Catholic Radio Indy expands local programming

By Sean Gallagher

Having recently completed its second year on the air, Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 FM has started to expand its local programming.

For much of its young history, the radio station has broadcast programming supplied by the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).

In the past year, listeners have been able to hear Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein read his weekly column that appears in The Criterion.

More recently, Catholic Radio Indy has started its own locally produced half-hour interview show, “Faith in Action.” It airs live on Tuesdays at 4 p.m., and is rebroadcast at 4 p.m. on Thursdays and a.m. on Fridays and Mondays.

The first program featured Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ parishioner Lucious Newcomb of Indianapolis, who oversees The Lord’s Pantry, a charitable organization which distributes food to the poor in Marion and Morgan counties.

The station plans to air more local programming, said Jim Ganley, Catholic Radio Indy’s station manager, who recently spoke about the impact he hopes Catholic Radio Indy can have on listeners.

“A lot of the programs on EWTN right now are kind of apologists-driven, which is important,” he said. “People want to know more about their faith all the time. But as far as evangelization and reaching out to other people, they want that local, human touch.”

Whether the shows originate in the archdiocese or from EWTN, the radio station has had a positive impact on many listeners, according to St. Lawrence parishioner Bob Teipen of Indianapolis, the chairman of Catholic Radio Indy’s board of directors.

“I think it’s had a very positive impact on a number of people,” he said. “We’ve received numerous comments about how it’s helped them draw closer to the faith and understand the faith better.”

Many of those people gathered on March 2 for a fundraising dinner hosted by the station at Primus North Banquet and Conference Center in Indianapolis.

One of those in attendance was Peg Kramer, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis.

Kramer, who said she started listening to Catholic Radio Indy shortly after it went on the air, spoke about its impact on her faith life.

“It certainly has excited me about my faith,” she said. “I have learned a lot of new things. And it amazes me now when people ask me questions, I usually have answers.”

At the dinner, Kramer and the others in attendance listened to Servant of God’s Buechlein, who read his weekly column that appears in The Criterion.

Teipen recognizes the potential for evangelization through the radio station he helped found. He said that local programming will add to that potential.

He also noted that Catholic Radio Indy’s recent addition of streaming its signal on the Internet can expand its listenership far beyond the reach of its radio signal. The station currently reaches east to west from just west of Greenfield to just east of Terre Haute and north to south from just south of Lafayette to just north of Bloomington.

Teipen and other station supporters are working hard to secure Catholic Radio Indy for the future.

For the last two years, they have been leasing the radio station. In the coming

See RADIO, page 19

Catholics bring legislatures messages on life issues

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In Washington, issues such as parental notification before an abortion, fetal pain and assisted suicide remained on the back burner in Congress, and court observers wondered when a judicial challenge to Roe v. Wade might reach the Supreme Court. But around the country, state legislators were stepping up in defense of life.

Although not every effort was successful, legislators in nearly every state were working to limit abortions, prohibit assisted suicide, improve health care access, eliminate the death penalty, achieve just immigration reform and enact a living wage for workers.

And in many places, Catholics were taking their message directly to the legislatures.

“We put them in office and we need to hold them accountable,” Candy Hill, senior vice president for social policy at Catholic Charities USA, said of legislators in a talk to students and adults gathered in Nashville, Tenn., for Catholic Day on the Hill earlier in March.

“One of the most important things we can do as citizens is to be here and learn to understand the issues,” Father Ragan Schriver, director of Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, said.

“For much of its young history, the radio station has broadcast programming supplied by the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).”

250 middle and high school students at the Capitol. “It’s a great day to recognize what our faith tells us as Catholics and Christians to advocate for.”

Like other Catholic Day on the Hill participants, Bishops David R. Choby of Nashville, Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville and J. Terry Steib of Memphis met with state legislators in their offices throughout the day to discuss immigration, abortion, health care and other issues. The bishops also met privately with Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen.

Catholics in Florida planned similar meetings with legislators during Catholic Days at the Capitol in Tallahassee on March 21-22.

Among the topics cited as priorities by the Florida Catholic Conference during the March 7-May 5 legislative session were parental notification, the death penalty, farmworker safety and the minimum wage.

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By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Indianapolis Catholic Conference gains moral ground at Statehouse

While Gov. Mitch Daniels’ Major Moves programs, property tax reform and deregulating the telecommunications industry captured the headlines, the Indianapolis Catholic Conference covered a lot of moral ground at the Statehouse this year.

The priority issues that ICC addressed during the 2006 Indiana General Assembly included legislation to limit the death penalty, attempting to curb abortion by improving Indiana’s informed consent, ensuring fair treatment for immigrants and assisting low-income families with heating costs.

“Upholding the dignity of the human person, especially the least among us, is a work all Christians share,” said Indiana Catholic Conference Executive Director Glenn Tebbe. “The Indianapolis Catholic Conference, as the official representative on public policy matters for the Indianapolis bishops, has a unique responsibility to do so.

“The Church has consistently upheld the dignity of all life from conception to natural death. It is out of this consistent life ethic that we address legislative issues,” Tebbe said. “This year, we are dealing with more of the same issues.”

Two legislative measures aimed at limiting Indiana’s death penalty were introduced, one that did not make it to the House floor and another that did not come to an end for the 2006 session. Senate Bill 160, the right for a reprieve of the victim’s family to witness the convicted murderer’s execution.

“While we support the rights of victims, including the right of families to seek justice, we do not see this legislation as providing the moral clarity that the life issue requires,” Tebbe said. “The Church opposes legislation which may foster feelings or attitudes of revenge.”

Sen. Bill 160 passed the Senate 38-11 and the House 82-12.

Rep. Joe Micon (D-West Lafayette), who voted against the measure, said, “I voted against Senate Bill 160 because I am pro-life, which means (supporting) the right to life, regardless of the moment of conception to natural death. Senate Bill 160 is really about vengeance, which is the Lord’s alone to decide; I don’t think public policy should be about vengeance.”

ICC also led an effort to defeat a bill restricting public assistance for undocumented immigrants. House Bill 1383 would have restricted access to public services—including schools and hospitals—and charged state police with immigration enforcement. Several from the Catholic community—and those representing health and education programs—tested against the bill. They noted the devastating effects it would have for families and children who are citizens, but whose parents are undocumented residents. The measure also would have had negative consequences for employers and Indiana’s economy. House Bill 1383 was defeated in the House on Feb. 27.

“The floor debate on House Bill 1383 was our chamber’s finest moment,” Micon said. “When Rep. [Joseph] Dostal [R-Indianapolis] spoke about Matthew’s Gospel—when I was hungry you gave me food, when I was thirsty you gave me drink, and when I was a stranger you welcomed me—it truly summed up the debate.

“Our chamber did the right thing from a public policy standpoint, and for me it was all about preserving moral values, not power politics,” Micon said. “The Indianapolis Catholic Conference’s presence was felt on House Bill 1383 and it permanently through the efforts of Glenn Tebbe and the Catholic network that the vote against the bill was so strong.

“A bill to improve Indiana’s informed consent law died when the conference committee report for House Bill 1172 was not adopted by the Senate. The final version of the bill only dealt with informed consent. The effort to add abortion clinic regulation was dropped.

“The bill was significant, and the effort to defeat it was well-orchestrated,” Tebbe said. “There were two primary sides to the opposition were ‘the fetus might feel pain’ and ‘human physical life begins when the human ovum is fertilized by a human sperm.’

“Although the report was approved 7-3 by the Senate Rules Committee late Tuesday, March 14, the bill was not called before time expired at midnight. Even though the House was under the same time constraints, the measure passed 75-23. Since the conference committee report did not pass the Senate, Indiana’s informed consent law remains unchanged.

The one-year state sales tax exemption for persons receiving heating assistance will become law with the governor’s signature on House Bill 1001. Under the bill, all the money set aside for the program will be used for emergency heat assistance, rather than 6 percent being used for sales taxes.

The Indianapolis Catholic Conference and the Indiana Catholic Action Network have had an impact on lawmakers by taking part in the political process,” Tebbe said. “Even though some of the legislation we supported or opposed did not go our way, by taking part in the debate we were able to educate the decision-makers and raise awareness on important moral issues.”

(Peeping Curtis Ayer is correspondent for The Criterion)"

Papal preacher says prayer during life’s dark moments

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—During life’s dark moments, caused by either physical suffering or mental or emotional anguish, Jesus teaches the faithful to pray to God, said the preacher of the papal household.

“Jesus teaches us that the first thing to do in these cases is to turn to God with supplication, which was his resurrection,” Father Cantalamessa said.

“Keep on praying ... with greater intensity,” Jennings County and chaplain of Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr/Sr. High School in Madison, granted permission to enter Stift Klosterneuburg Monastery, a religious order of Canons Regular of St. Augustine, in Vienna, Austria, effective June 5, 2006.

This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis.

Official Appointment
Rev. C. Ryan McCarthy, pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption in Jennings County and chaplain of Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr/ Sr. High School in Madison, granted permission to enter Stift Klosterneuburg Monastery, a religious order of Canons Regular of St. Augustine, in Vienna, Austria, effective June 5, 2006.

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Indianapolis to speak to people about the plight of Christians living in the Holy Land and to elicit help for them. He has been traveling in the United States for several weeks and will return to Jerusalem at the end of the month. Shortly before he left, Palestinian elections in Gaza and the West Bank put Hamas, known in part for its support of Islamic militants, into power in the Palestinian parliament. Father Peter said that the election results were unexpected. "Even the Hamas people were surprised," he said.

