinast

When I bought my computer four years ago, it was the latest model with the market’s fastest processor. Today, it is virtually obsolete in terms of speed, downloading capabilities and the storing of graphics.

During that same time period, cell phones appeared everywhere. Now when I’m in an airport or other public place, I have a hard time finding a pay phone to make a call.

These are relatively minor changes compared to the incredible advances in medical technology, the influence of satellite communication and surveillance, and the impact of a global economy.

An accelerated pace of change is now simply a fact of life.

Nearly 40 years ago, Vatican Council II recognized this fact and addressed it in the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (64). The council acknowledged that the rapid, massive changes at that time caused people to “hover between hope and anxiety, and wonder uneasily about the present course of events.”

That assessment is even more true today.

Constant change pressures some people into feeling they must always have the latest product and use the latest service or else they will be perceived as out of touch with society. A XCR must be replaced by a DVD, an appointment calendar by a GPS device.

For others, however, the actual number and nature of today’s changes can seem overwhelming and incline a person to resist every new development. I know people who take pride in being computer illiterate or who refuse to change harmful eating or smoking habits.

In between this determined refusal to adapt and its opposite, a wholehearted acceptance of every change that comes along, there is a more discriminating and Christian attitude that can help us deal positively with change.

First, the impact of change in so many areas of life challenges us as Christians to clarify our priorities and to evaluate new or proposed changes in light of those priorities.

For most of us, the top priority is our love and care for one another. Thus, we see that cell phones may keep busy family members in contact with one another.

While a steady diet of computer games and Internet surfing can isolate individuals and retard their interaction, what are some other priorities that need to be clarified in this world of rapid change?

A job market that assumes people frequently will change employment and regularly relocate may provide lucrative salaries. The cost, however, adds up to families without roots in any particular community of friends and acquaintances.

As disagreements and grievances in society are handled more and more through lawsuits and court decisions, a Christian must decide whether to compromise and forgive or whether to pursue legal remedies.

Second, a discriminating response to changes based on one’s priorities reminds Christians to accept personal responsibility for the choices they make. We cannot simply presume that every change in our world is for the better or that no one is worse off as a result.

One big change for consumers in our economy has been the shift from cash to credit—and with it a tolerance for carrying debt, especially on credit cards. Unless a person assumes mature and informed responsibility for managing personal funds, credit-card debt can mount quickly and undermine an otherwise stable and happy life.

The same sense of responsibility is required in other areas such as health care and retirement. It is not enough to have health insurance. It is necessary to be responsible for one’s own health and use prescription drugs.

Improved medical care has led to another change: longer life spans.

While my parents never imagined retiring, their grandchildren take it for granted. Nonetheless, people now are called to prepare for the possibility of a longer life—to prepare financially, legally (insuring that their final wishes are carried out) and personally (by reflecting on what kind of life they hope to lead after retirement).

Today’s changing world also challenges our attitudes toward new developments.

Undoubtedly, Christians should have an open mind and be willing to consider some unprecedented developments. At the same time, because of the kinds of changes we witness, no one should expect immediate, clear-cut assessments of all of them.

For example, are term limits a useful way to curb the political power of public officials or a stepping-stone for opportunists? Is globalization a benefit to world unity or does it homogenize and lessen the richness of cultural and national diversity? Answers to these questions may come slowly and require patient investigation and dialogue.

As Christians, we should anticipate the unexpected. And it may help, I believe, to remember that we live within the creative stirrings of the Holy Spirit and await the Lord’s unannounced return.

This does not mean we should accept every change. It may suggest, however, keeping an open but discriminating mind while continuing to live by our priorities.

(Father Robert Kinast is director of the Center for Theological Reflection in Largo, Fla.)†

Prayer gives people hope

This Week’s Question

What gives you hope for our rapidly changing world?

“What gives me hope in a rapidly changing world is ... prayer.” (Maureen Windley, Newport, R.I.)

“The fact that our God does not change. He is the one constant in our ever-changing lives. No matter where we are on our faith journey, he is there.” (Marie Konopka, Greensburg, Pa.)

“I have hope because my relationship with my husband has held steadfast through 32 years of marriage, and daily prayer has helped me ‘see’ Christ in others every day.” (Marine Clyne, Zionsville, Ind.)

