The gospel of the body
Hundreds flock to hear the good news about sex and marriage

By Sean Gallagher

What would you do on a cold Saturday in the middle of February? Chores around the house? Attend your children’s or grandchildren’s sporting events? If you’re in college, take a break from studying?

On Feb. 18, more than 300 people—from teenagers to senior citizens—packed Tuohy Hall at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis to hear noted Catholic author and speaker Christopher West lead a daylong seminar on the Church’s teachings on the nature of the human person, sexuality and marriage.

The day before, more than 200 people listened to West speak for four hours on related topics at Holy Name Parish in Beech Grove.

These teachings have come to be known as the “theology of the body,” a term coined by Pope John Paul II and the subject of 129 catechetical presentations that the late Holy Father gave at his Wednesday general audiences from 1979-84. It is also the title of the one-volume English translation of those presentations.

Commenting during a break on Feb. 18, Cliff Babbey, a member of Christ the King Parish, said that in his opinion the large turnout for the eight-hour seminar demonstrated what more and more people feel about the prevailing attitudes about sexuality in today’s culture.

“People, I think, have become overwhelmed by … the evil that society perpetuates about the human body,” Babbey said. “The message that is constantly being demonstrated to us by Madison Avenue advertising is that the human body … is something to be looked at with lust and not looked at as a portal to God.”

Presenting the banquet
Although West spoke about this understanding of the human body and sexuality held by many in society—often likening it to “eating out of the dumpster”—he emphasized the positive nature of the Church’s teachings on these topics, describing them as “the banquet.”

“You attract bees with honey,” West told his audience on Feb. 18. “You attract a world that’s eating out of the dumpster by presenting the banquet, not by condemning the dumpster.

“This is not a message of condemnation. This is a message of salvation. And when we present the banquet to people, they no longer want to eat from the dumpster if they really see the banquet.”

West’s presentation of the Church’s teachings on sex and marriage was filled with contemporary cultural references.

Philippines remain hopeful as they help search after landside

MAASIN, Philippines (CNS)—Relatives of victims of a massive landslide in the central Philippines remained hopeful as they helped survivors and aided rescuers, Church officials said.

On Feb. 15, Bishop Precioso Cantillas of Maasin told UCA News.

U.S. Marines joined the rescue effort in Guinsaugon village on Feb. 20 as high-tech equipment detected sounds at the site of an elementary school buried in the mud on Feb. 17, but rescue officials said they could not determine if the sounds were made by survivors or shifting mud.

Bishop Precioso Cantillas of Maasin observed rescue operations in the village on the overcast morning of Feb. 20, reported UCA News, an Asian Church news agency based in Thailand. From there, he proceeded to St. Augustine Parish, about three miles away in Catmon village, to help coordinate aid and relief work.

“You can really feel the people’s strong faith—even reporters and rescuers are commenting about it,” Bishop Cantillas told UCA News.

The bishop said local residents were praying, and those he spoke with believed their relatives were alive. Some of the survivors were men and youths who were working or attending high school outside Guinsaugon, a village of 1,800 people, he said.

“People in Guinsaugon and barrios around it have been feeling tremors from time to time,” Bishop Cantillas said. He attributed the tragedy to the “very soft” soil and incessant northeast monsoon rains. “People would evacuate, but when the rains stop, they would return,” he said.

By late Feb. 20, five children were among the 72 people confirmed dead; another 1,350 people were listed as missing.

St. Augustine Parish Center was offering refuge to relatives and residents of Guinsaugon, on southern Leyte Island.

Guinsaugon had 500 houses, a town hall and a public elementary school, reported Father Amiel Borneo, the bishop’s secretary, who is coordinating rescue efforts. He said parish workers were involved “in all areas of operations,” including helping to identify bodies.

The priest said about 200 evacuees were staying at the St. Augustine Parish house, while 700 other evacuees were being housed in the diocese’s Cristo Rey Regional High School in the city of
Pro-life director writes novel about God’s saving grace

By Mary Ann Wyand

Serving souls. That’s the primary work of the Catholic Church—preparing people to spend eternity with God. That’s also the goal of Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo in her ministries as director of the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry and part-time director of religious education at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. It was to what she hopes to accomplish with her first novel, The Final Choice, about the life and death decisions that people make in contemporary society.

The right choices, of course, are based on Scripture and Church teachings, Sister Diane said, but she chose to publish her book is based on Church teachings, but she chose to publish it with a Christian publisher based in Indianapolis, praised Sister Diane’s novel

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One of the best novels about life and death, and how faith impacts these decisions us about tomorrow and leads us to the light of eternity,” Father Pavone wrote. “I describe the Final Choice as a written soap opera,” she said. “The book is a really good book. Will you sign it for me?”

Sister Diane said she “wanted to find a way to bring the liberating truths of the Church’s teachings,” she said, and is intended to be read by junior high and high school students as well as adults.

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Abstinence from meat is to be observed on Ash Wednesday, March 17. Fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age or not yet 59. Those who are bound by this rule may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one’s needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

Fasting is to be observed on the evening of Holy Thursday, which is April 13. Voluntary Commutation means that those permitted to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday until the evening of Holy Thursday, which is April 13.

The First Choice

The First Choice is a novel about life and death, and how faith impacts these decisions us about tomorrow and leads us to the light of eternity,” Father Pavone wrote. “I describe the Final Choice as a written soap opera,” she said. “The book is a really good book. Will you sign it for me?”

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Scholarship aims to increase diversity at Marian College

By John Shaughnessy

His simple approach to life could help many people today: “Pray and work, but don’t worry.”

Yet, it’s the actions of Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter that provide the greatest lesson about the difference that one person of vision and courage can make in the world.

Sitting in his president’s office at Maranatha Baptist University, Daniel Elsener shares the story of Cardinal Ritter, the late archbishop of Indianapolis whose legacy has been honored at the college with a new $1 million endowed scholarship fund.

The story takes Elsener back to 1947, 10 years after Cardinal Ritter ordered the integration of Catholic schools in Indianapolis. By 1947, Cardinal Ritter had become the archbishop of St. Louis, a community with steep Southern ties that felt comfortable with blacks and whites attending separate schools.

Cardinal Ritter didn’t share that belief. So he ordered Catholic schools in St. Louis to be integrated—a choice that led to a hostile and vocal firestorm, with opponents threatening legal action while also suggesting that the Indianan native return to his home state or take his plan with him to Africa.

“Even good people told him he couldn’t do it,” Elsener said, shaking his head in respect and admiration. “He was under tremendous pressure. And he just did it. And he was alone in doing it. He saw things as they should be. Some people have courage. Some people have vision. The great leaders have both.”

Cardinal Ritter’s choice came seven years before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1954 that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.

“He stood for actually affected our country,” Elsener said. “He was a step ahead, and he didn’t have a National Guard to implement it. We need to remember it and celebrate it.”

The scholarship fund will be used to increase diversity at Marian, according to the wishes of the person who endowed it—Andrew Steffen, an Indianapolis attorney.

“A big part of my interest is to provide opportunities to qualified and deserving students who want to obtain degrees in the performing and visual arts and in education,” he said. “I just can’t think of a greater act of stewardship.”

Elsener hopes that legacy of making a difference continues with the students who will benefit from the Cardinal Ritter scholar fund.

“I hope the people who receive them can live out a little of Cardinal Ritter’s vision, commitment and commitment to education,” Elsener said. “I hope the Christian message flows through their life’s work. This is the spirit of that kind of gift, that it just lives and lives.”

Federal tax and budget cuts seen hurting poor, vulnerable

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The newly approved 2006 federal budget and the budget proposals for coming years will cut programs for the poor and vulnerable even as tax cuts and higher defense spending increase federal deficits, Catholic social ministry leaders were told on Feb. 14 at a national conference in Washington. Ellen Nissenbaum, legislative director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, said the Bush administration’s fiscal year 2007 budget proposal calls for deep cuts in domestic discretionary programs, some cuts in entitlement programs and tax cuts that will increase the deficit.

“This fails the test of fairness, and it certainly fails the test of fiscal responsibility,” she said.

Deborah Weinstein, executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, said the 2006 budget reconciliation bill, signed into law the previous week, institutes changes in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF program, that will lead to less Medicaid funding and make it much harder for states to meet requirements for federal funding.