Initial reaction to the election among the nearly 150,000 Christians living in the Holy Land focused on their concern that the Hamas-led parliament would impose a Sharia legal code—a strictly Islamic law—on the territories under the control of the Palestinian authority.

However, Father Peter noted that Palestinian society is largely secular, and two weeks ago the leaders of Hamas declared that there would be no Sharia. He said, however, that there still may be trouble on the horizon for Palestinians, including Palestinian Christians, since Hamas still officially opposes the existence of the state of Israel. This policy might lead the United States and other Western countries to cut off aid to the Palestinian authority.

"Obviously, Hamas has to take out from their charter the [call for] the destruction of Israel," Father Peter said. "The problem right now is [determining] how to help the Palestinian people and not necessarily the Palestinian Authority. You can use NGOs [non-governmental organizations]. But if you have a million kids out of school because there are no teachers, if you have [places] where there are no hospital personnel being paid or social workers, we have a big problem on our hands."

Father Peter noted that the leaders of Hamas have said that Sharia will not be imposed, Father Peter said that Palestinian Christians continue to feel pressured by their Muslim compatriots. He said that in the last four months some misunderstandings have led Palestinian Muslims to set fire to the homes of many Christians in two villages in the northern part of the West Bank. "The destruction caused a lot of ill feeling in the Christians dealing with these militant Muslims," Father Peter said.

He went on to say that despite the fact that many Christian and Muslim Palestinians live and work well together, Christians in the Holy Land still have a general "mistrust" for the Muslims there.

Shortly before Father Peter returns at the end of March, Israeli national elections will occur. However, he sees little prospect for real progress in Israeli-Palestinian relations. "The problem is that the president and the Congress will not discuss the issue of the state of Israel. This policy will lead the United States and other Western governments to keep as much territory as it can," he said.

"The mentality is still the same," Father Peter said. "Keep the Palestinians demographically away from us. Make sure we have as much territory as possible. And we’ll surround them with the wall and with military and settlements. And they can’t really move back and forth."

But even in the midst of pressure from Palestinian Muslims and a lack of cooperation from Israel, St. Luke parishioner Richard Sontag of Indianopolis, the FFHL’s director of public relations, said the existence of Christians in the Holy Land is important for the region. Describing them as the “glue that holds everything together,” Sontag referred to a March 3 incident at the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth to show how Christians there are peacemakers.

"I believe the Church, which was praying at the Stations of the Cross, an Israeli family entered and set off firecrackers. The incident sparked protests in Nazareth. The father, mother and a 20-year-old member of the family were arrested and jailed. But Franciscan Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the leader of the Franciscans in the Holy Land, visited the family in jail to show them he forgave them, and called for Christians in the area to do the same.

Over the last eight years, the FFHL has taken a three-pronged approach to preserving the Christian presence in the Holy Land. It has awarded 86 scholarships to Palestinian Christians, allowing them to go to college in the region. Forty of these students have graduated, with 85 percent of them serving in an area in a variety of professional fields. Much of the remaining 15 percent are composed of women who have since married and chosen to be stay-at-home mothers.

In addition to education and employment, the foundation also works to supply adequate housing for Palestinian Christians.

"The problem right now is [determining] how to help the Palestinian people and not necessarily the Palestinian Authority. We’re trying to provide humanitarian services that our people do not have, that other people, such as the Israelis and the Muslims, have,” he said. "We’re trying to provide the basic need of an education to those who are academically inclined, to find jobs for these young people, and to build housing for them.”

Many people in Indiana have supported the ministry of the FFHL. In 2005, Indiana ranked fourth among all states in the amount of money contributed to the organization.

St. Luke parishioner Mike Hirsch of Indianapolis is the foundation’s regional representative. And Sontag, as mentioned, is its director of public relations. Sontag credited the strong support in Indiana for the foundation to the impact that pilgrimages to the Holy Land have had on many people in the state. "When you come back, you’re not the same person,” he said. "God has touched you in such a way that you want to get involved.”

Father Peter, who frequently serves as the guide for the many pilgrimages the foundation organizes, said these trips also have a positive impact for Christians in the Holy Land. "Pilgrimages will give our people the moral support that they need at this particular time,” he said. "There’s a sense of compassion. Pilgrimages are very, very important.”

Addressing the concern that many have regarding the safety of Holy Land pilgrims, Father Peter said that no pilgrim has been hurt or killed in any group that he has led over the past 21 years. But in addition to going on pilgrimages or contributing financially to the ministry of the FFHL, Father Peter also encouraged people to pray for Christians in the Holy Land, especially as Holy Week approaches, that time when the Church celebrates Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. "One of the basic deviations that brings you [there] in this season of Lent is the Stations of the Cross,” Father Peter said. "Offering up the Stations of the Cross for the suffering of fellow Christians [there], asking the Lord to give them hope, is very realistic. It happened in Jerusalem.”

(The text concludes here)
Building bridges through immigration reform

Among us—as taught in Matthew's gospel of welcoming the strangers, making sure we welcome the strangers, whether of Irish descent, African, Asian or from Central America, our Creator played a role—the biggest role possible—in bringing each of us into this world. We may be from different countries, speak different languages, have different vocations and even be on different sides of the political spectrum, but in the end, one constant remains: We are all children of God. That includes a new born-going home with his working-class, American-born parents in Dubuque, Iowa, or the young Mexican couple with a toddler seeking a new beginning in Danville, Illinois.

Two families. Two distinct lifestyles. Both families of God.

Their example leads to two questions that have come to the forefront recently for those of us Christians who want to "walk the talk" each day where our faith is concerned: Do we see Jesus in others? Are we Jesus to others?

The answer to those questions, apparently, depends upon whom you ask. There is a heated battle taking place not only on various state fronts, but on a national stage as well, namely, where immigration laws are concerned.

While representatives and senators debate the issue in our nation's capital (including possibly a walk along 700 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border), state and Church leaders in Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Georgia and California are making sure immigration reform is on people's minds there, too. And many of them want people to know, whether an immigrant's status is legal or not, they support efforts to assist the newcomer.

The Indiana Catholic Conference recently helped lead opposition to an effort that would have restricted assistance to undocumented immigrants. House Bill 3138, which would have restricted immigrants' access to public services, including schools and hospitals, was defeated. We applaud the ICC and Indiana legislators who are making sure we welcome the strangers among us—as taught in Matthew's Gospel. They are, after all, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

More than 1,000 people supporting immigration reform took part in a eucharistic adoration for a week at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis in early March. What makes this action even more impressive is that people from all walks of life— including Latinos and Anglos—turned out to pray for those strangers among us seeking a new life in our country. In neighboring Illinois, a crowd of 100,000 people turned out on March 10 in Chicago at immigration rights march and rally. Only a few weeks earlier, a group of Chicago-area priests announced they were fast ing on Ash Wednesday for immigration rights and hosting immigration prayer vigils at public places every week during Lent.

More than 500 people gathered at Cincinnati's Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains on March 11 to fast for justice in immigration reform. They, too, pledged to pray for those who were escaping oppression and poverty, the lack of freedom in their own countries. Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony asked Catholics to dedicate their Lenten prayers and practices to helping immigrants.

In Georgia, Atlanta Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory and Savannah Bishop J. Kevin Boland released a pastoral letter on March 1 calling for comprehensive immigration reform. The Georgia bishops cited Catholic social teaching to make the point that the human dignity and human rights of undocumented immigrants should be respected.

Simply put, the aforementioned groups have let others know Christ is alive in their hearts, as their actions prove it.

We urge Catholics and all people of faith to follow these leads and let their voices be heard where immigration reform is concerned. We are a country of immigrants called to reach out to others hoping to achieve the American dream. Building a wall is not the answer to this challenge.

Do we see Jesus in others? Are we Jesus to others? Building bridges through faith—for all of God's children—is what our Creator demands of us.

— Mike Krooks

Letters to the Editor

Wanted: More positive stories about priests

I read the article about Charlie Ressler and Father John Mannon in the March 10 issue of The Criterion, and it really touched me. It’s about time that we have more articles about priests in a positive manner. Thank you!

Meghan Sullivan, Indianapolis

Christians called to care for poor and needy

This is in response to Tony Magliano’s column in the March 3 issue concerning fighting for a just federal budget.

Magliano starts off his column by saying that the government is of the people. But he needs to understand that if we want to change the government back in the hands of the people, he should be supporting the fair tax act, which eliminates federal income tax.

By doing this, it puts the money back in the hands of the people who can then use it to have churches create the programs that Magliano feels will be dev estated by the proposed budget.

I would like to think that he is not in the federal government’s charter to develop social programs, but it is in a Christian’s charter (to do so). It is, however, in the federal government’s charter to defend this country.

If we really want to support the poor and needy, then let’s put the responsibility for it back with organizations designed for that purpose, who can provide those services more efficiently, with less bureaucracy and more responsibility.

It is time, as Christians, to recognize our responsibilities in caring for the poor and needy, and quit looking to bureaucratic programs to do the work for us.

Cheryl Pearcy, Greenwood

Get NBC affiliates to air ‘Jesus Decoded’

With The DaVinci Code coming out in theaters soon, the confusion that Dan Brown’s book has caused already is only going to grow.

The USCCB has addressed this issue with its own Web site, www.jesusdecoded.com, which dispels the myths presented by Brown in his book and presents the truth of the faith.

A television program, also called “Jesus Decoded,” has been produced by the Catholic Communication Campaign to be aired on NBC affiliates who are willing to carry it.

Contact WTHR Channel 13 in Indianapolis (or your local NBC station if you’re outside the Indianapolis area) and request to air “Jesus Decoded.”