“Children give me hope in the future. The simplicity of a request: ‘Let’s play just one game’... or ‘When we pray, why do you always bless me [Neil] and Brian?’ Yes, children give me hope and [help me to] focus on what is truly important.” (Linda Lambert, Pontiac, Ill.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Share your idea of what a family celebration—a birthday, baptism, graduation, etc.—should be.

To respond for possible publication, write to Faith Alive at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †
Catholic priests: Archbishop John Hughes (IV)

Perspectives

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

We saw in the 10th column in this series that Archbishop John Hughes of New York prevented the destruction of Catholic churches in New York during riots that followed the 1844 Native American Party in 1844. Eleven years later, during the Civil War, he faced another problem: the Draft Riots. Provisions of the draft law were unfair. For example, a man could buy himself a substitute's exemption for a fraction of the obligation of the serve in the army.

Archbishop Hughes was in favor of a draft, but he was far in favor of earning the right to provide for his people. He worked to prevent the destruction of the Catholic Church and the suffering of those who would lose their homes. His actions during the Civil War showed his dedication to his duty as a priest and a leader of the Catholic Church.

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Opening New Wise Word Windows

Long ago, a friend sent some “Words of Wisdom” copied from what looks to be a column in a newspaper (the kind with a slick shine). Someone must have left in the wise words themselves to be slick, but I’d rather keep these ideas in the succinct form they are. All I ask is that we remember to use them slowly and carefully, digging deeply for the special insight that comes. Some of them could be expanded into full-blown meditations. On the paper my friend sent, a tiny cross begins each of these sentences. I don’t have the capability of doing that here. Also, instead of using quotation marks, I’m italicizing everything. There are no authors noted, so I am crediting “Anonymous, USA.” I’ve clipped a few, and one sentence is simply this: 

• A successful marriage isn’t finding the right person; it’s being the right person.
• Some marriages might be made in heaven, but they all must be maintained on Earth.
• It isn’t difficult to make a mountain out of a molehill: Just add dirt.
• Too many people offer God prayers with clown marks all over them.
• The tongue must be heavy, because so few old clowns can do with it.
• God wants spiritual fruit (as found in the Fruits of the Holy Spirit), not religious power.
• A skeptic is a person who sees the handwriting on the wall but claims it’s a map.
• Standing in the middle of the road is dangerous, because you can get knocked down by the traffic from both directions.

Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of the Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.

Research for the Church.James D. Davidson

Generational differences among priests

Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger of The Catholic University of America have published an important new book, which summarizes and raises many timely issues for religious orders in 2001, but also makes excellent use of studies done in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Hoge and Wenger assert that today’s priests have much in common. For example, virtually all priests study the liturgy, which is the heart of God’s people, love for the Catholic Church, desire for personal fulfillment and acceptance of the Church, love for the Catholic Church, desire to serve God’s people, virtually all priests agree on “their love for the Church, their love for the Catholic Church, their love for the Catholic Church, their love for the Catholic Church.”

One thing that I find interesting is that priests in the last 30 years. “The first occurred at the time of Vatican II—from the older ‘culic’ model of priest as administrator of the sacraments and teacher of the faith, to a model of priest as spiritual and social leader of the community” (p. 59). The second occurs on the basis that when we are writing about the values of a generation, we are writing about something that is shared by our readers. I am not a rioter. No, I am a man of peace. Then the men quietly went home. †

Deacon James D. Davidson is a professor of sociology at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. His most recent book is Lay Ministers and Their Ministerial Functions, published by Our Sunday Visitor in 2003.

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

It’s always time to give and to receive

It’s all over. The fat lady has sung (probably). The time of generosity and gift-giving has passed once again. But there are new opportunities for giving in 2004 now, and we have other fish to fry. Well, not necessarily. I consider what a gift really is. A gift is something that is freely given and freely accepted, a gift that is well-being of both the giver and the recipient. We shouldn’t wait until Christmas each year for gifts, although that is indeed the time when the custom began with the greatest gift ever given. It’s only natural that a gift is a wonderful thing, since it’s God who thought up the idea in the first place. And, it’s God who has given us the gift of life, including temporal life, which we receive through Adam and Eve, and eternal life, which comes with the Incarnation.

Not satisfied with these extraordinary awards, God continues to present us with innumerable gifts, including intellectual beauty and physical prowess. Some of us have gifts for learning language or dancing like the late great Hines. Some are producing delicious food, and some for solving complex mathematical and engineering problems.