Nissenbaum said that, out of the legisl-ation enacted since 2001 that has contributed to the federal deficit, in the 2005 deficit 48 percent was due to the adminis-tration’s tax cuts, 36 percent to defense, homeland security and entitlement programs; 8 percent to discretionary domestic spending, including education and health; and 8 percent to discretionary non-discretionary spending, including tax cuts; those in the middle 20 percent will receive an average tax break of $748; those in the top 20 percent will average $5,406. The 2006 tax break for those in the top 1 percent of earned income will average $39,020, and for those whose annual income exceeds $1 million, the average tax break will be $111,549, according to the chart, based on data from the Tax Policy Center.

She said a new pay-as-you-go “reform” in the budget process “applies only to enti-tlements, not taxes,” meaning that new structures are placed on entitlement funding, but tax cuts can be extended or new ones added without budgetary restrictions.
**Letters to the Editor**

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James I. McDavid, Indianapolis

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I wonder how much time he gave his victims to do the same.

Peter Juddiks, New Albany

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Nuestro sufrimiento puede sumarse al de Cristo en la cruz

Nuestros primeros padres, Adán y Eva, vivieron con toda la gloria de Dios en su humanidad, pero lo sufrimiento y la muerte que han sufrido conocen una experiencia de vida y muerte como ninguna otra. Cuando se pecó y murió, Dios los abandonó, dejando que la muerte y el pecado se llevaran a cabo. Sin embargo, Dios nos ha dado una esperanza de resurrección y vida eterna.

El sufrimiento es un don que nos permite comprender la bondad de Dios y su amor. Dios nos ama a pesar de nuestro pecado y sufrimiento, y nos da la oportunidad de ser santos y participar en su redención.

Dios nos permite ser libres para uti-
izar nuestros talentos humanos a fin de
construir y desarrollar nuestro ambiente
terrenal. En ocasiones hacemos cosas que
donos envejecer (mayoreando para obtener
salud de nuestra salud. La buena
noticia es que si el envejecimiento
se produce con la salud, si algunas
saludables son a causa del pecado, pero
muchas no lo son. En cierta forma, podríamos decir que
nos ocurren cosas malas porque no somos Dios, no somos perfectos ni tampoco nuestros
otros. La buena noticia es que si el
historia no termina con nuestras
fecciones, sufrimiento y muerte. La
noticia es que tenemos un destino divino
que hará que nuestra “vida buena” aquí
en la tierra sea pálida en comparación. La
verdadera tragedia sucede cuando olvi
damos que estamos destinados al reino
de Dios donde toda larga será engañada.
Al final, eso es lo que cuenta. La
verdadera tragedia sucede si no tenemos fe en
Dios, especialmente si intentamos ocu-
pa el lugar de Dios, tal como Adán y Eva.
Nuestro consuelo más profundo ante
el sufrimiento es saber que Dios entiende verdaderamente porque, en su
inmensa amor, Él permitió que su único
Hijo compartiera nuestra travesía. Jesús
sufrió y murió injustamente por nosotros
y conquistó el pecado y la muerte para
siempre.

Por lo tanto, recuerdos el Via Crucis durante el Cuaresma, reza-
mos “Te adoramos, oh, Cristo, y te
alabamos porque gracias a tu santa cruz
hay arrasado el mundo.”

Debido al amor de Dios encarnado en
Jesús, tenemos la esperanza inmanente de
que no estamos condenados a una vida
injusta para siempre.

A medida que se acerca la Cuaresma,
debemos recordar este maravilloso miste-
rio de Dios.

Tal vez nuestro desafío de la Cuaresma
can ser el esfuerzo renovado de consider-
ar en la oración cómo el sufrimiento
que se nos presente puede simularse al
de Cristo en la Cruz. Allí podremos hallar
el verdadero consuelo al creer que Cristo nos ayuda a llevar nuestras cargas.
Retreats and Programs

February 24-26 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Discerning 101,” Father Daniel Mahan, presenter, $150 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail www.archindy.org/fatima

February 26 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Satanic 101,” Mother Maria Nazaret, presenter. Information: 317-398-6817 or www.archindy.org/fatima

Stewardship conference to be held in Indianapolis

The Living Catholic Stewardship Conference will be held on June 14-16 at the Sheraton Hotel and Suites at Keystone at the Crossing in Indianapolis.

According to conference organizers, one of its main purposes is to gather “a body of the faithful from around the country to bring the stewardship message closer to area parishes.”

Sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor, the Indianapolis Archdiocesan Stewardship Council and other organizations, the conference will feature two archdiocesan Catholics—Father Daniel Mahan, pastor of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis, and Daniel Elsener, pastor of Marquess Catholic in Indianapolis. Nationally known speakers, financial experts and motivational speakers Matthew Kelly of Cincinnati, will also present programs.

Registration for the conference costs $225 before March 1. After that date, the cost increases to $300.

For more information on the conference, call 800-348-2888, ext. 2550, or log on to www.orsvengeloves.com.

Events Calendar


February 24 Marian College, St. Francis Hall, 5300 South College Road, Indianapolis. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, worship, prayer and praise evening. Information: 317-977-2460.

St. Nicholas School, hall, 6401 E. 56th St. Dinner, Speaker, information by sevenths- and eighth-grade students, 6-7:30 p.m., free will offering.

St. Francis Hospital, 811 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Natural Family Planning (NFP) class, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-865-5554.

February 25 Cathedral High School, 5225 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, Shamrock Run 2006, 5:30 p.m.-midnight, $110 per person includes dinner and preview party. Information: 317-342-1481.

University of Indianapolis, Sullivant Student Center, 1400 E. Hanna Ave., Indianapolis. St. Francis Hospital and Health Centers, Spiritual Growth Day 2006, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., $40 adults, $35 spiritual growth age groups. Drive Time youth, no registration required. Information: 317-865-5864.

St. Ambrose Parish, parish hall, 325 S. Court St., Seymour. Parish Retreat, “Changed by His Glory,” John and Katrina Vinson, presenter. Information: 812-357-6611 or e-mail vinson@saintmeinrad.edu.

February 26-27 Marian College, library auditorium, 3230 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Catholic Radio 89.1 annual dinner, reception 6 p.m., dinner 7 p.m., $50 per person. Information: 317-236-1569 or e-mail vnesia@archindy.org.

St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Fourth annual Catholic Women’s Conference, “Helped Women Today,” 8 a.m.-3 p.m., $54 per person. Information: 317-857-2007, ext. 122, or e-mail mmeiner@stchristophersindy.com.


March 8 Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg, Lenten Series, “Who Do You Say I Am? Jesus, The Word Made Flesh,” Franciscan Sister Forma Rocke, presenter. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., lunch. Information: 812-537-6603 or e-mail dmjung@stmary.org.

March 13 Mount St. Marys College, 5225 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Pre-Cana Conference for engaged couples, 1:45-6 p.m. Information: 317-236-1560 or 800-382-9383, ext. 1596.

March 15 Marten House Hotel, 180 W. 36th St., Indianapolis, “The Spirit in These Times,” monthly series, 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Information: 812-933-6477 or e-mail pmrobinson@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 16 Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg, “The Spirit in These Times,” monthly series, 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Information: 812-933-6477 or e-mail pmrobinson@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 16-19 Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Parish social services and “New Generous Services,” Benedictine Father Noel Michael MacGowan, presenter. Information: 812-537-6611 or e-mail pmrobinson@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 20 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Lenten Retreat for Women,” Benedictine Father Carl Hauer, presenter. Information: 812-933-6477 or e-mail pmrobinson@saintmeinrad.edu.


Sister Maria Tarsia, presenter, $152 per person. Information: 317-933-5777 or e-mail kordes@thedome.com.

March 19 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Discernment 101,” Jesus Father Thomas Wider, 7-9:30 p.m. information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail www.archindy.org/fatima

March 24-26 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Lenten Retreat for Women,” Dominican Sister Romanova Nowak, presenter. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail www.archindy.org/fatima

The Redemptorist Retreat Center, 820 W. State Road 48, Bowling Green, Archdiocesan Parish Retreat for men, all ages, all call are confirmed. Information: 317-391-2092, 317-391-5212, 317-236-1521 or e-mail cuid@saintcatherine.org.

Kordes Retreat Center, 841 E. 14th St., Fishers, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). “Wearing the ‘Seamless Garment’–Social Justice in Action,” Benedictine Father Michael A. Kordes, presenter, $152 per person. Information: 800-890-2777 or e-mail kordes@thedome.com.