The USCCB and the CCC have provided us a wonderful way to teach and evangelize those who may be confused by the myths set forth by The DaVinci Code. Let’s get this show on the air!

Chuck Abraham, Noblesville

Looking Around

War and the Christian conscience

Long before peace studies made any significant headway into the Catholic college curriculum, Professor Joseph Fahey had an impressive program going at Manhattan College. He has been at it for about 40 years. But instead of having the same, one year’s experience, 40 times, his teaching and research over the years produced annual growth in his understanding and appreciation of the relationship between the Christian conscience and the question of war. He emerges from the experience with something quite important to say.

With the release of his new book War and the Christian Conscience: Where Do You Stand? (Orbis Books), Fahey’s masterful pedagogy can reach a larger audience. Widespread confusion and unease at home over America’s involvement in the war in Iraq make the publication of this book quite timely now and even necessary.

Fahey’s approach is direct: “This is a book intended for the general reader who may never personally have decided where he or she stands on war.” Through many years of teaching and lecturing on issues of war and peace, he says that he has “found that many people mistake their culture for their conscience. They think they should follow the views of their nation, or their religion, or their family. And I have found that very few people have ever seriously examined the issue of war and come to their own personal decision.”

For those willing to engage their minds in an unemotional examination of the moral issues associated with war, this book provides a searchlight, compass and road map. It is intended to be a help for the inquiring, independent mind, not an instruction for the passive, unreflective person. Moreover, since “Christianity does not speak with one voice on the morality of war,” it is obvious that the Christian conscience is likely to need someone helping to address the challenge raised by the subtitle of this book.

Where Do You Stand?

Fr. William J. Bryon, S.J.

The DaVinci Code coming out in theaters soon, the confusion that Dan Brown’s book has caused already is only going to grow.

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Chuck Abraham, Noblesville
The season of Lent might provide an ideal time to reflect and make changes for a little extra prayer and reflection. For this third week of Lent, I want to encourage us to reflect on family life and family values from a specific point of view.

One time someone said to me, “Archbishop, you are throwing good money after bad money in our schools.” He said if we don’t do something to help parents develop their spiritual and moral values, we are wasting our money on our Catholic school system.

When I pushed for an explanation, I was told that unless our parents are committed Catholics, often what is taught in religion and morality classes and the school’s spiritual formation program gets undone at home.

I think there is probably some truth in that. I think the same concerns certainly apply to our valiant efforts to provide religious and moral education and formation in our parish religious education programs. This person went so far as to say that the commitment of parents to participate in some kind of adult religious education and formation program (like an extended annual retreat) should be made a requirement for their children’s enrollment in our Catholic school system. It is food for thought.

A basic truth is at stake. The first and primary responsibility for the religious education of our children and youth belongs to parents. The primary responsibility begins and ends at home. This primacy of responsibility cannot be placed on our parish religious education programs, our Catholic schools or the Church at large, for that matter. This might be a timely point for reflection for conscientious parents.

Parish religious education programs and Catholic schools exist to help parents provide extended religious and moral education and formation for their families. Our Church has a clear responsibility to do all we can to provide such help. And parents have a responsibility to do their best to can engage their children in extended programs of religious education.

I am often offered by the long-range planning divisions for the future education of our children. Generally, this is a fine indicator of parental responsibility.

I am reminded of something my mom, who taught fourth grade, used to talk about. She would tell me of her amazement (and worry) when at parent-teacher conferences parents would inquire about the capacity of their fourth-graders for college entrance.

In some way, set standards are understandable, but it can also inordinate and a tremendous pressure on a young child. Mom was concerned about the number of children who had stomach ulcers. On the other hand, she would brood over the fact that rarely did parents raise concerns about the religious education or moral formation of their children.

It is so very easy to fix on the importance of academic excellence in our children’s education and to overlook an equally important part of their overall development, namely their moral and spiritual formation. We must not settle for an “either-or” proposition here. I think of the holistic education we should provide our children as “academic excellence with a Catholic heart.” This excellence applies as much if not more to religion as it does to any other academic discipline.

We must not be shortsighted in planning for our children’s future. To be preoccupied with a college education for future career or profession alone may seem far-sighted but, in fact, it is hopefully nearsighted if formation in faith is sidelined.

When all is said and done, the only thing that counts when we are called home to God is the integrity of our life and our faith in him.

Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for March

Youth: that they may open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit so that they can truly discern their role in the Church, especially God’s call to priesthood and religious life.

The foundation of faith and morals is laid in our family homes. What happens in religious education programs in our parish schools or builds on that foundation. We cooperate in the long-range development of our youth.

If you need help with your own formation as parents, please participate in the life of your local parish community. In addition to the worship and prayer life and sacraments of the Church, we offer retreats and adult education, religious formation and marriage enrichment programs to help you. I don’t know what better investment you could make for your family’s future.

Lent provides us an extra opportunity to examine the balance of material and spiritual values that direct our lives and those of our children. It is no surprise that we need support spiritual and moral opportunities in culture that almost exclusively promotes material values at every turn.

The special grace of this Holy season can give us the help we need to change course if it seems called for. Return to the Gospel is the call of Lent.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPACARDELSEÑOR

ARCHBISHOP DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

Lent: An opportunity to examine the balance of material, spiritual values in our lives

Cuaresma: Una oportunidad para examinar el saldo de valor es material y espiritual en nuestras vidas

La gracia especial de esta temporada de Cuaresma: Una oportunidad para examinar el saldo de valor es material y espiritual en nuestras vidas.

La preocupación por una educación universitaria con vistas al futuro de su familia, para el profesionalismo y para el futuro de su carrera. Las intenciones vocationales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo.

Las intenciones vocacionales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo

The Criterion Friday, March 24, 2006
WASHINGTON (CNS)—A spokes-
woman for the U.S. bishops’ pro-life
secretariat, responding to a report that
two more women have died after tak-
ing RU-486, called on Congress to pass leg-
islation that aims to suspend the Food
and Drug Administration’s approval of
the drug used for chemical abortions.

“We are deeply saddened by yet
another advisory from the Food and
Drug Administration that two more
women have died from RU-486 abor-
tions,” said Deirdre McQuade, director
of planning and information for the
U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life
Activities.

However, in its March 17 public health
advisory, the FDA said it was not yet
“able to confirm the causes of death”
of the two women in the United States, but
was “investigating all circumstances asso-
ciated with these cases.”

The agency said it had received “verbal
notification” of the deaths by the manu-
facturer of RU-486, Danco Laboratories.
McQuade said 10 women have died after
using the regimen.

“We again call on Congress to pass the RU-486
Suspension and Review Act [‘Holly’s Law’] which
will protect women’s lives while the flawed
FDA approval process of this dan-
gerous drug is scru-
ninized,” McQuade
said.

The measure calls for temporary sus-
pension of the FDA’s approval of RU-486 so
the U.S. comptroller general can
review the agency’s adherence to statu-
tory mandates in its process for
approving the drug.

“After five years of trauma and death
associated with RU-486, the FDA’s
response has been limited to health advi-
sories and amended drug labeling. How-
many more healthy women must die
before the agency takes a close second
look at RU-486?” she asked.

Since its approval in September 2000,
RU-486 has been marketed in the United
States under the names Mifeprisone and
Early Option by Danco. Known generi-
cally as mifepristone, it induces an abor-
tion in the first seven weeks of pregnancy
when used in conjunction with another
drug, prostaglandin.

RU-486 prevents the fertilized egg from
clinging to the uterine wall, and the
prostaglandin is used 48 hours later to set
off contractions that expel the embryo.

McQuade said the New England
Journal of Medicine reported in
December 2005 that “RU-486 abortions are
10 times more likely to kill a woman,
from infection alone, than are surgical
abortions in early pregnancy.”

“This estimate does not even include
RU-486-related deaths from other causes,
such as ruptured ectopic pregnancy,” she
said.

In its advisory, the FDA said that “all
providers of medical abortion and their
patients need to be aware of the specific
circumstances and directions for use of
this drug and all risks, including sepsis,
when considering treatment. In particular,
physicians and their patients should fully
discuss early potential signs and symp-
toms that may warrant immediate medical
evaluation.”

Holly’s Law is named in memory of
Holly Patterson, an 18-year-old from
California who died from toxic shock in
2003 after being given RU-486.

Pro-life official urges Congress to suspend FDA approval of RU-486

Housing, a sales tax exemption for text-
books and adoptions by homosexuals,
currently banned in the state.

In Illinois, parents and supporters of
Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish and other non-
public schools came together for a
February rally in support of legislation
opening school opportunities and
after-school educational programs to low-
income children attending public, private
or religious schools.

Another issue drawing Catholic atten-
tion in the Illinois General Assembly was
the “morning-after pill”—in particular,
whether pharmacists who object to it can
be forced to disperse the drug.

A bill under consideration would
require pharmacists to disperse the
morning-after pill without a prescription,
while other proposals would include
pharmacists under the state’s Health Care
Rights of Conscience Act, which Illinois
Gov. Rod Blagojevich said applies only
to doctors.

Blagojevich has pledged to veto any
legislation that weakens the state regula-
tion requiring pharmacists to disperse
emergency contraception. “Let me make
something else very clear—if any of those
bills reach my desk, they are dead on
arrival,” the governor said.

At the other end of the life spectrum,
legislators in California were preparing to
debate whether state should become
the second to allow physician-assisted sui-
cide, currently legal only in Oregon.