Some of us have gifts of empathy, kindness and generosity, which enable us to treat others as we would want to be treated. Some of us possess gifts of spiritual discernment or the ability to communicate God’s truth so that others may share it.

If we despair that we are the least of God’s creatures, perhaps we’ve been given gifts that others are not blessed with. Perhaps we are the ones who should share our wealth and materials. We need to consider what a gift really is. We need to consider whether we are offering God a gift or not.

Then, there are material gifts. When we copy God’s gift of the Incarnation by giving a gift of our time, we are trying to express our love for others as God expressed his for us. We may not be offering a gift of the same kind of love, but we are offering the best substitute we can find.

We realize a gift has become just a meaningless obligation when we no longer enjoy giving, or receiving. The ugly tie firmly held to our body by our distant relative, or the hostess bagged with a kerchief full of weird delicacies from an acquaintance may irritate us more than they inspire gratitude. If we’re truthful, we know we’ve probably given similar presents and all of us should just stop it.

Furthermore, in undesigned gift exchanges we may not know who will receive our gift, so the idea is to give something generally desirable to a person who shares part of our lives. Still, true giving involves some kind of love for the recipient. The gift is not intended to be mean something as simple as hearing them when they speak, offering our humanities in the public, and respecting their dreams.

Of course, we don’t always hit the joy button. Of course, we don’t always hit the joy button when choosing a gift. Some of us have gifts of empathy, kindness and generosity, which enable us to treat others as we would want to be treated. Some of us possess gifts of spiritual discernment or the ability to communicate God’s truth so that others may share it.

We use both the spiritual and material gifts we’ve been given because that’s the best way to show them respect, and to show God. And we should continue to give to others, both spiritually and materially. Then we may truly pray with joy and gratitude. “Bless us, Lord, and these thy gifts.”

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greensboro, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord! Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 11, 2004

- Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

This weekend, the Church celebrates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—report this event. It is not recorded in John, although John’s Gospel alludes to John the Baptist’s baptism in the Jordan and, also reported in John’s Gospel, John the Baptist gives Jesus the title “Lamb of God.”

In any event, the baptism of Jesus has been regarded as a major revelation by God of His identity and mission. The first reading is one of the four Suffering Servant Songs in Isaiah. Usually, these very poetic passages occur in the liturgies of Lent, and indeed for Good Friday. There is an omenous overture.

No one knows who precisely was in the mind of the author of this section of Isaiah as these four magnificent hymns were composed. Was it the future Messiah? Was it one of the prophesied? Was it the author? Was it a collective reference to the people of Israel?

Regardless, the Christian liturgies over the centuries have given Jesus in the Suffering Servant Songs. Certainly, this is the message for this feast.

Through this Scripture, God reveals that a faithful and pure servant will come. He will endure an outrageous fortune. His suffering will be for all of us.

To the people of Israel?

The suffering Servant Songs. Certainly, this is the centuries have seen Jesus in the centuries of the Church.

Many will turn against him, yet he will be reborn again in our own hearts, minds and souls.

In the great revelation of the Epiphany, celebrated last week, the Church continued to tell us about Jesus. The Son of Mary and therefore human, the Lord also is God. The Magi recognized this fact. Now, on this feast, the Church instructs us further about Jesus. He is the instrument of God’s love for us. Doomed to suffering and grace.

It was, and is, God’s will that we be one with God. We achieve this union with God in and through Jesus. He is our Savior. We must be one with God. We achieve this union with God. We must be united with Christ. He is our Savior.

Reflection

The Church joyfully has led us to Christmas, the anniversary of the Lord’s birth. It led us to Christmas through Advent, when it called us to renew ourselves, to refresh ourselves in holiness and grace.

If we indeed renewed ourselves in Advent, then Christmas should have been much more than a commemoration. It should have been a personal event. As Christians, we have allowed Christ to be reborn again in our own hearts, minds and souls.

In the great revelation of the Epiphany, celebrated last week, the Church continued to tell us about Jesus. The Son of Mary and therefore human, the Lord also is God. The Magi recognized this fact. Now, on this feast, the Church instructs us further about Jesus. He is our Savior.

It was, and is, God’s will that we be one with God. We achieve this union with God in and through Jesus. We must be inseparably bonded to Christ. He is God. God is love. God forgives us and restores us to eternal life.†

Angels are pure spirits and are creatures of God.