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis, Women’s Retreat,” “Discovering Jesus at the Back Door of Our Lives,” 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $32 per person. Information: 812-933-5777 or cjohnst@archindy.org.

March 25 Michaela Farm, Oldenburg, “Identifying Ruptures: Whacks and Ovoh,” Workshop for pastors, 1-5 p.m., presenter, 10-noon information: 812-933-5777 or cjohnst@archindy.org.

March 26 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Pre-Cana Conference for engaged couples, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., free will offering. Information: 317-859-6651 or 317-859-6751.

March 28 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Lenten Day of Reflection,” 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail www.archindy.org/fatima

March 30 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Contemplating God’s Existence: the Cross in Our Daily Lives–A View from a Contemplative Monk,” Community of St. John the Beloved Mary David Hoyer, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail www.archindy.org/fatima
The Sisters of St. Joseph of Tipton, headquartered in Tipton, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, announced on Feb. 7 that they are joining six other Sisters of St. Joseph communities to form a new congregation.

The new community, which will be known as the Congregation of St. Joseph, is awaiting final approval from the Holy See, which is expected in April 2007.

The other communities helping form the new congregation are based in Cleveland, Cincinnati, LaGrange, Ill.; Nazareth, Mich.; Wheeling, W. Va.; and Wichita, Kan.

The Congregation of St. Joseph is expected to have more than 800 sisters, a press release said.

In a statement, St. Joseph Sister Joseph Martin McEntee, the president of the Tipton-based community, said the decision to form a new congregation “grew out of our ... common origin, heritage, charism and mission from the original Sisters of St. Joseph, who began to minister more than 250 years ago in La Puay, France.

“Rather than continuing as independent congregations,” Sister Martin said, “we have chosen to be and act more as one that we might better focus our human and capital resources on serving the needs of the world’s people in the 21st century.”

Four Sisters of St. Joseph of Tipton are currently ministering or in residence in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

St. Joseph Sister Jane Frances Mannion has served as a pastoral associate at St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis for eight years. For 15 years before that, she served as a pastoral associate at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis. She currently serves the new congregation’s leadership council.

In a telephone interview, Sister Jane Frances, who entered her community in 1960, noted a commonality between the start of her religious life and the life of this newly-formed religious community.

“When I entered 46 years ago, I didn’t know what was ahead,” she said. “You have to depend on the Spirit and know that we’re working together. That’s been important.”

She said the formation of the new community could have an impact on the archdiocese by introducing it to many women religious who might not have considered ministering here in the past.

“I think it would be enticing knowing that there’s an opportunity to go to another diocese and to be involved in the life of that diocese,” Sister Jane Frances said.

The headquarters for the new congregation will be in LaGrange Park, Ill.

Sisters of St. Joseph form new congregation

By Sean Gallagher

Children medical mission to Morocco to offer

By Mary Ann Wyand

Two St. Luke parishioners, Dr. Mercy Obeime and Linda Lucas of Indianapolis, recently participated in an Ambassadors for Children medical mission to Morocco to bring hope and help to the poor in this northwest African country.

As part of a 15-member coalition, they traveled to the L’Heure Joyeuse Clinic in Casablanca and the Maison de L’Enfant Dar Tifl Orphanage in Marrakech to offer medical care, school supplies, toys and love to some of Morocco’s most underserved children.

The Ambassadors for Children mission trip was videotaped for a documentary titled “The Hope Givers” by WFYI Channel 21 staff members Jim Simmons and Kaline Schoune for broadcast at 7 p.m. on Feb. 26 on the Indianapolis PBS station. Veteran broadcast journalist Diane Wilks of Indianapolis is the program narrator.

It was a heartbreaking experience to see so many malnourished children, said Obeime, a family practice physician at St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis.

“At Casablanca, we went to a clinic where mothers brought their babies who were born with a very low birth weight, and they were given food to feed their children,” Obeime said during a Feb. 21 telephone interview.

“The mothers did not get enough to eat during the pregnancy,” she said. “They did not have food that was rich in protein, and their children have protein deficiencies. When the babies are born, they are small and have very low muscle mass. The clinic tries to give them appropriate food. It was really sad. I picked up a baby who was about four months old, who weighed only about five pounds but had been delivered at term.”

Obeime said the women don’t understand why their babies are sick.

“The mother is in a hopeless situation because she doesn’t really understand what went wrong,” Obeime said. “She feels guilty, she feels she had something to do with this, even though she doesn’t quite understand what she did [wrong]. This was one of the things that touched me the most because it can be prevented.”

Malnutrition causes a number of health problems, including cognitive disorders, she said, but providing multivitamins and nutritious food for women of childbearing age can save their children’s lives.

Documentary shares Ambassadors for Children mission trip to Morocco

Legacy for Our Mission:
For Our Children and the Future

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS WORKS AT SHAWE MEMORIAL

Jerry Bomholt thought he was taking a step back-ward. He was afraid that he would be cutting himself off from real student interaction when he accepted the call to serve as principal and basketball coach at Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, Ind. He was wrong.

“When I took this job three years ago, I thought that I would, in the administration position, be further removed from students as opposed to being in the classroom. What happened was just the opposite,” Principal Bomholt said.

“When I was a teacher, I dealt primarily with the kids in my classroom. As an administrator, I work with every student in the school at a certain level, a lot of them on a daily basis.”

Father Michael Shawe Memorial is a small junior and senior high school by state standards—just 158 students in grades seven through 12. The class sizes are small, too, with a nine-to-one student/teacher ratio. Principal Bomholt believes the school’s size and friendly atmosphere is why he can know the student body so well.

“The reward is that I feel like I get to deal with the entire student body. All of us here, because we are small, we know every student. We know every kid by name. We know their backgrounds, and we know their parents. It’s more of a family atmosphere.”

Parents of the students who attend Father Michael Shawe Memorial are heavily involved in the school, which contributes positively to the family atmosphere. “I think if you just took everything away, I think the number one strength is the interest of our parents in the education of their children,” Principal Bomholt said. “And that’s one of the reasons parents choose Shawe Memorial. We do have a partnership of involvement and concern with our students’ parents.”

Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School students Patti Lasik, Jai Stack and Courtney King participated in the 2005 commencement ceremony.

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Plans for the school include building state-of-the-art libraries and improving the science labs. Eventually, Father Michael Shawe Memorial hopes to physically join the two buildings that make up the school, which now are divided by a parking lot.

Father Michael Shawe Memorial prepares its students for the future—no matter what it may bring. “We want any student who goes through our junior/senior high school program to feel qualified to be accepted at any school in the country,” Principal Bomholt said. “They should feel comfortable and confident applying to any school of their choice.”

Principal Bomholt thinks the faculty and staff at Father Michael Shawe Memorial have created a unique experience for the students and parents. He said it contributes to the students’ receiving an education that is above and beyond the typical junior or senior high school experience.

“We are surrounded by a great faculty and staff who are dedicated to Catholic education,” Principal Bomholt said. “It’s an absolute pleasure to come to school every day, to stand out in the front lobby and greet every kid and try to make them feel like they’re coming to a place where they’re safe and where they’ll be nurtured.”

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocese’s upcoming capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as Catholic education. By contributing to Legacy for Our Mission through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allotted to Catholic schools such as the Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, Ind.
He quoted songs by the Rolling Stones, Bruce Springsteen and K. D. Lang. He acknowledged that there was still a great challenge in helping people know that the Church’s teachings on marriage and sexuality lead to true happiness. “The trick is in helping people believe that the banquet even exists,” he said. “We have been so conditioned by our culture to doubt that real love is even possible. We don’t even believe that the banquet exists, so we settle for the dummy.”

The Church’s vision of sexuality

Many who heard West speak in Beech Grove and Indianapolis were formerly in that position, but now see the positive power of the Church’s vision of sexuality in their own lives.

Kellie Goebel, a member of Holy Name Parish, has been married to her husband, Steve, for 18 years. For most of that time, she knew what the Church taught about marriage and sexuality but not the reasons behind it.

She described the view she previously held on the topic to be both “prudish”—in that she didn’t want to talk openly about it—and “cavalier,” something she “didn’t take seriously.” But a couple of years ago, she began to want to learn more about why the Church taught what it does on sexuality.

She used a random Internet search for books on the topic. The first one to come up was West’s Good News about Sex and Marriage. Goebel purchased a copy and was struck by its upbeat message.

