



# The Criterion

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**There's something about Mary**

"Twenty Something" Catholic columnist Christina Capecchi reflects on her role models, page 14.

## A Mother's Love

### Graduation photo inspires couple with quadruplets

By Mary Ann Wyand

Photo by Mary Ann Wyand



Above, Rick and Ellen Taylor of Indianapolis hold their 2-year-old quadruplets beside their older sons for a family portrait. Their children are, from left, 7-year-old Zachary, 4-year-old Jacob, Allison, Hannah, Abigail and Benjamin. She teaches a first-grade class at Holy Name School in Beech Grove. See earlier story at [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com).

Right, Holy Spirit parishioners Phil and Theresa Taylor of New Palestine took this photograph of their children on June 3, 2001, on Monument Circle in Indianapolis after Cathedral High School's commencement ceremony at the Hilbert Circle Theater in Indianapolis. Their oldest daughter, Lynn, second from right, poses with David, from left, Laura, Julie and Katie.



Submitted photo

Constant motion.

That's how Holy Name School first-grade teacher Ellen Taylor describes her life in the classroom with 12 students and at home with a 7-year-old son, a 4-year-old son and 2-year-old quadruplets.

Taylor and her husband, Rick, will celebrate Mother's Day with their children on May 14 at their south side Indianapolis home, and Sunday promises to be as busy as every other day of the year.

The Taylors said they never dreamed that God would bless them with six children in eight years of marriage, but now they can't imagine life without their three sons and three daughters.

They believe that their naturally conceived quadruplets—Benjamin, Hannah, Allison and Abigail—are the result of many prayer requests for a daughter.

Their oldest son, Zachary, is a second-grade student at Holy Name School in Beech Grove, and Jacob attends pre-kindergarten there so they go to school with their mother every weekday.

The quadruplets were born at 33 weeks on Nov. 28, 2003, at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis, and the fraternal and identical twins are all healthy. They believe their babies' strong start in life is also the result of many prayers.

It hasn't been easy taking care of four babies at the same time, Ellen Taylor said, smiling easily, even with help from their parents, other relatives, friends and baby-sitters.

Fortunately, she said, teaching skills help her stay calm and organized at home, too.

Inspiration comes from a special photograph prominently displayed on their refrigerator, which they look at

every day.

It's a high school graduation picture of another set of Taylor quadruplets—David, Julie, Katie and Laura Taylor dressed in their caps and gowns—sent by their parents, Holy Spirit parishioners Phil and Theresa Taylor of New Palestine. The Taylor families are not related.

The photograph was taken with their firstborn daughter, Lynn, after Cathedral High School's commencement ceremony on June 3, 2001, at the Hilbert Circle Theater

on Monument Circle in Indianapolis.

"After our quadruplets were born," Ellen Taylor said, "Theresa sent me a picture of their quads on their first Christmas, and another picture taken after their high school graduation, along with a beautiful letter giving me advice that I will treasure forever. We've had the graduation picture on our

See **QUADRUPLETS**, page 2

## As premiere of *The Da Vinci Code* nears, Catholic leaders urge caution

WASHINGTON (CNS)—As the May 19 premiere of the film adaptation of *The Da Vinci Code* nears, bishops and other Catholic leaders across the country are urging caution and skepticism about it should the claims made in Dan Brown's novel cross over into the movie.

Dioceses also have taken steps to educate Catholics on separating fact from fiction in the book. The novel contends that Jesus Christ was married to Mary Magdalene and fathered a child, and portrays *Opus Dei* as a secretive Church cult that is plotting to take over the Church.

"It is pure fiction, and the novel is identified as such. Unfortunately, too many people believe the story. One review, printed on the back cover of a paperback edition, states: 'Read the book and be enlightened,'" said Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia in a column published in the April 27 issue of *The Catholic Standard & Times*, Philadelphia's archdiocesan newspaper.

But he said the debate over the novel and the release of the film offers "a teaching moment for the Church."

"It is astounding that many, unfortunately, seek understanding of Jesus in novels rather than in the inspired texts of Scripture. For it is there, in the word of God, that we plunge into the depths of the mystery of Jesus. In the Gospels, we hear his voice, we see his face, we experience his love, we understand the power of the paschal mystery," Cardinal Rigali said.

"Is *The Da Vinci Code* anti-Catholic? Well, sure it is. The book is at least as anti-Catholic as it is anti-Christian," said Archbishop George H. Niederauer of San Francisco in a column published in the May 5 issue of his archdiocesan newspaper, *Catholic San Francisco*.

In his column, Archbishop Niederauer took apart several assertions made in the novel.

See **DA VINCI**, page 17

Also inside: Our annual Evangelization Supplement, pages 9-12.

## By the numbers: Stats give picture of John Paul II's pontificate

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Under Pope John Paul II's 26-year papacy, the Catholic Church grew by



Pope John Paul II

45 percent, struggled to replace priests and religious, and experienced a significant "graying" of its hierarchy, according to statistics released recently by the Vatican.

In a sense, the statistics complete a by-the-numbers portrait of Pope John Paul's pontificate. They cover the period from 1978, the year of his election, through the end of 2004, three months before he died.

The worldwide Catholic population increased by 342 million during that time, from 757 million to just under 1.1 billion.

That sounds huge, but it was actually

slightly less than the rate of general population increase. As a result, Catholics as a percentage of the world population decreased from about 18 percent in 1978 to about 17.2 percent at the end of 2004.

The continent-by-continent numbers are more significant than the global totals, confirming the Church's demographic shift to the developing world.