Are all angels male? (Louisiana)

According to Catholic tradition, and generally for all Christians, angels are believed to be pure spirits. They are creatures of God, intelligent and capable of moral decisions and actions, but they have no material or physical makeup, therefore no bodies, and therefore no sexual identity. Angels, as themselves, are neither male nor female.

In earlier Hebrew stories, angels rarely appear. God deals with human beings—Adam and Moses, for example—face-to-face, as it were, with no angels in between.

Later on, as the Jewish awareness of God’s transcendance, or holiness, developed, angels appear in the Old Testament more and more often as intermediaries between God and humans.

By New Testament times, they became more evident and are mentioned often in the Gospels and other Christian writings after Jesus. The voice of the Father is heard rarely in the New Testament, but angels have a significant role in important events such as the Assumption of Mary and the Resurrection.

When angels do appear to human beings, it is nearly always in human form, and always when a sex is indicated it is masculine.

The Book of Genesis (Gen 18:2), in which three men, obviously angels of God, receive Abraham’s hospitality, as well as Joshua (Jos 5:13), Ezekiel (Ez 9:2) and Zechariah (Zec 1:8) are a few examples in pre-Christian Scriptures. Instances in the New Testament include Luke (Lk 24:4) at the tomb after the Resurrection and Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:10) the ascension of Jesus.

Even when gender is not mentioned explicitly, other circumstances seem to point toward males, such as masculine forms of names and functions for which a woman would not serve in ancient culture, such as the angel Raphael guiding Tobit’s journey to find a wife, and so on.

The canonical Scriptures assign names to three angels, all of whom serve in what would usually be seen as masculine roles. Gabriel interprets visions in the Book of Daniel and plays a central role in the birth stories of Jesus and John the Baptist. Also named are Raphael and Michael, who is described as “great prince” in Daniel (Dn 12:1), and leader of the host of angels in the book of Revelation (Rv 12:7).

Angels were always treated with deference, greatness and esteem by the biblical characters and authors.

Your columns about celiac sprue disease explained how some people cannot tolerate the gluten in wheat Communion hosts because of a dangerous allergy. You said there is no totally gluten-free host that the Church approves for the Eucharist. A Catholic periodical reported recently that a new host is available and approved. Can you tell us what they are and where our parish can obtain them? (Florida)

Catholic authorities have ruled several times in the last two decades or so (most recently July 24, 2003) that totally gluten-free hosts are not valid matter for the Eucharist and may not be used at Mass or for Communion. That ruling continues.

Work has continued in the United States and Europe to find a formula that can be received by those who cannot tolerate gluten. One formula was recently developed in response to the requests of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Mo., longtime manufacturers of Communion hosts.

As Vatican authorities require, the hosts are not entirely without gluten, but the amount is exceedingly lower than any available in the past, about .01 percent or one part in 10,000. In other ways, these hosts comply with requirements that they be composed of wheat and water only, with no other foreign materials, and no process that would alter the form of bread.

A physician should determine whether or not a person with celiac sprue should attempt to tolerate even this small amount. The alternative remains of receiving the Eucharist only under the form of wine.

The Benedictine Sisters may be reached at 31970 State Highway P, Clyde, Mo., 64432 or 800-223-2772 or by e-mail at aabread@benedictinesisters.net.†
DENTAL STUDY FOR PERSONS WHO WEAR PARTIAL DENTURES

Researchers at the Oral Health Research Institute (IU School of Dentistry) are currently looking for people who wear partial dentures to participate in research studies to test dental products. These studies have been conducted with partial denture wearers since 1981 but now more participants are needed to fill the ever-growing study needs.

Needed are persons ages 18 to 75 who wear upper or lower partial dentures and are generally in good health. Participants will attend a screening appointment to determine if they qualify. Qualified subjects will be paid up to $200–$300 for their time and receive free dental clearings. If you want to learn more about the project, please call (317) 274-8822 and ask to speak with a representative of the partial denture studies.

Lenten Retreats

March 5–7 Lenten Retreat for Women
The Divine Romance: Accepting God’s Love for Us and Growing in our Response
Fr. Patrick Keith Hosey and Sr. Maureen Mangen

March 12–14 Lenten Retreat for Women
Fr. Ben Hawley SJ

March 19–21 Lenten Retreat for Women
Fr. Ted Haag, OFM

March 26–28 Silent Retreat for Men & Women
Presenter To Be Announced

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Rest in peace

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


DALL, SASSO, Sue, 45, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Nov. 23. Daughter of Pauline Dall Sasso.