She has since purchased several copies of the book and given it to friends. Goebel and her husband also plan to apply the principles of the theology of the body in their ministry as a sponsor couple for engaged men and women at Holy Name Parish. But she thinks many other people could benefit from learning about it.

“I feel if people understood it better, it could have applications through high school sexual education and through marriage and everything,” Goebel said. “I just see it how could it touch a lot of different aspects of life.”

Father C. Ryan McCarthy knows this from experience in both his ministry at St. Joseph and St. Anne parishes, both in Jennings County, where he serves as pastor, and at Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, where he teaches and serves as chaplain.

“There have been a number of ‘Ah ha!’ moments for couples and for individuals in marriage preparation classes,” he said, “[and for students] in the high school where I teach, when they suddenly start to realize, ‘Wait a second. That’s why I felt the way I did.’

“It’s always a nice thing to witness when someone starts to see the truth of a situation and realizes what the Church teaches do make sense, and that it also makes sense in light of their own experience.”

Reflecting on the decade of his experience as a seminarian and a priest, Father McCarthy spoke of the pleasant surprise he felt as he noticed a growing interest in the Church’s teaching on marriage and sexuality.

“You would think, from a secular perspective, that wouldn’t have a chance, that the message would be drowned out,” he said. “The reality is, the truth seems to be coming through and seems to be growing in strength.”

Understanding a vocation

Seminarian Rick Nagel, a member of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh, who is in his fourth year of formation at Saint Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad, participated in a weeklong intensive seminar on the topic led by West.

Although he has already had many opportunities to apply it in confirmation retreats and ministry to individuals or small groups, Nagel also sees its importance in helping him to understand more deeply the vocation to the priesthood.

“In much of the theology of the body, people automatically take it to relationships with another, which is beautiful and that is certainly what we should do,” he said. “But in the sense of living a celibate life, I look at it as a total gift to all others, not just another, but to all others.”

Appealing to college students

Far from the spiritual atmosphere of a seminary, a college campus might be considered one of the places where the Church’s teaching on sexuality would have a hard time being heard. But even there, young men and women are finding it appealing.

Sury Seygwart, a sophomore at Butler University in Indianapolis and a native of Granger, Ind., participated in the Feb. 18 seminar at Christ the King Parish.

Describing herself as one who values the theology of the body and wants to share it with others, Seygwart said that she was deeply moved by West’s presentation on Thursday and Friday night. “I have the greatest job in the world,” she said. “I just feel like I’m spreading the cure for cancer. What a great job—to see a message spread that’s liberating men and women around the globe.”

West continued from page 1

Andrew and Miriam Dize of Indianapolis listen to Christopher West speak about the Church’s teachings on sexuality during a presentation on Feb. 18 at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Ind. The couple, who studied the theology of the body at Saint Meinrad, said they are “very excited to be able to bring this kind of environment” to their parish.

West said that the theology of the body has “helped us to appreciate our marriage and to grow more in love.”
Immigration reform has many different connotations. For some, it means tightening borders and deporting undocumented aliens. For others, it means dealing with the reality of 11 million undocumented immigrants—45,000 who reside in Indiana—who are living, working and paying taxes in Indiana.

The Indiana General Assembly consid- ered and defeated two immigration reform measures this year. House Bill 1310, lost in the House, would have allowed undocumented immigration reform in Indiana. Many lawmakers realized the harmful and discriminatory effects of the bill, and it was soundly defeated by a 19-to-74 vote in the Indiana House.

Rep. Mike Murphy (R-Indianapolis) led an effort and floor debate to defeat House Bill 1310, which was one reason the measure was defeated by such a large margin. During the House floor debate, Murphy reminded representatives of their own families’ her- itages and histories.

"Many of our own undocumented ancestors did not come here legally. Some crossed the border from Canada to the United States," he said. "If we think all of our ancestors came here legally, we are remembering fairy tales. Thousands came here illegally." Murphy said that House Bill 1310 failed because "the opportunity to have access to places where they could then attempt to harm others.

The Indiana Catholic Conference sup- porting House Bill 1310. Rep. John Aguilera (D-East Chicago), who authored a similar driving privilege bill, said he thought House Bill 1310 failed because "the opportu- nity to have a proper discussion" on the issue never happened.

Aguilera, a member of St. Stanislaus Parish in East Chicago, Ind., in the Gary Diocese, added, "I thought it was the fear and an unwillingness to have an open dis- cussion on these issues, it will be difficult to make significant progress without a proper discussion on the House floor. Crouch opposed House Bill 1310, the driver’s certificate bill.

"I don’t think we should give a special behavior, which is what I thought House Bill 1310 would do if it passed," said Crouch.

Crouch, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Daylight, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese, added, "Perhaps the state should consider something like the new job openings."

Governor’s Tax Amnesty program for the Hispanic community as a way to help undocumented immigrants become legal without fear of being deported or fined. The Hispanic/Latino population in Indiana is currently estimated at 245,500. The 2000 U.S. Census counted more than 214,000 Latinos in the Hoosier State, and 45,000 undocumented immigrant Hoosiers.

Myth 3—America is being overrun by illegal aliens.

Fact—The number of immigrants liv- ing in the United States remains relatively small compared to the total popula- tion. The percentage of foreign-born peo- ple here is about 11 percent. In 1910, the U.S. population was 100 million with foreign-born was 14.7 percent. Only three legal immi- grants per 1,000 enter the United States each year compared to 13 immigrants per 1,000 in 1913.

The 2000 Census found that 22 per- cent of the Hispanic/Latino population between 1990 and 2000. Rather than "overrunning" America, immigrants tend to help revitalize demographically declining areas of the country, most notably in urban centers.

Myth 4—Immigrants aren’t really interested in becoming part of American society.

Fact—Immigrants show positive char- acteristics. A report released by the Institute of Contemporary History showed that immigrants are more likely than the native-born to have intact families and a college degree, and to be employed; also, they are no more likely to commit crimes. Immigrants will help fill the labor shortfall by the retiring baby boomers.

Retired Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan has stated that, "Immigration, if we choose to expand it, could prove an even more potent antidote for slowing growth in the working-age population."

Immigrants contribute to entrepreneur- ship. Inc. Magazine reported in 1995 that 12 percent of the “Inc. 500”—the fastest growing corporations in America—were companies started by immigrants. More than 60,000 immigrants serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Myth 5—Immigrants contribute little to America’s economic growth.

Fact—Immigrants increase the work- ing population and help revitalize demographically declining areas of the country, most notably in urban centers. Many of the jobs that the year that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), now called the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS), estimated that there are 45,000 undocumented immigrant Hoosiers.

(For more information, visit the American Immigration Lawyers Association at www.aila.org.)

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Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis and "Lead Me Back to You," among other things, said after the archdiocesan retreat on Feb. 5 at three years, said after the archdiocesan administration, offices and agencies, telephone numbers, Mass times, addresses, e-mail addresses, photos and biographical information about pastors, parish life coordinators, religious women and men ministering in the archdiocese, Catholic chaplaincies, hospitals, colleges and universities.

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"I love to look out and see the kids praising God, worshiping with music and finding themselves in Christ," Rahill said. "I think the only reason I put on my guitar is to bring youth closer to Christ by showing them his love and them through the music.

"A former seminarian, Rahill plays the acoustic guitar and is the male vocalist for Grace On Demand. He also writes music, and created half of the lyrics for songs on the band’s new CD.

"I’m blessed to be a part of youth ministry in the archdiocese," Rahill said. "Father Meyer has given us an awesome ministry and wonderful task to bring kids of the Catholic tradition [together] where they can feel free to worship and abandon themselves before God among their peers."

Father Meyer, who often sings rap songs with the band at youth events, said "the proceeds are going to assist, promote and produce more CDs and music for our young Catholics."

Since Rahill founded Grace On Demand two years ago, the band has provided praise and worship music for three Consumed retreats and two Archdiocesan Youth Rallies in addition to concerts at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County and St. Pius X Parish in Granger, Ind., in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese.

Rahill said the band’s goals are to praise God, evangelize, and increase participation in archdiocesan and parish youth ministry events.