The debate was expected to heat up in
mid-April, when Democratic Assembly
members Patty Berg and Lloyd Levine
scheduled a hearing in the Senate
Judiciary Committee on Assembly Bill
651, a measure that would allow doctors
to prescribe lethal medication to patients
who have been declared mentally compe-
tent and terminally ill by two physicians.

Berg and Levine tried unsuccessfully
last year to pass another assisted suicide
measure, but abandoned the effort because
of lack of support.

A recent survey showed 49 percent of
Latinos in the state strongly disapprove of
physician-assisted suicide, 15 percent dis-
approve, 17 percent somewhat approve and
12 percent strongly approve. The mar-
gin of error was plus or minus 5.4 per-
centage points.

The results “speak volumes about how
the Latino community opposes doctor-
assisted suicide,” said Angel Luevano,
state director of the League of United
Latin American Citizens. “Latinos know
that this is morally wrong. We don’t see
this as a partisan issue, but one that con-
cerns civil and human rights.”

Another hot topic in state legislatures
this spring was Roe v. Wade, the
1973 Supreme Court decision that lifted
most state restrictions on abortion.

In March, South Dakota became the
first state since Roe took effect to ban
nearly all abortions, except those to save
the life of the mother.

A similar bill is headed for conference
committee in Mississippi, after the state
Senate on March 15 declined to concur
with House-passed amendments adding
excceptions for rape, incest and “the pres-
ence of a life-threatening condition in the
mother that would be worsened by contin-
uing the pregnancy.”
The Criterion  Friday, March 24, 2006

Baltimore’s basilica, nation’s first cathedral, to reopen in November

BALTIMORE (CNS)—It will take nine days of events to celebrate the completion of the two-year restoration of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, America’s first cathedral.

The renovation will be completed in time for the scheduled reopening of the basilica on Nov. 4. Special events are scheduled through Nov. 12.

This year marks the bicentennial of the start of construction on the basilica in 1806 on top of a hill overlooking Baltimore. The basilica was designed by Benjamin Latrobe, chief architect of the original U.S. Capitol in Washington.

When ground was broken for the cathedral, Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore was the only Catholic bishop for the entire country.

Michael Ruck, chairman of the board of the Basilica Historic Trust, announced plans for the reopening of the historic church at a press conference on March 15 inside the basilica. With the work already completed during the privately funded restoration, the church is flooded with natural light that reveals its freshly painted colors.

He cited Bishop Carroll and Latrobe’s vision for the nation’s first Catholic cathedral and called it a masterpiece.

Ruck, a member of the basilica parish and president and chief executive officer of the RuReck Family Corps., said the announcement of the November celebration marked the 200th anniversary of the week John Eager Howard, a colonel in the American Revolution, agreed to sell the site on which the basilica sits for $20,000 “to the trustees of what would become the first American basilica.

Construction of the basilica would “secure not only the right of Catholics, but also the right of all Americans to worship without fear or persecution or attack.”

“Catholicism had been illegal and was repressed when the British were in charge,” he added. “Thus, religious freedom began to emerge from a constitutional concept to concrete reality, right here, 200 years ago this week.”

The privately funded restoration is expected to cost $32 million, said Ruck. Mark Potter, executive director of the basilica trust, said $25 million has already been raised from individuals, organizations and foundations across the country, adding that $21 million is already in hand, “which is phenomenal.”

“Now that the scaffolding is down,” Potter added, “it’s easy to imagine how wonderful the basilica will be when the new marble floor is in place and our pews, pulpit, altar and bishop’s chair are gloriously restored.”

Ruck also noted that the building’s historic significance is particularly important today when sacred mosques and basilicas in distant lands are being attacked.

“Thus, religious freedom represented a break from the past, Ruck said.

Dr. Marie-Alberte Boursiquot, a member of the basilica parish who is also a member of the board of the trust, announced the basilica will officially reopen on Nov. 4. The following day, the altar will be rededicated and an archdiocesan Mass will be celebrated.

Boursiquot said a highlight of the week will be on Nov. 12, “when all the Catholic bishops of America will converge on Baltimore for a procession into the basilica, a moment that will echo a similar procession when the church was first opened.”

Potter thanked the trust’s board members, the contractor, Henry Lewis, and architect, John G. Waite Associates. In thanking all the carpenters, electricians, roofers and painters who are working to restore the basilica, Potter mentioned the signature of a mid-19th-century craftsman in the undercroft of the basilica.

Francis Gildea, who signed his name in wet cement soon after the Civil War battle of Gettysburg, Pa., in 1863, is a tangible link “to all the many expert craftsmen whose beautiful work on this restoration will inspire and be admired for centuries to come,” Potter said.

Now that the scaffolding is down,” Potter added, “it’s easy to imagine how wonderful the basilica will be when the new marble floor is in place and our pews, pulpit, altar and bishop’s chair are gloriously restored.”

Construction of the basilica would “secure not only the right of Catholics, but also the right of all Americans to worship as they pleased,” he said, “as a symbol of our right to worship without fear or persecution or attack.”

This cathedral deserves to be protected, preserved and ... showcased for Americans of today and Americans of tomorrow,” he said, “as a symbol of our right to worship without fear or persecution or attack.”

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Parishes schedule Lenten penance services

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of penance services that have been reported to The Criterion.

Batesville Deanery
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
April 3, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
April 4, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
April 4, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris
April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg

Bloomington Deanery
March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Louis, Bloomington
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
April 4, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville

Connersville Deanery
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Andrew, Richmond
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth, Cambridge City
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle

Indianapolis East Deanery
March 27, 1 p.m. at St. Philip Neri

Indianapolis North Deanery
March 26, 4 p.m. for North Deanery parishes at Christ the King
March 27, 7 p.m. for North Deanery parishes at Christ the King
March 28, 7 p.m. for North Deanery parishes at Christ the King
March 29, 7 p.m. for North Deanery parishes at Christ the King

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 25, 9:30 a.m. at St. Barnabas
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Mark
March 29, 7 p.m. for Holy Name, Beech Grove, Nativity and St. Jude at St. Jude
April 5, 7 p.m. for Good Shepherd and St. Roch at Good Shepherd
April 5, 7 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Joseph at St. Joseph
April 5, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart
April 10, 7 p.m. for SS. Francis and Clare, Greenwood, and Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
March 28, 9 a.m.-11 a.m. at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School
March 28, 6:30 p.m. at St. Monica
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
April 6, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels

New Albany Deanery
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
April 2, 2 p.m. at St. John, Starlight
April 2, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
April 5, 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyds Knobs
April 6, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
April 9, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

April 10, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

Seymour Deanery
March 29, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, Seymour
April 4, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace, Madison

Tell City Deanery
March 30, 7:15 p.m. at St. Mark, Perry County
April 2, 4 p.m. for St. Michael, Cannelton; St. Fius V, Troy; and St. Paul, Tell City, at St. Paul, Tell City
April 6, 7:30 p.m. at St. Augustine, Leopold
April 12, 7 p.m. at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad

Terre Haute Deanery
April 6, 7 p.m. for St. Michael, Terre Haute
April 6, 7 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville

Father Robert Kennedy, pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Rochester, N.Y., demonstrates how he would confer a blessing during the sacrament of penance. Father Kennedy said today’s focus on reconciliation, along with the penitent’s option to visit the priest face-to-face rather than with a screen between them, alleviates some first-frames’ jitters for children. “I think the mystery of the dark box kind of made it an intimidating experience,” he told the Catholic Courier, newspaper of the Diocese of Rochester.

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Author encourages women to slow down, make most of life

By Mary Ann Wyland

Paula D’Arcy’s happy life with her beloved husband, Roy, and 21-month-old daughter, Sarah, ended in a split second in 1975 when a drunk driver crashed into their car on a highway in Connecticut. The accident killed her husband, who was driving, and her daughter, who was strapped in a child restraint seat behind him.

D’Arcy, who was pregnant, sustained serious injuries but survived the car accident.

When she woke up in the hospital a few days later, there wasn’t even time to begin asking God why such a heartbreaking tragedy could happen to her family. That week, her parents took her to the funerals of her husband and daughter.

Several months later, she gave birth to their second child, a daughter she named Beth Starr.

Now an internationally known Catholic author, retreat leader, grief ministry speaker and psychotherapist who lives in Boston, D’Arcy found a new life and ministry by picking up the pieces of her broken dreams and reaching out to help others who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

She was the keynote speaker for “Hopeful Women,” the fourth annual women’s conference held on March 4 at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.

More than 275 Catholic, Protestant and Jewish women from cities in central and northern Indiana as well as Ohio listened attentively to her spellbinding stories that centered on the importance of taking time in the busyness of daily life to get to know “the unbroken place within.”

D’Arcy described the joy of inattentive time at an hurricane-ravaged New Orleans couple who danced in each other’s arms inside their hurricane-ravaged house last fall because they were thankful to be alive.

She also discussed her friendship with Morrie Schwartz—a retired college professor from Boston and the subject of a bestselling book titled Tuesdays with Morrie written by Mitch Albom—and how Schwartz coped in positive ways with the painful, debilitating symptoms of ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s Disease.

St. Christopher parishioner Collette Fike of Indianapolis introduced D’Arcy by explaining that her eight books and one-play act reach across religious boundaries with compelling and insightful messages.

“Her work as a counselor also included working with a man named Morrie Schwartz—of the book Tuesdays with Morrie—and Paula tells her part of that story in her book Sacred Threshold,” Fike said. “She also is president of the Red Bird Foundation, which supports the growth and spiritual development of those in need, including those in prison and in developing countries around the world.”

Smiling often, D’Arcy reminded the women that they can find renewed hope by examining what they have been given in life and learning to appreciate those gifts.