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Brother of Unabomber says death penalty is no solution to violence

CONVENT STATION, N.J. (CNS)—David Kaczynski, who led federal investigators to his brother, Unabomber Ted Kaczynski, in 1996, says he is opposed to the death penalty in a recent talk at St. Eliza-

beth College in Convent Station. “The more you learn and think about the death penalty, the less likely you are to support it,” Kaczynski said. “There exists a serious inequity in the structure of the death penalty system. The worst lawyers are reserved for the poorest defendants.”

Kaczynski said there has not been an execution in New Jersey in decades, yet the government continues to spend millions of dollars on it.

Center run by National Evangelization Organization draws hundreds of teens

ST PAUL, Minn. (CNS)—The Twin Cities’ newest teen hot spot isn’t The Old Navy store at the mall or the trendy night-

club downtown, but a converted gymna-

sium in West St. Paul known as the NET

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World

Pope encourages people to meditate on the meaning of Christmas

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Greeting thousands of people gathered around the Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square, Pope John Paul II encouraged people to silently look at the statue of the baby in the manger and think about the meaning of Christ’s birth. “In the cold temperatures and under a grey sky, the visitors gathered on Jan. 4 for the recitation of the midday Angelus prayer. In his prayer, the pope spoke about a verse from the Gospel of St. John: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” In his Gospel, John focuses on “the divine origin of Christ,” yet at the same time “he forcefully insists on the reality of Incarnation,” the pope said.

The pope encouraged people to silently meditate on the mystery of the Incarnation and think about the death of Jesus. The pope said, “Jesus is true God and true man,” Pope John Paul said. “He is the only-

ness of his Incarnation,” the pope said.

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the lectern used for liturgical celebrations during Christopher Columbus’ voyages to America.

Pope John Paul II also personally wrote a letter of welcome, which is on display for all who visit the exhibit.

“The exhibit narrates the history of the papacy starting ideally from the tomb of St. Peter, the first pope,” said Msgr. Roberto Zagnoli, curator. He is also the director of the Missionary-Ethnological Museum of the Vatican.

“The visitor will be led down in the grottoes of the most important basilica of the Vatican and from there trace the birth of the ancient basilicas, built by emperor Constantine, on the tomb of the prince of the Apostles,” he said.

“The subsequent sections deal with the pontifical elections, papal celebration and even the papal obligations throughout the ages in continuous dialogue with Church communities, the people, the cultural traditions and religions,” Msgr. Zagnoli said.

And the display is not necessarily only for Catholics—non-Catholics as well would receive a deeper understanding of the history of the Church, Msgr. Zagnoli said.

“Art, daughter of beauty, is certainly one of the more significant elements which engages people in a dialogue, for all and not just Catholics,” he said.

“The exhibit, for all its works and collections, is so unique and extraordinary that not to see it would mean missing a once-in-a-lifetime experience,” he said.

(Admission to the “St. Peter and the Vatican” exhibit is $18.50 for adults, $9.50 for children ages 3-12 and $13.50 for seniors. An audio tour is included. For more information, call 513-287-7000 or 800-733-2077 or log on to www.cincymuseum.org.)

Above, the papal tiara of Pope Pius VII, dated to 1802, is one of the many artifacts from the history of the popes currently on display at the Cincinnati Museum Center. The crown includes gold and precious stones.

Left, Dennis Bartz looks up at a recreation of scaffolding in the Sistine Chapel. The recreation is just a part of the “Saint Peter and the Vatican: The Legacy of the Popes” exhibit at the Cincinnati Museum Center. The exhibit is the largest collection from the Vatican Museum to tour in the United States.

I believe sharing is something you never outgrow.

It isn’t supposed to end in kindergarten. Or when we get older. I believe sharing is a way of life. But why stop there? Nothing can keep us from giving. The Catholic Community Foundation has a number of financial tools that can help you help the Church carry on its mission, from simple one-time gifts to endowments. For more ways to remember the Church in your estate, ask for Jim Wathen at 800-382-9836.

Just off the presses, the new directory contains up-to-date information about parishes, pastors, parish staff, schools, school staff, religious education staff, archdiocesan administration, offices and agencies, telephone numbers, Mass times, addresses, e-mail addresses, photos of and biographical information about pastors, parish life coordinators, religious women and men ministering in the archdiocese, Catholic Charities, hospitals, colleges and other institutions.

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