"God really uses me through music," Rahill said. "It gives me energy to work at music ministry, and it’s God’s gift. He gave it to me, and I’m giving it back. I started doing music ministry in 1992 when I led retreats and conferences as a seminarian at Saint Meinrad. It’s an awesome form of youth ministry. It’s just incredible to see kids responding to the music and praising God." Rahill said he felt called to youth ministry instead of the priesthood, and wants to help encourage thousands—rather than hundreds—of teenagers to participate in the annual Archdiocesan Youth Rally and the Consumed retreat, which focuses on reverence for the Eucharist.

Mary, Queen of Peace parishioner Monica Bollman of Avon, the band’s female vocalist, said Grace On Demand members like to introduce teenagers to praise and worship songs to help bring them closer to Christ.

"Music can change how you look at everything," Bollman said. "It can inspire you to look at everything a little deeper than what you do otherwise."

The band’s new CD is "a very collaborative effort," she said. "We all helped write the songs. It’s very unique in its sound. It’s inspiring!"

Bollman has four children, teaches a third-grade class at Pine Tree Elementary School in Avon, and finds time to help with parish youth activities in addition to Grace On Demand’s part-time music ministry.

She hopes that parishes will start reaching out to children through music ministry to get them more involved in their Catholic faith at a younger age so they will be connected to the Church through Mass and youth group activities during their middle school and high school years.

"I would love to see a [Church] program developed specifically for them," she said, "because if we wait until high school then we have lost some of them."

Marian College sophomore John Boyle, a member of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Avon, plays the electric guitar and helped Rahill start Grace On Demand. Boyle is majoring in theology at the Franciscan college in Indianapolis.

"When we play, seeing the kids praising God really makes it all worthwhile," Boyle said. "We felt like the Spirit … brought everything that we had to offer musically and faith-wise, and poured it all into our first CD and our new CD, too. We’ve sold about a thousand copies of our first CD since we released it at the youth rally last year."

Boyle invited Jon Hook, a drummer and music producer who is a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Brazil, to join the contemporary Christian band, whose other members are Catholic.

Hook said he appreciates this opportunity to praise God with teenagers.

"I remember one moment during the Consumed retreat," Hook said. "All the kids were around the Eucharist, and they had their arms around each other. We were playing at the time, but … I almost forgot that I was playing [the drums] … because it just came natural to me. Just watching the kids—watching the Spirit move through them—was amazing."

(Grace On Demand CDs sell for $10, and can be ordered by contacting Austin Rahill at austin.rh@gmail.com or logging on to www.graceondemand.com)
Christian life is about giving everything to God

By Fr. John W. Crosin, O.S.F.S.

Most Christians seek inner peace, deeper tranquility. We don’t want to experience anxiety and worry. Peace is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We can pray for the gift of peace of mind and heart in our daily prayers, and sometimes we receive it.

I knew some people who seem to have the gift of serenity more constantly than most of us. They seem to be close to God. Their spiritual peace radiates out to others.

When I visit these friends, I have this peace, too. Gradually, it goes away.

In recent years, I have been feeling this peace more frequently. It often is connected with prayer.

On Ash Wednesday, we review our spiritual life. We then make our Lenten resolutions. Often, these resolutions concern our daily prayer.

Our review may indicate that prayer has become routine, that our attention more frequently wanders. Perhaps something new is necessary, though we might not be sure exactly what it is.

Lent is time to focus on prayer, renewal

By Fr. Richard Rice, S.J.

Prayer is about our relationship with God. How are we invited to be different this Lent in terms of our spiritual practices?

In my ministry with the Twelve Step program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I have been able to refresh my approach to prayer at home, during the day, alone or with others.

Now I am meeting people who don’t want to experience anxiety and worry.

In my ministry with the Twelve Step program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I have been able to refresh my Ignation practice of the Examen, the Jesuit method of examination of consciousness.

A few years ago, a friend introduced me to the Buddhist practice of tanglun. I’ve been able to translate this into Christian language of Spirit and peace, and it refreshed my personal prayer.

So often, we toss up a petition to God like a Hail Mary football pass, informing God of something he wants to refresh their lives with him if they ask and are open.

The practice of tanglun is done for the purpose of developing a compassionate heart. For whom are we Christians, this is the heart of Christ, the peace of the Spirit of Jesus. This means praying in the Franciscan spirit of “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.”

St. Francis de Sales suggests that:

• We need patience with others, but also with ourselves.

• If we make a mistake or fail, we immediately should ask for forgiveness.

• We should treat all persons with gentleness out of respect for their human dignity. Our task is to encourage others to be their best selves.

• We need patience with others, but also with ourselves.

We are not so perfect, and progress is slow. We may not see the progress that we expect or hope for in our lives.

Instead of “making up our minds” about what to do, perhaps we should ask the Holy Spirit to guide us with the inner tranquility out of which to pray. We might also ask how to pray.

Then we must listen for the response. Habit, emotion or “business” might impede our listening. But the Spirit does answer prayers. Occasionally, the answer comes directly. Sometimes it takes three days, such as during the Holy Thursday, or on a Sunday morning, or on a special feast day.

In recent years, I have been feeling this peace more frequently. Perhaps we should ask them what our Lenten resolutions should be. This will make for an unusual Lent. Our prayer might become less distracted and deeper.

Prayer—with its inner peace from the Spirit—leads us out into our daily activities.

One reason that I joined the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales 40 years ago is because St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) spoke frequently of inner peace. I knew early on that I needed to be in a tradition where this is emphasized. I tend to be a perfectionist, and thus overly concerned even about nonessentials. I benefit from regular reminders about the essentials.

So often, we toss up a petition to God like a Hail Mary football pass, informing God of something he wants to refresh their lives with him if they ask and are open. Gradually, it goes away.

Perhaps we should ask them what our Lenten resolutions should be. This will make for an unusual Lent. Our prayer might become less distracted and deeper.

We need patience with others, but also with ourselves.

If we make a mistake or fail, we immediately should ask for forgiveness.

We should treat all persons with gentleness out of respect for their human dignity. Our task is to encourage others to be their best selves.

We need patience with others, but also with ourselves.

We are not so perfect, and progress is slow. We may not see the progress that we expect or hope for in our lives.

In my ministry with the Twelve Step program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I have been able to refresh my approach to prayer at home, during the day, alone or with others.

Now I am meeting people who don’t want to experience anxiety and worry.

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Jesus in the Gospels: He foretells betrayal

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

How do we curb the use of smutty words?

Remember when it was taboo to use curse words in print, films and tele-
vision? Perhaps it’s because of today’s more permissive culture or because of the
emergence of a more sophisticated language. The choice of words to express
elementary passions, as a rule, is subject to what some might consider a "code of
etiquette". But when we step forward in faith to do something that our heart
knows is not good. As broken Lenten resolutions from last year become
diminish our selfishness and nure our spiritual growth.

Prayer can move us to alleviate stress and come through difficult times.

It can lead us to recognize more and more blessings in our lives, even those things we might not have thought of as blessings before.

Therefore, prayer can lead us to gratitude for these freely bestowed gifts, things for which we have no credit.

As broken Lenten resolutions from years past remind us, fasting can be diffi-
cult. Why? Because it is our attempt to separate ourselves from those things to which part of us might cling tenaciously, burying them in the depths of our psyche.

Whether it is overwhelming, aimlessly surf-
ing the Internet or wasting time in front of the TV, fastening ourselves to our computers may be hard, but it frees us up to give of ourselves to more others.

A primary way that we do show love to others is through almsgiving. Done with the right intention, this Lenten practice embodies selflessness.

It forces us to look at others in love, recognize their needs and seek to meet them through sharing our own material resources.

Looking at these Lenten practices from this perspective might lead us to conclude that we should do them year-round and not just during the 40 days before Easter.

Indeed, St. Benedict wrote some 1,500 years ago that "the life of a monk ought to be a Lent." Now, in writing this, he was not being a killjoy. In fact, he went on to write that a monk’s Lenten practices were to help him look forward to Easter with joy and spiritual lightness.

So consider making the upcoming season a Lenten season. Perhaps if we focus our attention on Christ and, through him, in our Catholic faith, the life of our homes will be a continuous Lent.

Our family prayer—whether it is at Mass, around the dinner table or before going to bed—can become a way for us to continually return to God, give him thanks for the day’s blessings and seek his aid in the challenges of our relationships.

As families, we can fast from those things separate us, such as frequently listening to licks or talking on cell phones when our parents or siblings are in the room with us.

And as families, we can give alms by doing things for others, those who live close to us: shoveling the driveway of an elderly neighbor or bringing a meal to an infirm person.