She asked the women to consider the questions, “What sound is my life making? What is the speed of my life? Is there ever silence or enough silence?”

Silence must involve true listening, D’Arcy said, not just the absence of noise and busyness.

“Someone once suggested that it would be shocking to view your own life like a movie, but without sound,” she said. “To simply watch yourself, to see how you’ve chosen to spend the hours of your days.”

Perhaps it would be difficult, she said, to see the hours that sped by filled with concerns of so little consequence without noticing the fleeting beauty of daily life.

D’Arcy said she reads poetry to reflect on hope, joy and beauty in life.

“I began reading one poem every day,” she said. “I am amazed at . . . the way the Spirit reaches through my small opening, leading me to new vistas . . . Silence becomes a core conversation of life.”

But sadly, she said, “it’s possible to live your whole life and never have this core conversation because we move through life so quickly. I heard a woman say last week that when you’re . . . moving at 60 miles an hour, the only thing you will encounter is other people going 60 miles an hour.”

It’s important to listen for the sound of what is genuine in life, she said, because when life will continue to change for the better.

“Our minds are never still,” D’Arcy said. “We’re always listening to something. Do you listen to all of the time? [Do you ask] ‘Am I special? Do people like me? Am I loved?’ . . . These questions become an unbelievable preoccupation in our lives. There’s a constant litany of voices in our heads, all these things that are really peripheral in our lives, which is the way we move through life, on the periphery, never getting to the center.”

D’Arcy also shared her conversation with the author of the best-selling book titled On My Way Home, the one-act play reach across religious boundaries found in silence during the fourth annual “Hopeful Women” conference.

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See AUTHOR, page 17

“Hopeful Women,” the fourth annual women’s conference on March 4 at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis. It is the author of eight books, including Song for Sarah and Gift of the Red Bird—The Story of a Divine Encounter, and a one-act play titled On My Way Home.
To give hope, we need to experience hope

By Sister Miriam Pollard, O.C.S.O.

How can we hope—we, the ones who want to help the hopeless? We have to admit there is such a thing as hope and that it is possible for all of us. But we also need to experience a passage into the real thing.

What is hope—not just any old hope, but the theological virtue? It is a poured-in willingness to grasp God’s promises, to rely on the one who promises. Hope relies on the “what” and “who” of the mystery of God.

The trouble is that hope starts operating best when we feel like we don’t have any.

Hope is the ragged, barefoot child who comes limping along when we feel like there is no help and never will be.

We have church on Sunday and centering prayer or charismatic prayer or liturgical prayer, but nothing seems to work. We have everything, yet we despair.

Let us call it emotional despair, not the moral determination to forego all possibilities.

Discourse comes in various forms:

Minor despair—We have awakened to a day that is as gray as the color of an old sheet.

Major despair—The person we love and want to marry has found someone else or we’ve lost our job with nothing in sight but bills.

Super-major despair—What euphemisms are called a白银, a death house? Nothing seems to sweep away everything we love and possess, or someone’s suicide or divorce achieves pretty much the same thing.

When we have everything, when we feel spiritual and respectable and good, we don’t need hope. It’s when we’re playing host to despair and its kin—guilt, desolation and self-rejection—that we reach out for hope and wonder where it is when we need it.

Why is it difficult to hope?

The great obstacles to faith—suffering and evil—also do nicely as obstacles to hope. A heart drowning in these dark seas will not easily believe in faith or easily reach out to hope.

The trouble is that evil. Evil and pain.

But deeper than the pain and the evil lies the inability to envision a kind of resolution other than the one we want. We are standing on the bare beach of our determination to have not only some solution, but “this” solution—a good that we so desperately want, the taking away of what we so desperately don’t want or, at least, when all else fails, our desire for help in a form that we can understand.

But hope in the form that we have decided upon is not what God and hope are all about.

It’s when we don’t get what we want that we kick off from a shore of unstable sands into the kind of help that pours out of the dark, mysterious sea of God’s own nature.

This is our invitation into the intense and frightening, but ultimately stable world of the divine self-gift. This stability can feel horribly insecure, but there it is—the real thing.

Remember that hope is given. We only have to take it and hold it in hands that may not feel its weight.

The grace to take that gift is there for the asking. We can pray by resting in the gift, recognizing it in the arid of a God who wants only our good, who wants only to give the gift; in however alien a form.

We can carry a mantra in our hearts, invoking the presence that is already there.

There can be beautiful music, watch the sunrise, read Second Isaiah and the Resurrection accounts often.

And we can be very honest with God about how small a gift we want. Perhaps we want this gift, which is a manifestation of the eternal tenderness, and how much we want this gift for others. If we have made the journey, the others will know. If we share with gentleness, without sounding as if this is an easy task—share without reproach and with great sympathy—we will be able to present at least the possibility of hope to others, a possibility that may be all that the others can bear at the moment.

We can become a humble part of the help ourselves with service, a hand, a check, a smile, a note.

(Cistercian Sister Miriam Pollard is the prioress of Santa Rita Abbey in Sonoita, Ariz., and the author of Love: Dialogues With the Prison, published by Crossroad in 1996.)

Hope is a journey into the light

By Father Herbert Weber

Early one cold February morning, Glenn Benner was transported from the Ohio State Penitentiary in Youngstown to the “death house” at the Southern Ohio Corrections facility in Lucasville.

It was the day before his execution. As his minister for five years, we met weekly for prayer, Eucharist and discussion.

Benner described his trip to the death house. He looked out the window of the van to see the dawn of a new day. There were dark clouds, but the sun started to shine, the clouds dissipated and light overwhelmed the darkness. For him, this was a symbol of the journey of hope he traveled during the last 12 years of his life.

Hope does not deny that darkness exists. Benner admitted his crimes and knew he had destroyed lives and families through his deeds. He also knew that hope, like light, is stronger than darkness.

At his funeral, I spoke about the quality of hope in his life. Finding hope, and living with it, is necessary for everyone. Hope is based on several realities, which lead back to God. Hope is the realization that one is never alone. With hope, there is always the possibility of another day.

Benner told me there was no way he could undo the harm he had done; but with God’s grace he could place himself in the Lord’s mercy. He tried to transform his life into discipleship by helping prisoners. People often feel they have to face life alone. That is never true. Benner had the blessing of many people, who reached out and brought him to faith and baptism.

Hope is built on the conviction that goodness is stronger than evil. The darkness which envelops someone is never stronger than the light that penetrates the darkness.

Before the execution, I read Psalm 27 to Benner: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?” I suggested that this be his mantra as he walked into the room to face his death.

Hope as certainty in God’s love permeated Glenn Benner’s final days. Like light, it radiated into the lives of others.

(Father Herbert Weber is pastor of Blessed John XXIII Parish in Perrysburg, Ohio.)

God does not abandon us

Describe a time that you tried to offer hope—through words or action—to a suffering person.

“I have visited many people in the hospital, bringing them the Eucharist. I encourage them to put their trust and faith in God, and let him know how they feel. I tell them God wants his children to come to him, and they will feel better for telling him. God...doesn’t abandon us. We abandon him.” (Jack Kobe, Price, Utah)

“I used to be an intensive care nurse. Once, an elderly man...was being treated by others, but kept staring at me. I went over to him and just held his hand. He seemed so grateful for that simple thing. I’ve read since then that one of the best things for the sick is the human touch.” (Linda Carpenter, Copley, Ohio)

“We had a fundraising dinner for the tsunami victims, and a newspaper fellow asked...how we would explain where God was in this. We answered that Jesus came to be with us in our suffering, not necessarily to take it away. His being with us helps relieve the suffering through. And when people respond with help, we are following the Apostles and living out our mission.” (Carrie Lacher, Friday Harbor, Wash.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Has the Church in your area ever advocated basic, local-level action to foster social justice? How?

To respond for possible publication in an upcoming edition, send your comments, up to 200 words, to yourDiocese@Catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
Jesus in the Gospels: Betrayed with a kiss

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Eik

After his agony and prayers in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was wholly in control of his emotions and actions. He had resigned himself to whatever was about to happen. He was prepared to go to the cross like a lamb.

As the Apostles were praying near the cave of Gethsemane, Judas arrived with a crowd of people sent by the high priest Caiaphas, who was probably a temple police and one of the chief priests and scribes who had long threatened to kill Jesus, but who also had reason to bemasters soldiers. Perhaps Caiaphas had thought it wise to get the cooperation of the Roman occupiers right from the start. Judas told them that he would give a kiss to the man they were to arrest. It would be the kind of embrace one might exchange between friends, but the word Matthew and Mark use indicates the kiss of greeting was to be followed by a blow at such a caduceus. Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Jesus then asked the crowd, “Whom are you looking for?” When they replied, “Jesus the Nazorean,” he said, “I AM.” The crowd fell to the ground. He displayed such majesty that he probably could have walked right through the crowd, as he had done on previous occasions. But that was not to be this time. Ramirez thought of the words of his Apostles, telling the crowd to let them go, as it seems, Peter got his nerve up. He had a sword. He drew it, swung it wildly, and managed to cut off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest’s slave. How did the author of John’s Gospel know the slave’s name? Why were the evangelists so specific about the right ear?

We can imagine that Judas was happy about this turn of events. There are some who believe that he had become disillusioned with Jesus because he was so slow to act as the Messiah. Perhaps Jesus thought he was. Now, he thought, he had been successful in provoking Peter and surely the master would be able to defeat Rome.

Not so. Jesus quickly stopped the fight and told Peter to put his sword away for all his sword will perish by the sword,” then he healed Malchus’s ear—the final healing miracle.

Then all his followers deserted Jesus. Only Mark tells us the rather strange story of a young man following Jesus “wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked.”

Was this young man Mark himself? Had he become curious when the crowd passed his home and followed to see what was going on, and in a hurry just thrown on a linen cloth? What other explanation could there be?

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Christianity is the reason for freedom

Recently, a young man contacted me about a column I’d written on the “relationship between science/reason and religion. He reported that he was a minister and he could see that science generally seems to hold up science as the ultimate authority opposed to faith in religious truth.

I told him that I would have to continue writing about the two ideas, since he believes religion is losing a battle for hearts and minds of too many people. He said he had been led to the Church, and we should remember and be grateful for that heritage.

No sooner had we had our conversation than I read several reviews of a new book titled “The Victory of Christianity.” The author is Stark, including one in The Indianapolis Star by Jack Fink, editor emeritus of The Criterion. The implication of Stark’s arguments is exactly what my reader was concerned about.

Stark is a professor of social sciences at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and director of the Spiritual Capitalism project at Baylor, which appeared in a 1993 issue of The Criterion. He also claims that the rise of prosperity did not occur in other religions because Christianity is unique in its futurist/ethical ethic. He writes in The Criterion: “Whereas a personal God who gave us free will, holds us responsible for our own actions and promises rewards and punishments to the soul. We are all in equal opportunity before God.

On the other hand, Eastern religions and Islam promise only death by fed, thus destroying initia- tive. They emphasize following the law rather than discovering the spirit. And, while their societies developed high cultures and even invention, there was no follow-up in using them to improve people’s lives. Nor did they do anything to advance individual freedom. Stark’s book is convincing to me and certainly instructive about early intellec- tual and religious history. My young reader has the same question about us. Are there several other new books out there now discussing the same themes. And, while such books aren’t the usual Letter spiritual reading, they’re sure to improve understanding and appreciation of our faith.

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

A conscientious look at the confessional

It was curious how some people had a highly developed sense of guilt, she thought, while others had none. Some people felt guilty about minor slips or mistakes on their part, while others would feel quite unmoved by their own gross acts of dishonesty. …

Mma Ramotswe’s open today with lines from The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency by Alexander McGill Smith. Coincidentally, I was reading the novel during the author’s appearance at a conference in Lafayette, Ind.)

Mma Ramotswe’s words ring true because we all know sinners in both cate- gories, including ourselves. A sister who taught me in high school once told my father how I would have difficulty in life because I was “too conscientious.” She was right. Time and experience have tem- pered that, although there were incidents in my life that really stretched my ability to handle it with my ability to love or be understanding.

So has the sacrament of penance, also known as the sacrament of reconciliation. I encourage readers to check the “The Sacrament of Reconciliation” section in The Criterion for in-depth information about the forms of penance that I mention briefly here.

“Penance consists of the following:是有 confidence in the sacrament of penance, also known as the sacrament of reconciliation. I encourage readers to check the “The Sacrament of Reconciliation” section in The Criterion for in-depth information about the forms of penance that I mention briefly here.

“Penance consists of the following: Is there any more important policy impli- cations. It suggests that, if people only understood their faith, they would agree with Church teachings.

In the 1990’s, sociologists Charles Glock and Rodney Stark explored the relationship between religious knowledge and religious behavior. Their measure of religious knowledge included questions about Scripture quotations and Old Testament prophets. Their index of religious “orthodoxy” included items about belief in the personal God, the divinity of Christ, the authenticity of biblical miracles and the existence of the devil. Their measure of “ethicalism” had to do with the question of love’s one neighbor and doing good.

Glock and Stark found very little relation- ship between knowledge and belief. Catholics who were more knowledgeable were only slightly more likely than other Catholics to be doctrinally orthodox and there were no more religious leaders to score high on ethicalism. A 2005 national survey also raises ques- tions about the alleged link between illiteracy and dissent. Several colleagues and I asked Catholics to agree or disagree with statements about certain Church’s positions. There were no more responses to any of the statements than either to the other. Agreement with this statement was 75 percent for the illiterate and 95 percent for the religiously literate. Disagreement was a sign of religious literacy. We also asked Catholics about the importance of the Church’s opposition to the death penalty, same-sex marriage and abortion.

Catholics who were most likely to say they could not explain their faith to others and 85 percent of those who disagreed with that statement said that belief in the Church’s stance was very important. Thus, there was little or no link between illiteracy and dissent.

There is a third way to look at the issue. If illiteracy contributes to dissent, Catholics with high school educations or less should disagree with Church teachings more than highly educated Catholics. In fact, most studies—including several of my own—indicate just the opposite: less educated Catholics are more likely to agree with Church teachings than Catholics with high school educations.

Our research also shows that laypeople accept core Church teachings which they would be hard pressed to explain away. Is Jesus’s real presence in the Eucharist, and reject many other teachings which they can explain away or ‘paraphrase’ to make them more suppressive? But they uphold the Church’s opposition to the death penalty. These studies and observations raise serious questions about the alleged link between illiteracy and dissent. There does not appear to be a very strong relationship between the two. Indeed, they seem to have little or nothing to do with each other.

(James D. Davidson is professor of sociology at Pennsylvania State University in West Lafayette, Ind.)
Fourth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday, March 26, 2006

• 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
• Ephesians 2:4-10
• John 3:14-21

This weekend, the Church celebrates Laetare Sunday, the name drawn from a word in the first word in Latin of the Entrance Antiphon, Rejoice! Lent is well under way. Easter is not that far away. It is not so trivial as a day to rejoice that the drabness and penance of Lent will soon end. Instead, it is a lesson about life. The drabness and trials of earthly someday will end. The glory of heaven awaits us.

Once the Church required, and still allows, celebrants at Mass to wear vestments of a rose color. It is not as if the more somber violet of Lent today is diluted. Rather, the violet is brightened by the sunbeams of the approaching dawn.

That dawn, of course, will be the brilliant flash of the Resurrection. The Second Book of Chronicles supplies this weekend with its first reading. At one time, Chronicles was a single volume. As time passed, and as editors and translators had their way, it was separated into two volumes. Thus it has remained, and thus it exists in all modern translations of the Bible. It is part of the Bible’s historical set of volumes. While these volumes tell of the history of God’s people, their purpose is not to report history, but to reveal developments in the people’s religious experience. This reading recalls the bitter events that led to the Chosen People’s defeat by the Babylonians, and the removal of the Temple of the Chosen People from Jerusalem. It is not to report history, but to pose is not to report history, but to

The Sunday Readings

Monday, March 27
Isaiah 65:17-21
Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b
John 4:34-54

Tuesday, March 28
Ezekiel 1:1-9, 12
Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
John 5:1-16

Wednesday, March 29
Isaiah 49:8-15
Psalm 145:8-9, 13c-14, 17-18
John 5:17-30

Thursday, March 30
Exodus 32:7-14
Psalm 106:19-23
John 5:31-47

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen

True Christian humanism is based on Gospel teachings

Q Our discussion club had a lively exchange recently about humanism, and spiritual or Christian humanism. Can you explain the differences? People said that it is good, while others said that it violates Catholic teach- ing. What do these words mean? (Texas)

A The word “humanism” has a rainbow of meanings. In itself, it is the belief or philosophy that the greatest good of men and women is their perfection as human beings. All good, all morality, according to this idea, is based on what will make men and women more perfect human, more able to be whole and integrated in their knowl- edge and loving and feeling. So the word “humanism” can mean both un- Christian or un-Catholic about humanism; it is solid Catholic doctrine. All God’s laws, all of Christ’s teachings and grace are aimed at making us become what God made us to be, good people in the pattern of Jesus, who was the perfection of human existence.

Pope Paul VI said in his encyclical “The Development of Peoples” that in all the Church’s labors for truth and justice, “what must be aimed at is complete humanism ... the integral development of the whole man and of all men.” St. Irenaeus was, I believe, the first to say, “The glory of God is man fully alive,” fully living the human nature created by God.

Council II’s Declaration on the Church in the Modern World echoes the same thought. Hope is seen for man because “we are witnesses of the birth of a new humanity, one in which man is defined first of all by his responsibility towards his brothers and toward history” (#55).

Some brands of humanism in the past, as today view the works and goals of human beings without regard to any relationship to a Creator, to a Savior or to a life beyond this world. In short, it is just a way to get by, to live well, but without the direction of God. Obviously, this vision of men and women is opposed to Christian belief, it is and has been explicitly condemned by Catholic and other Christian authorities.

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True Christian humanism, based on the Gospel, has become an important element of Catholic social doctrine, found in a myriad of modern Catholic documents, most prominent of all the encyclicals and other teachings of Pope John Paul II. This kind of humanism is not only per- missible, it is essential if the human fam- ily is to develop on this earth in a healthy and Christ-centered manner.

Q In a recent column, you said that “there is no evidence in the Gospels that Mary had explicit knowledge of future events in the life of Christ.” His death and resurrection, for instance. I agree. But books are available, sanc- tioned by the Catholic Church, that tell more of Mary’s knowledge and her life with the Apostles. Two of these books are My Mother Mary of Agreda and Anne Catherine Emmerich. You could have mentioned them. (Pennsylvania)

The books that you refer to, and a few others based on private revela- tions to various persons, are sanctioned by the Church only in the sense that there is no heresy in them. In other words, the Church does not teach for their truth or accuracy. Some of these revelations, in fact, contradict each other. People may believe what is in them if they wish, but they are not Catholic teaching.