All of these suggestions—and so many more that could have been mentioned—might be hard to start. But why? Because it is our attempt to separate ourselves from those things to which part of us might cling tenaciously, burying them in the depths of our psyche.

When we root our families in Christ and, through him, in our Catholic faith, the life of our homes will be a continuous Lent.
**The Sunday Readings**

**Sunday, Feb. 26, 2006**

- **Hosea 2:16b, 17b, 21-22;**
- **2 Corinthians 3:1b-6;**
- **Mark 2:18-22**

Providing this weekend’s first reading is the Book of Hosea. It is not a long book, perhaps even predominantly prophetic, nor is it often used in the liturgy. This book is about Hosea. His father’s name is given, but no other details of his background are offered. It is noted that his wife was Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. They had at least one child, a son, who was named Jezebel.

In this reading, God speaks in the first person, through Hosea. God says that the Chosen People will go into the desert. There in the starkness and silence, the people will return to faithfulness. They again will realize that God once led them from slavery in Egypt to freedom in their own land.

They will turn to rightness and justice. They will love mercy. Their bond with God will be so intimate and firm that it is likened to an espousal.

Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians supplies the next reading:

Any reading of the two epistles to the Corinthians immediately gives us the image of Paul’s anxiety, and at times his disappointment, as he considers how these Christian Corinthians are living their lives. To understand the situation, they all were not entirely true to the Gospel.

At times, St. Paul scolds them. Overall, his communications are filled with encouragement and challenge. Such is the case in this reading. He reminds the Corinthians of God’s love. It is an active love. God gave Christ to fallen humanity to teach, to redeem, and to bring true life.

St. Mark’s Gospel is the source of the last reading.

It is yet another argument between the Pharisees and Jesus. The Pharisees have acquired the reputation over the years of being hypocritical and insincere, even as they demand absolute conformity with the Torah, as they read the Torah.

Indeed, the English language contains the word “pharisaical” to illustrate insincerity and duplicity. Most probably, not all Pharisees were hypocrites. Rather, they were intensely committed to their religion, as they perceived it.

In this perception, they saw violations of the Law of Moses. They judged the disciples of Jesus as loose in observing the law. Whereas, to the contrary, the followers of John the Baptist were as precise regarding the law as we observed the Pharisees themselves.

Trailing off into this dispute is always a temptation. Mark presents the quarrel vividly. However, the lesson is that even the most determined or devout person can be confused. After all, any human is subject to confusion.

Jesus enters the picture as firmly grasping the situation. Furthermore, Jesus defines the Law of Moses. In this action, Jesus showed a divine identity. The law ultimately was not the Law of Moses, but God’s law. Jesus authoritatively interpreted the law.

**Reflection**

On Wednesday, the Church will call us to observe Ash Wednesday, and on that day we will begin Lent.

In these readings, the Church looks ahead to Ash Wednesday and to the Lenten season, and calls us to remember that we need God.

Bedeviling human existence at any time and in every place, for every person, are sin and the confusion that is part of being human. Compounding the situation are the effects of Original Sin. This first sin forever weakened and blinded human beings.

The second reading illustrates how inclined we are to sin. We need Jesus. As implied by Mark in this reading, Jesus is God. He speaks with divine, not earthly authority and knowledge.

However, God does not burst into our lives as a conqueror would come to rule over us. We must seek God. We must go into the silence and starkness of our own desert to realize why we need God, and to commit ourselves to seek God. If we commit to him, God will await us.

**Question Corner/’Fr. John Dietzen**

**Consistent ethic of life includes all prolife issues**

Q In articles about abortion, I’ve seen reference to a “seamless garment” and a “consistent ethic of life.” I recently became Catholic, and am not familiar with these terms, which as I understand it come from the Catholic Church. What do they mean? (New York)

A Both terms have approximately the same meaning: All issues involving respect for the dignity and sacredness of human life weave together. They support each other, and none can be ignored or minimized without undermining all of them.

The first person to use the phrase “consistent ethic of life” was probably the late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago.

The beauty of such an ethic, he once said, “is that it provides an overall vision, and it shows how issues are related to each other, though they remain distinct.”

While he did not use those exact words, no one, I believe, has given a more clear description of this important concept than the late Pope John Paul II in his January 1999 message for the World Day of Peace and at greater length in the encyclical “The Gospel of Life.”

In the first document, titled “Respect for Human Rights: The Secret of True Peace,” the pope repeated that the right to life is inviolable. A culture of life, he wrote, “guarantees to the unborn the right to come into the world. In the same way it protects the newly born, especially girls, from the crime of infanticide.”

“To choose life involves rejecting every form of violence: the violence of poverty and hunger, which afflicts so many human beings; the violence of armed conflict; the violence of criminal trafficking in drugs and arms; the violence of mindless damage to the natural environment...”

As the pope indicated, the first of all basic rights is the right to life. For the past 20 years, the seamless garment idea has helped our bishops and all of us to better understand and protect that right.

Some time ago, you wrote a column on the non contraceptive use of the “birth control pill.” My two daughters are suffering from some medical difficulties which they have been told could be solved with these pills. I’ve been ignoring my own doctor’s advice to use “the pill” to alleviate problems of my own. Is using “the pill” an option for us? (Michigan)

A Because a full response to your question would be far too long for this column and require much more information than you could give in your letter, cannot do so here. (Catholic & Religious)

Non-contraceptive use of the so-called birth control drugs can be moral under certain circumstances. However, several concerns always need to be considered.

For instance, physicians and reproductive scientists are increasingly concerned about the long-term effects of hormonal “medications.”

Second, a significant group of contraceptive agents today are abortifacients—that is, they accomplish their contraceptive effect by some form of destruction of a fertilized ovum.

It is important that you have a physician who knows the pharmacology of the hormone therapy that he prescribes as well as what drugs are involved and their effects. (Catholic & Religious)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith issues and experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.
Legacy of popes

Exhibit from Vatican makes last North American stop in Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE (CNS)—With the exhibit “St. Peter and the Vatican: The Legacy of the Popes” at the Milwaukee Public Museum, Midwesterners have a rare opportunity to get a peek at objects that trace the Catholic faith over the past 2,000 years.

“It is an extraordinary exhibition that will mesmerize visitors of all backgrounds,” said Dan Finley, museum president. “The museum is delighted to provide the Milwaukee community and visitors to the region with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see timelessly works of art in such a meaningful context.

The museum expects that the exhibit, which opened on Feb. 4 and runs through May 7, will draw viewers from not only the Milwaukee area, but also surrounding states, as this is the tour’s last North American stop.

Msgr. Roberto Zagnoli, curator of the Vatican Museums, was at the Milwaukee Public Museum shortly before the opening for the uncrating of four of the objects to be showcased in the exhibit, including the Mandylion of Edessa, considered to be the oldest known representation of Christ.

“The true meaning of this exhibit is the dialogue it will open up with people in all the world,” Msgr. Zagnoli said. “They can now entertain themselves with the truth.”

The Catholic bishops of Wisconsin got a sneak preview of the exhibition on Feb. 1, along with a guided tour from Msgr. Zagnoli.

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan and Auxiliary Bishop Richard J. Skiba of Milwaukee, Bishop Jerome E. Listecki of La Crosse and retired Bishop Robert J. Banks and Auxiliary Bishop Robert F. Morneau of Green Bay were shown the selected pieces that tell the tale of the ornate history of the Church.

“This isn’t just a story about the past,” Msgr. Zagnoli told the Catholic Herald, newspaper of the Milwaukee Archdiocese. “It’s a story of the living Church. We hope for this to serve as a continued dialogue with cultures and people of the world.”

The Mandylion of Edessa, a third- to fifth-century image on linen, was one of the pieces that drew particular attention from the bishops.

“We are not competent enough to comment on the miraculousness of this,” Msgr. Zagnoli said of the piece, whose measurements are similar to that of the Shroud of Turin.

Another piece that garnered the attention of the bishops was the hammer used to verify the death of a pope. When a pope dies, he is struck on the head three times as he is called by his baptismal name and asked, “Are you alive?” (However, when Pope John Paul II died last April, Vatican officials did not use the hammer, and instead used an electrocardiogram to confirm that he was dead.)

For every bit of reverence and awe that it was sure to inspire and educate Catholics and non-Catholics alike on the successor of St. Peter, his role in promoting international peace and justice, and his historical importance to the power and authority of the Catholic Church over the past 2,000 years.