A (A free brochure describing basic Catholic prayers, beliefs and moral precepts is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 5515, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com)
Pope urges religious leaders to reconcile conflicts with dialogue

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI urged religious leaders to reconcile conflicts with dialogue and active solidarity.

In a March 16 speech to members of the American Jewish Committee, the pope underlined the “rich common patrimony” that “distinguishes our relationship as unique among the religions of the world.”

Christianity acknowledges God’s relationship with Israel as the beginning of salvation history, and the pope reminded his audience that the Catholic Church “can never forget that chosen people with whom God entered into a holy covenant.”

But Judaism and Christianity also share a unique trait with Islam in that they all believe in one God as creator of heaven and earth, he said.

“It follows, therefore, that all three monotheistic religions are called to cooperate with one another for the common good of humanity, serving the cause of justice and peace in the world,” said the pope.

He emphasized the importance of religious leaders spearheading such efforts since they “have a responsibility to work for reconciliation through genuine dialogue and acts of human solidarity.”

The pope said such cooperation is especially urgent today because greater attention needs to be given to “teaching respect for God, for religions and their symbols, and for holy sites and places of worship.”

The visiting American Jewish Committee’s international director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi David Rosen, said he agreed with the pope’s assessment of “the need to reach out to Islam.”

The rabbi said the group has “lots of bilateral contacts” with Muslim groups, but he said the level of dialogue and exchange is “low-key and behind the scenes” because Muslim leaders risk being criticized for engaging in dialogue with Jews.

But he added that the pope’s call for openness is critical and Muslims need to have “a lot of education” about other religions.

For example, he said the pope’s appeal for dialogue is “an opportunity for Muslims to re-examine their own history” and understand their own roots.

The pope said he agreed with the American Jewish Committee on the importance of not focusing on the “negative stereotypes” of “those who have deviated from the path of the religion” but to work to promote “the path of love and peace” by building bridges with other religions.

The pope emphasized the need to “reach out to Islam” and “work together to proclaim the Gospel and bring the message of peace and hope for humanity.”

He also said the pope’s call for dialogue is “not a substitute for action” but a way to “open doors to a better understanding.”

The pope also noted the importance of interreligious dialogue and cooperation in promoting peace and justice in the world.

He stressed the need to “promote peace and justice in the world” and said that religious leaders can play a crucial role in promoting interreligious dialogue and cooperation.

The pope urged religious leaders to lead the way by reconciling conflicts and divisions through dialogue and active solidarity.

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Teen challenges those gathering signatures on stem-cell petition

ST. LOUIS (CNS)—Molly McCann wants people to stand up for the unborn. The 17-year-old has been doing just that at several protests she organized at libraries to oppose a petition that would protect human cloning and embryonic stem-cell research in Missouri.

A member of Ascension Parish in Chesterfield who is home-schooled, Molly said she organized the protests after she encountered a person at her local library branch who was collecting signatures for the Missouri Stem-Cell Research and Cures Initiative.

In an interview with the St. Louis Review, archdiocesan newspaper, Molly said the ballot language, which continues to be challenged in the state courts, is flat-out deceptive.

“I saw a man or two sign the petition, and I felt they were really sort of being duped,” she said. “I got pretty upset on the ride home.”

She told her mother, Noreen, about what had happened, and her mother encouraged her to go back to the library. Standing next to the woman collecting signatures, Molly said, “Everyone who came up, I would step up and say, ‘Do you realize there are no cures with embryonic cloning, but would ban the implantation of a cloned embryo in a woman’s uterus. The Church opposes any cloning or stem-cell research that results in the killing of a human embryo.”

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Molly said she received mixed reactions from library patrons. While she was able to convince some people not to sign the petition, others still chose to sign it after hearing what she had to say, she said. And yet others seemed to already know about the controversy behind the issue and refused to sign.

“Since then, Molly and several siblings and friends have organized other protests outside the library headquarters and two branches where other signature collectors have been present.”

Molly said the issue is important to her, not only because it involves human life, but also because she will turn 18 this September—just in time to vote against the effort in November if it gets enough signatures to be put on the ballot.

She also plans to organize demonstrations with her siblings and friends this summer. “We’d like to get the word out across the state of Missouri because the issue here is to get people educated,” Molly said. “A lot of people, if they understood what was happening here, they’d vote no. But if they don’t hear the controversy, it’s quite possible they might vote yes.”

Molly said she encourages people to visit libraries, post offices and other places where signatures are being collected to present the other side of the story.

“Stop and just devote 20 minutes to an hour to just standing there and giving the other side,” she said. “Because often times, these petitioners just walk off. They give up.”

### Lenten Dining in Southern Indiana

#### KELSEY’S Casual Dining

730 Rolling Creek Dr.
New Albany, IN
(Take I-265 to the Grant Line Rd. exit; Kelsey’s is located behind Lee’s Chicken in Summit Plaza)
812-949-1001

Lenten Specials!
When you dine at Kelsey’s during Lent, give your receipt to your parish office. All parishes returning their receipts to Kelsey’s will receive a 10% donation of the receipts total!

#### Lenten Dining Guide

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### “In God We Trust”

Woman’s penny project sends prayers, support to U.S. troops

Sally Sobert holds a “penny” card and a prayer card she designed to show support to U.S. troops serving their country at home and abroad. Sobert, pictured at the Marian Servants of the Word House of Prayer in Thibodaux, La., on Feb. 3, affixes a penny, spray-painted red or blue, to a card that proclaims, “God has so blessed America.” To date, more than 50,000 penny cards have been distributed to military personnel in the U.S. and Iraq.

A 20-year Army veteran stationed in Baghdad, Iraq, called Sobert and told her she had had no problems getting them.

“As word of the project got out, I literally had people coming up to me and giving me pennies,” she said.

Some local organizations have also collected pennies for the cause, including St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Parish in Thibodaux and the Bayou Community Band, which collected pennies at its concerts.

When 4,400 members of the National Guard from the area were deployed to Iraq, Brig. Gen. Hunt Downer of Houma told them his prayer coin had on a friend of hers whoduped,” she said. “I got pretty upset on the hour to just standing there and giving the other side,” she said. “Because often times, these petitioners just walk off. They give up.”

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“As word of the project got out, I literally had people coming up to me and giving me pennies,” she said.

Some local organizations have also collected pennies for the cause, including St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Parish in Thibodaux and the Bayou Community Band, which collected pennies at its concerts.

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### Lenten Dining Guide

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### “In God We Trust”

Woman’s penny project sends prayers, support to U.S. troops

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Media’s power to inform, unite must be used for good, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The potential power of the media to inform and unite people must be harnessed for the good of humanity, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Meeting on March 17 with members of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, the pope encouraged Catholic bishops and communicators to help the media and the entertainment industry promote truth and peace.

“Such a commitment demands principled courage and resolve on the part of those who own and work within the hugely influential media industry to ensure that promotion of the common good is never sacrificed to a self-serving quest for profit or an ideological agenda with little public accountability,” he said.

Pope Benedict reminded council members that in his message for World Communications Day 2005, he called for special efforts to uphold and support marriage and family life through the media.

Even television programs and movies can help parents raise their children by “presenting edifying models of human life and love,” he said.

“How disheartening and destructive it is to us all when the opposite occurs,” Pope Benedict said. “Do not let our hearts cry out most especially when our young people are subjected to debased or false expressions of love, which ridicule the God-given dignity of the human person and undermine family interests.”

He asked council members to increase their efforts to help media professionals “promote what is good and true, especially in regard to the meaning of human and social existence, and to denounce what is false, especially pernicious trends which erode the fabric of a civil society worthy of the human person.”

During their March 13-17 meeting, council members focused particularly on implementing the suggestions made by Pope John Paul II in his 2005 apostolic letter on the rapid development of communications technology.

While members and consultants spoke among themselves about rumors that the rapid development of technology has brought us closer together or accomplished something else, Pope Benedict was planning to reorganize the Vatican’s various communications-related offices, the supposed plan was not mentioned at all during the council’s working sessions nor during the meeting with the pope.

Jesus Father Federico Lombardi, general director of Vatican Radio and the Vatican Television Center, attended the council meeting. He said he had not heard anything official about the reorganization.

In a reflection prepared for the meeting, Bishop Joseph A. Galante of Camden, N.J., a council member, said the rapid development of technology has improved the ability of the Church to communicate with its members and the wider world.

“And yet, for me, this marvel is coupled with a certain uneasiness,” he said. “I wonder sometimes whether these new technologies have brought us closer together or accomplished something else.

“The media-driven world—which is increasingly owned and overseen by the powerful few—too often exaggerates differences, exploits conflict and degrades human dignity in the name of profit,” he said.

Despite the need to offer criticism from time to time, Bishop Galante said, the Church must recognize and use the positive power of the media.

“We can expand the boundaries of our outreach to people who need to hear the Good News,” he said.

“We have the ability to communicate the beauty of the faith in new and compelling ways that resonate with the people of today, in particular our youth.”

Bishop Baker co-authors novel about Florida missions

CHARLESTON, S.C. (CNS) — Bishop Robert J. Baker of Charleston has co-written a novel that recounts the history of the chain of Spanish missions in northern Florida.

The book, Cacique: A Novel of Florida’s Heroic Mission History, was released on March 14 by Saint Catherine of Siena Press, a Catholic publisher in Indianapolis.

It was co-founded by Father Daniel Mahan, pastor of St. Louis Parish in Batesville, and Jean Zander, a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.

The book’s co-author is Tony Sands.

“Cacique,” a Spanish word for chief, is the tale of Florida’s Potano Indian chieftains and their relationship with Spanish Franciscan missionaries, according to a press release from the publisher.