Often sporting boyish grins, the bishops couldn’t help but joke with one another at certain points during the tour. “Man alive!” exclaimed Archbishop Dolan at the sight of a chalice of Pope Pius IX, laden with jewels. “You’d have to do calisthenics to lift that!”

In a museum-issued press release, Archbishop Dolan said the exhibition “is sure to inspire and educate Catholics and non-Catholics alike on the successor of St. Peter, his role in promoting international peace and justice, and his historical commitment to increasing dialogue with other world religions.”

Beginning with a three-minute introductory video, the exhibit itself includes more than 300 objects and has been modeled after the Vatican, with walls, doors, ceilings and foundations re-created to give visitors an authentic feel, as if they are walking through the Vatican itself.

Highlights of the exhibit include the papal tiara of Pope Pius IX; a Buddhist thanka, or devotional cloth, presented by the Dalai Lama to Pope John Paul II; and the addition of objects used during the election of Pope Benedict XVI. Other items include personal items of the popes, official diaries from papal conclaves, mature sculptures and intricately embroidered silk vestments.

One of the final items is a bronze cast of the hand of Pope John Paul II, which visitors can touch as they exit.
Independent firm looks into handling of Chicago abuse cases

CHICAGO (CNS)—The Archdiocese of Chicago has hired an investigator to conduct an independent overview of its handling of abuse cases, and asked for a complete review of its policies and procedures for monitoring clergy accused of sexually abusing children.

Both moves came as Cardinal Francis E. George named Jimmy Lago, chancellor of the archdiocese, as the person responsible for overseeing the efforts of all archdiocesan employees and offices to make sure children are protected.

The initiatives came in the wake of the January arrest of Father Daniel McCormack, then pastor of St. Agatha Parish, on charges that he had sexually abused two boys. Since then, he has been charged with abusing a third boy, who came forward after the first two cases were reported in the media.

The archdiocese and Cardinal George personally were widely criticized for not removing Father McCormack from ministry sooner. The priest had been questioned by Chicago police at the end of August 2005 after one of the boys reported being molested three years ago; he was released without charge because the state’s attorney did not believe there was enough evidence to prosecute him.

The cardinal has said the archdiocese had no mechanism to remove him as pastor after police launched an abuse investigation against him because the alleged victim did not make a statement to Church officials. Before the priest’s removal in January, he was being monitored by another priest at St. Agatha and was told to avoid being alone with children.

In the initiatives announced on Feb. 15, an independent firm, Defenshield and Associates, will review the handling of Father McCormack’s case and the case of Father Joseph Bennett, who stepped aside as pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in South Holland after the McCormack case broke.

Father Bennett had been under investigation for two years—and had been assigned a monitor for his activities—after two adult women came forward and said he had abused them as children.

Former federal agent Terry Childers will review the monitoring procedures the archdiocese has used, both for priests under investigation after allegations are first received, and those who have been removed permanently from ministry after the cardinal determines that there is reasonable cause to believe the allegations against them are true.

The results of both reviews will be made public, said Lago, who met with reporters on Feb. 15. That will be necessary to restore credibility to the archdiocese, although it won’t be enough, he said.

“Credibility isn’t something you restore instantly,” he said. “We’re going to have to earn it again. Are we like everybody else? I would like to say we’re the diocese you can trust, but unless we say what went wrong here, we can’t do that.”

Lago, a social worker with a background in child-protection work, is a married father of twins, as well as the archdiocesan chancellor. That makes him uniquely qualified to serve as the point person on the issue. Cardinal George wrote in a memo to clergy and archdiocesan employees announcing the change.

His job is to make sure everyone—from the legal office to the vicar for priests to the Independent Review Board—is working together, and to make sure Cardinal George is aware of all the pertinent information “from the earliest moment,” Lago said.

He said the archdiocese has committed itself to working more closely with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. It will, for example, notify the state agency every time it receives an allegation that a child has been abused by a member of the clergy or archdiocesan employee—even if the allegation comes from an adult who reports abuse from decades in the past.

The archdiocese already notifies the state department immediately of any current allegations, Lago said.

The weekend before the initiatives were announced, Cardinal George apologized to parishioners and priests for the fallout in the scandal in two letters. The letters were published as more than 250 Catholics rallied in front of Chicago’s Holy Name Cathedral to show support for the cardinal.

“I must apologize to all of you for the great embarrassment every Catholic must now feel in the light of media scrutiny of these events,” the cardinal wrote.

“In particular, I am deeply sorry for the pain of those Catholics who are part of St. Agatha’s Parish.”

The letter to priests was not made public by the cardinal or other archdiocesan officials. However, it was widely reported to have read, in part, “I apologize to each of you for not finding some way to at least provisionally remove [Father] McCormack even without an accuser or an accusation, … I want to say now that if there is any priest who is leading a double life, who is engaging in dishonest or sinful practices that destroy the Church, he should, for the sake of the Church, come forward.”

Vatican says number of priests increases

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The number of priests and seminarians in the world continues to increase, but the situation varies widely from continent to continent, the Vatican said.

The most positive signs come from Asia and Africa, while Europe has shown a marked decline in priestly vocations, according to a Feb. 18 statement from the Vatican press office.

The statistics were released in connection with the presentation of the 2006 edition of the Vatican yearbook, known as the Annuario Pontificio, which catalogs the Church’s pastoral presence diocese-by-diocese.

The press office said the number of priests in the world was 405,891 at the end of 2004, an increase of 441 from 2003. About two-thirds were diocesan priests and one-third members of religious orders.

The global breakdown shows that Asia added more than 1,400 priests over that period and Africa added 840.

The situation was relatively stable in North and South America, while Europe showed a decrease of nearly 1,900 priests.

The number of seminarians in the world rose to just over 113,000 in 2004, an increase of more than 670 from 2003. Africa and Asia again showed the greatest increases, while Europe continued to evidence a “clear decline,” the Vatican said.

The global population of Catholics reached nearly 1.1 billion at the end of 2004, an increase of about 12 million, or about 1.1 percent, from 2003. Over the same period, however, the general population increased at a faster rate, from 6.3 billion to 6.4 billion.
The Criterion  Friday, February 24, 2006

New cardinals? Rome buzzes with excitement as rumors fly

Pope Benedict XVI is expected to create his first batch of cardinals, a prospect that has already generated a buzz of excitement in Rome.

Vatican observers, especially journalists, tend to get overexcited when it comes to new cardinals. Since last summer, there have been at least three false alarms about impending consistories.

The current rumor is that the pope is preparing to name new cardinals in February, and invest them in late March. Holding a consistory during Lent would be unusual, but not without precedent; Pope John XXIII did so twice in the '60s.

The appointment of new cardinals is seen as a leading indicator of any papacy, but it’s important to remember that, whenever Pope Benedict announces his choices, it will be a list that he has inherited in large part from his predecessor.

Of the 20 or so prelates most frequently mentioned as likely cardinal appointees, all but two were put in line for the red hat by Pope John Paul II. One of those two is Polish Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz of Krakow, the late pope’s personal secretary.

Another is Swiss Bishop Gianni Tallon of Novara, who in a sense will also be seen as a potential successor to Cardinal Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, who in 2005 was named pope John Paul's personal secretary, head of the Pontifical Council for the Doctrine of the Faith, and appointed a cardinal during the pontiff's papal visit to the United States.

Among the two dozen or more names mentioned in the cardinal sweepstakes are archbishops from Monterrey, Mexico; Dakar, Senegal; Kampala, Uganda; and Spanish Archbishop Antonio Canizares Lloveras of Toledo.

There are a number of things to watch for when the list is announced:

- The numbers—There are currently 178 cardinals, of whom 110 are under age 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a conclave. Two more cardinals turn 80 before March 25, the rumored date of the conclave.

- The technical limit on the number of voting-age cardinals is 120. That means if the pope respects that ceiling, he could name 12 new ones. The wild card factor is that Pope John Paul set aside the 120 limit more than once, swelling the ranks to as many as 135 under-80 cardinals. Pope Benedict, as supreme legislator, can also derogate, or suspend, this rule, but opinions are divided over whether he will do so.

- The mix—If he wanted to, the pope could fill half the cardinal vacancies with Roman Curia officials virtually certain to be named cardinal. The others are Slovenian Archbishop Franc Rodé, head of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life; and Italian Archbishop Agostino Vallini, head of the Supreme Court of the Apostolic Signature, the Vatican’s highest tribunal.

- Other Roman Curia possibilities include German Archbishop Paul Cörlés, head of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications; and Polish Archbishop Stanislaw Ryłko, head of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

- The archdioceses around the world, potential cardinals include Archbishop Guadalupe Rosales of Manilia, Philippines; Archbishop Darmid Martin of Dublin, Ireland; French Archbishops André Vingt-Trois of Paris and Jean-Pierre Ricard of Bordeaux; Archbishop Carlo Caffarra of Bologna, Italy; Archbishop Sean P. O’Malley of Boston; Archbishop Joseph Zen Ze-kiun of Hong Kong; Archbishop Joseph Ngo Quang Kiet of Hanoi, Vietnam; Archbishop Raphael Ndingi Mwana’a Nzeki of Nairobi, Kenya; and Spanish Archbishop Antonio Canizares Lloveras of Toledo.

- The over-80 cardinals—Popes often name one or two elderly cardinals as a sign of respect or appreciation. Often, they have been nonbishops theologians.

- The three U.S. prelates named as potential cardinals by Vatican observers are, from left, Boston Archbishop Sean P. O’Malley; Archbishop William J. Levada, head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith; and Archbishop John P. Foley, head of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

- Pope Benedict XVI is expected to create his first batch of cardinals this year.

- One rumor reported by The Times of London in early January was that the pope’s over-80 cardinal nominations might include Msgr. Graham Leonard, a former Anglican bishop of London who was ordained a Catholic priest in 1994. If that happens, it would be unusual, but not unprecedented; Pope John Paul II named at least three Anglicans as cardinals.

- Pope Benedict’s first consistory will also offer clues about how he intends to use the College of Cardinals during his papacy. Pope John Paul turned to the cards six times several times for advice, convening them in Rome for discussions on such topics as Church finances, anti-abortion strategies and pastoral goals for the new millennium.

- Given that Pope Benedict, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, helped plan and preside over some of these “extraordinary consistory” many expect him to keep up this type of consultation.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—What makes a successful African-American parish tick? In the case of St. Augustine Parish in Washington, key elements are good liturgy, which includes good preaching and good music, plus a sense of social mission and a family feeling that encourages parishioners to return to the church, which describes itself as “mother church of black Catholics in the nation’s capital.”

Father Patrick Smith, the pastor, addressed the housing issue after Communion.

“A lot of change is happening in our neighborhood. A lot of new buildings are going up,” he said. “I hear a lot of questions about mortgages and reverse mortgages, and parishioners sometimes despair of the chance that they could afford to live in their church’s neighborhood.”

Housing is just one issue drawing the attention of the parish and its people. AIDS is another. An HIV/AIDS pamphlet rack stands atop a box for the Catholic Standard, the Archdiocese of Washington’s newspaper, in the back of the church.

In a telephone interview with Catholic New Service, Chester Jones, 74, said that when he was working at the Whitman-Walker Clinic in Washington, which does much AIDS treatment and counseling in the area, a colleague invited him to come to St. Augustine because it had an active HIV/AIDS ministry. Jones now co-chairs the ministry.

Father Smith addressed AIDS in his homily, referring to that Sunday’s Gospel reading of Jesus correcting a man’s leprosy. Standing at the edge of the sanctuary as he preached, Father Smith said, “Sickness is not a sin. It’s punishment for original transgressions, [e.g.,] HIV, whatever—it’s not how God works.”

Venning off the sanctuary, one arm extended, Father Smith noted that, as Christ broke a cultural taboo in touching the leper, “we need to reach out to touch others.”

Music is a big factor in bringing people to St. Augustine and keeping them there. On Sunday, with few in the congregation, Father Smith led the singing, accompanied midway through by the background gospel choir.

In interviews with CNS, several parishioners talked about the late Leon C. Roberts, who put the parish’s music program into high gear more than 30 years ago. The gospel choir released several recordings under his leadership, and Roberts collaborated on “Lead Me, Guide Me,” a hymnal designed for use in black Catholic parishes that has sold more than 125,000 copies—five times what was expected.

Roberts died of cancer in 1999, but some parishioners started the Leon Roberts Liturgical Institute, which has conducted workshops at the church.

“The liturgy had a reputation,” said Mike Mathews, 50, a lifelong parishioner. “It really helped me to appreciate the religion.”

“I am seeing it reviving under Msgr. Dillard,” a popular St. Augustine pastor who was removed four years ago after he acknowledged inappropriate relationships with two teenage girls from a previous parish assignment.

“The Parish was fed up with that. I’ve been to see change in the ethnic makeup of St. Augustine, said Vonaldrick Martin, a member of the parish gospel choir, said the gospel Mass at 12:30 p.m. can last 90 minutes to two hours. When Roberts was alive, she added, “they were going to three hours sometimes.”

When the carless Smith moved to Washington 10 years ago, she sought a parish close to a subway stop. “From day one, I heard about St. Augustine,” she said. “I checked it out and fell in love with it.”

Greta Elliott-Meredith, 44, remembers being one of only two black families in the Cape Charles, Va., parish of her girlhood. “I felt alienated a lot,” she told CNS in a telephone interview. “Nobody else around me but my mom and my siblings was Catholic.”

When Elliott-Meredith moved to Washington, an aunt suggested St. Augustine. “St. Augustine provided me with the connections to enrich my faith. It really helped me to appreciate the religion.”

She is the half of her father’s family—and her first baby sitter—-from the ranks of fellow parishioners. “Two years ago, I’ve begun to see change in the ethnic makeup of St. Augustine, said Pat Butler, a white native of Trinidad and Tobago. “We have a lot more in common than differences, if only people would take the time.”

“It’s like a family to me,” said Ruby Robertson.

Nial Amasi, a native of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, cited “the closeness, the vitality and warmth of worship” at St. Augustine as her reasons for joining in 1991.

“Truthfully, I was getting bored by Mass in my [parish] suburb,” she said in an e-mail from her native country, where she is on a mission.

Gentrification, she added, “makes our struggle for social justice even more acute and more difficult.”

Amasi said, “I have seen it lose its membership mostly over the removal of [Msgr. Russell] Dillard,” a popular St. Augustine pastor who was removed four years ago after he acknowledged inappropriate relationships with two teenage girls from a previous parish assignment.

“And I am seeing it revering under Father Smith with some of those people not coming back to check it out again and a chunk deciding to come back again,” she added. "

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Good liturgy, sense of social mission part of parish’s success

WASHINGTON—What makes a successful African-American parish tick? In the case of St. Augustine Parish in Washington, key elements are good liturgy, which includes good preaching and good music, plus a sense of social mission and a family feeling that encourages parishioners to return to the church, which describes itself as “mother church of black Catholics in the nation’s capital.”

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Music is a big factor in bringing people to St. Augustine and keeping them there. On Sunday, with few in the congregation, Father Smith led the singing, accompanied midway through by the background gospel choir.

In interviews with CNS, several parishioners talked about the late Leon C. Roberts, who put the parish’s music program into high gear more than 30 years ago. The gospel choir released several recordings under his leadership, and Roberts collaborated on “Lead Me, Guide Me,” a hymnal designed for use in black Catholic parishes that has sold more than 125,000 copies—five times what was expected.

Roberts died of cancer in 1999, but some parishioners started the Leon Roberts Liturgical Institute, which has conducted workshops at the church.

“The liturgy had a reputation,” said Mike Mathews, 50, a lifelong parishioner. “It really helped me to appreciate the religion.”

“I am seeing it reviving under Msgr. Dillard,” a popular St. Augustine pastor who was removed four years ago after he acknowledged inappropriate relationships with two teenage girls from a previous parish assignment.

“And I am seeing it revering under Father Smith with some of those people not coming back to check it out again and a chunk deciding to come back again,” she added. 

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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 diocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious whose obituaries are included here, they are reported by order priests and/or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


Mccahn, Ann K., 94, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Feb. 11.


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Interested applicants should submit a confidential cover letter by March 15th, expressing their interest along with their résumé to:
Search Committee
Saint Christopher Catholic Church
Attention: Nancy Meyers, Pastoral Associate
5301 West 16th Street
Speedway, IN 46224
Telephone: 317-241-6314, Extension 114
Or via e-mail: nmeyers@saintchristopherparish.org

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The Criterion  Friday, February 24, 2006

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