In the release, Bishop Baker noted that the Florida missions have not been exa-
cuted until recently. One that has, Mission Santa Fe de Tolosa on northern Florida, serves as the novel’s focal point.

Bishop Baker was ordained a priest of the Diocese of St. Augustine in 1970. He served as a parish priest and high school teacher before doing graduate studies in Rome. He later taught at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach, Fla.

He was ordained the 12th bishop of Charleston in 1999.

(For more information about Cacique, or to purchase it, visit www.bishopbaker.com or call 888-544-8674. The $14.95, plus shipping and handling.)
Robert F. Beidelman built large altar and ambo for Jubilee Mass

Robert F. Beidelman, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis and the father of Father Patrick Beidelman, pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis, died on March 17 at his home. He was 72.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 3:30 p.m. March 23 at Holy Spirit Church. Burial followed at Holy Cross Cemetery in Indianopolis.

A native of Indianapolis, he graduated from Little Flower School and Catholic High School as well as Purdue University's Institute of Technology.

Ina Schaaflein, the mother of Father Steven Schaaflein, died on March 11

Ina Pauline Schaaflein, a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd's Knobs and the mother of Father Steven Schaaflein, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Charlestown and St. Francis Xavier Parish in Henryville, died March 11 at the Green Valley Care Center in New Albany. She was 79.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 14 at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church. Burial followed at the parish cemetery.

Surviving are her husband, Richard Schaaflein; four sons, Kerri, Michael, Father Patrick and Steven Beidelman; three sisters, Kathryn and Martha Beidelman and Jude Rodnick; and six nieces and two great-grandnieces.

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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; deaths of archdiocesan priests serving in parishes in this diocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious who have moved or changed parishes are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; other priests whose deaths are included here are ordination or ordination.


GUTHICK, Ina Schaaflein, the mother of Father Steven Schaaflein, died on March 11 at 86.

Ina Pauline Schaaflein, a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd’s Knobs and the mother of Father Steven Schaaflein, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Charlestown and St. Francis Xavier Parish in Henryville, died March 11 at the Green Valley Care Center in New Albany. She was 79.

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Principal

St. Mary’s Catholic School, Anderson, Indiana, seeks a Pre-K principal. St. Mary’s (SMS) has a student population of 203 students and 18 faculty members with a strong academic program. SMS is accredited by NCA and, as a State of Indiana school, SMS is a multicultural, socio-economically diverse school that reflects a strong Catholic identity. Visit our Web-site for more information www.smmary.catholicweb.com. The position will be open beginning July 1.

Applicants should have a master’s degree, with either an administrator’s license or Indiana certification in administration. Candidate should have experience in collaborative leadership. The principal must be an active member of the Catholic Church who is committed to the integration of Gospel values through the educational curriculum. The principal is a member of the Parish Pastoral Team, which shares the pastoral leadership of St. Mary’s Parish and School. Bilingual preferred (English/Spanish), with a strong commitment to Social Justice.

This position offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Please send a resume with salary history, arriving no later than April 15, to:

St. Mary’s Principal Search
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Anderson, IN 46016
(765) 644-8467
Fax: (765) 648-4000
Email: stmarys@bsuemng.com

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If you believe you are qualified to lead our school into the future and perpetuate our tradition of excellence in Catholic education, please submit your resume by April 5, 2006 to:

Dr. R. Bach
Office of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1418
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
Tel: 317-236-1544

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Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Office of Catholic Education
Attention: Rob Rash
1400 North Meridian
Indianapolis, IN 46202
(317) 835-8224, ext. 1544

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Mike Hochuin
Indianapolis, at a time when one woman’s family made him appreciate his own blessings even more. “There was a single mother of two boys living in general housing and struggling day to day,” recalled Striegel, who served as the president of the group’s archdiocesan council. “There were struggles to pay for medicine and doctors’ appointments for the boys. I can actually remember her telling me about going to the dumpster to get things, a lamp or a nightstand.

She used our distribution center for clothing for her and the boys. I helped out with food and bills and counseling. I saw the comparison to my own family. I had a good job, a good wife, healthy kids and a home. It taught me humility. The ministry is a blessing. It’s living our faith.”

When Gerardo Dimas moved from California in 1992, he soon found a home at St. Monica in Indianapolis. Ever since, he’s offered that same welcome to fellow Hispanics as the parish’s Spanish Mass—which he helped to establish—now draws nearly 600 people each week.

“It’s the memory of one faith-seeker that motivates Dimas in his work for the Church. There was this friend of mine who was away from God,” Dimas recalled. “He had belonged to another Church. He was away from God,” Dimas recalled. “When I gave him the hug, he felt God was calling him. God was calling him. But he told me that until three years later he didn’t want it to go to my head.”

Dimas’ friend has now become a Catholic. That conversion thrills Dimas as much as starting the Spanish Mass. “It has grown with us, and he keeps us working,” Dimas said. “We’re looking for more ways to serve and help people.”

Patty Yeager
The thrill of turning a heartbreaking Christmas into a joyous one for struggling families and hopeful children has challenged Patty Yeager in her sixth years as the co-chairperson of the Christmas Store. In 2005, more than 500 needy families benefited from the archdiocesan effort to let parents shop—free of charge—for clothes, toys and other gifts. Yeager won’t forget the reactions of two mothers who found hope and help at the Christmas Store.

One was a refugee from Ethiopia who became excited about getting blankets for her children, who used them to cover up against the December cold in Indianapolis when they went outside. The other mother was in desperate need of a size 6 winter coat for her first-grade daughter, a child whose coat had been stolen from her daycare center.

“It’s a nice way to know Christmas mornings are great,” said Yeager, a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis. “For a split second on Christmas morning, I think there are a lot of people who are happy all over the city because of what we do at the Christmas Store.”

Father John Mannion
Fr. John Mannion, the archdiocesan director of Youth Ministry, helps to establish a spirit of service in youth. Mannion has served as the president of the group’s archdiocesan council. “There’s a lot of people who are happy all over the city because of what we do at the Christmas Store.”

In the end, though, Teipen acknowledged that no matter how much hard work he and other supporters of Catholic Radio Indy put into supporting the station’s mission, it’s the people who ultimately bring about any results. “That’s the thing about evangelization. You make the means available,” Teipen said. “And it’s up to God to do the rest.”

(To listen to Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 FM’s online streaming of its programming, log on to www.catholicradioindy.org)
MERIDIAN, Idaho (CNS)—Like Gideon, Deacon Malherbe Desert, a Haitian physician who is assigned as a deacon at Holy Apostles Parish in Meridian, has resorted to testing God—not just once, but several times in his lifetime. God has not let him down.

“You know God talks to people. You just have to listen,” he said.

Deacon Desert, his wife, Martine, and their five children came to Idaho last summer at the invitation of members of the Project Haiti team at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise. The deacon, who was a pediat- rician and general practice doctor in Haiti, and Martine Desert, who was a pharmacist, are not able to practice their professions in the U.S.

So for now, he is working as an operating room aide at St. Alphonsus hospital during the day, then going to the hospital library in the evening to study for the U.S. medical tests for foreign physicians. He estimates it will take two years before he is ready to take the test. She is studying English and hopes someday to return to her profession, too.

In Haiti, he worked in Port au Prince with Father Rick Frechette ministering to the very poor. Father Frechette, who has come to Idaho several times to help raise funds for St. Alphonsus’ Project Haiti, became a doctor and spearheaded the building of a hospital so he could better minister to the poor.

Deacon Desert was ordained to the diaconate in January 1996, almost 10 years after he became a doctor. “The calling [to be a deacon] seemed in my blood,” he said. “I felt. ‘If you don’t do it, you will not feel happy.’ ”

In 2004, he was working with Father Frechette “seven days a week” doctoring the poor, the sick and the dying, and providing pastoral care when his wife and children went to Florida on vacation to visit her uncle.

Three weeks later, she called him to say she wanted to stay in the U.S. because their children would have a better education and be safer due to the precarious political situation in Haiti.

He stayed in Haiti, working and sending the family money.

Then one day in 2005, Martine Desert called her husband, crying. While she and the children were at a store, there was a robbery. The robbers made them lay on the floor. They put a gun to her head and kicked the children. “They were all traumatized,” said Deacon Desert. When he went back to Miami, he could see that their children were even afraid to go out or go to school. He returned to Haiti, while asking God what to do. “It was a big choice for me,” he said. “I love my family so much, but I also loved my ministry, my vocation.”

Then he got a call from Barbara Tomasi at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center. Tomasi had met Deacon Desert on the Project Haiti trips to Haiti. She said she had heard about what happened to his family, and she invited them all to move to Boise.

The deacon and his wife visited the city in April. “We saw that Boise is a good place to raise children and give them a good education,” he said. “The authorities in Florida had caught one of the thugs, and every week we were going to the courts. Everyone was still traumatized.”

In July, the Desert family moved to Boise. Their children are all doing well in school. Christina, 15, is at Bishop Kelly High School in Boise. Christopher, 14, and Christian, 13, are at a Boise public middle school and Caroline Emmanuelle, 8, and Chris-Allan, 6, are at St. Mark School in Boise.

All the Desert children have “Christ” in their name some way. “Paul said, ‘Christ is my life,’” said the deacon. “We love Christ. He is our life, so we named them in homage to God and entrusted them to Christ at their births.”

One day, when their children are grown, the couple hopes to return to Haiti. Deacon Desert’s prayer for the people of Haiti is that the poor “can have a better, more dignified life.”

TESTING GOD

Haitian deacon moves family to Idaho for better life