The Church in Africa grew by 172 percent under Pope John Paul, increasing from about 12 percent to 17 percent of the African population. By the end of 2004, Africans represented about 14 percent of Catholics worldwide, compared to 7 percent in 1978.

The number of Catholics in North and South America, where about half the Church's members live, increased about 50 percent, virtually the same as the general population growth.

Europe showed signs of stagnation. The

Catholic population there increased by 13 million in the first 10 years of Pope John Paul's papacy, but over the last 16 years declined by more than 650,000. The overall European growth rate under Pope John Paul was 4.6 percent, the lowest by far of any continent.

The number of Catholics in Asia increased nearly 80 percent over the same period. The fact that Catholics still represent only 2.9 percent of the total Asian population explains why many Vatican officials see the continent as the great frontier of evangelization.

Oceania's tiny Catholic population managed to increase more than 50 percent under Pope John Paul, slightly more than the general population increase.

When it came to priests, the Vatican statistics highlighted the "good news, bad

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# QUADRUPLETS

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refrigerator for two years, and every time the babies cry and it gets stressful we just look at that picture and think, "They made it. We can, too."

The last two years have passed by in a blur, Rick Taylor said. "It's gone pretty fast. We moved to a larger house in March of 2004. Our family life is different now than it was two years ago, but it hasn't really slowed down. It's still hectic."

In spite of their nonstop lifestyle since the quadruplets were born, Rick Taylor managed to find time to complete a Master of Science degree in Management. He works in information technology for an employee benefits company in Indianapolis.

"We love all our children the same and are so happy to have them," he said. "The experience of having all of them has been the biggest joy for us. It's hectic every day, but fun, too."

Faith has helped them trust in God's plans for their family. He is a member of Gray Road Baptist Church in Indianapolis and she is a member of Holy Name Parish, where their children were baptized.

"As humans, you can plan but God has a

tendency of changing your plans," he said. "It's good to have long-term plans in theory, but with four babies we've learned to live in the present moment each day. You've got to have faith that God will take care of you, and everything will work out."

As the mother of a half dozen children, Ellen Taylor said she appreciates her own mother's help with child care and their parents' help with financial needs.

"We are so grateful for help from our parents," she said. "We're just in constant motion all the time. It's a lot of work, and sometimes you start to feel like you can't do it all. A lot of times, in the morning, before we get the children out of bed, we'll come down to the kitchen and just sit down and have a cup of coffee. Even if we don't say anything, at least we're still spending time alone together."

When life gets stressful, she said, they have learned to place their trust in God.

"The experience of parenting six children has brought us closer as a couple," she said. "It's taught me to trust more, to be more faith-filled and to pray that God will take care of everything. It takes a lot of patience and a sense of humor. We worry about finances, and my big concern is, 'How are we going to provide a Catholic education for all six of our children?'"



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Quadruplets Allison, from left, Benjamin, Hannah and Abigail Taylor received matching rocking chairs as gifts. The 2-year-olds are the children of Rick and Ellen Taylor of Beech Grove. Their older brothers, 7-year-old Zachary and 4-year-old Jacob, help take care of them.

When doubts creep in, she said, they look at Phil and Theresa Taylor's picture of their quadruplets on graduation day.

Theresa Taylor said when their quadruplets were born, there were only 25 sets of surviving quads in the country.

She said carrying her four children included risks, and raising the quads came with many challenges, too.

"My daily prayer to God from the moment I knew I was pregnant with the quads was that he show me a way to cope with whatever came," Theresa Taylor said. "He always has, usually through the most unforeseen manner. There have been so many people ... that have been there for me and my family. God has blessed us tremendously."

Two decades later, she said, their

quadruplets "have graduated from college, moved out of the house and found employment. But, more importantly, they are decent human beings who find joy in God and in their lives."

Raising five children hasn't been easy, Theresa Taylor said. "I am just glad that things turned out the way they did. God has indeed blessed us."

Rick and Ellen Taylor are "a wonderful young couple with a big job on their hands," she said. "I believe God will show them the way to cope. I believe they have a wonderful, if not difficult, journey ahead of them. They have been blessed. But then, that is easier for me to see, looking back on the life they have to look forward to. I wish them all the best." †

# NUMBERS

continued from page 1

news" picture that typified Pope John Paul's papacy. The good news was that the number of seminarians increased 77 percent from 1978 to 2004, with the greatest jumps in Africa, 304 percent, and Asia, 153 percent.

The bad news was that the number of priests worldwide has decreased about 3.5 percent since 1978—and with the Catholic population up 45 percent, that means the average pastoral workload is much heavier. The Vatican called the global figures "rather disappointing."

If Church officials are looking for a silver lining in those numbers, they may find it in the fact that over the last 16 years

the number of diocesan priests has increased by 11,634, reversing a trend. The number of religious-order priests continues to decline, however.

Europe showed the greatest drop in the number of total priests, losing 20 percent under Pope John Paul. North America dropped 13 percent, South America gained 29 percent, Africa was up 84 percent and Asia up 74 percent. In the United States, the total number of diocesan and religious priests dropped nearly 20 percent in the period from 1978 to 2004.

The Vatican also examined the numbers of priesthood candidates in relation to the Catholic population, and found "greater dynamism" in Africa and Asia, which have more than 150 seminarians for every 1 million Catholics. Europe had 84 seminarians

and North and South America, about 67 for every 1 million Catholics.

The statistics confirmed two other widely known trends under Pope John Paul: the sharp decline in the number of women religious—down about 23 percent, from 991,000 to 767,000—and the sharp increase in permanent deacons, up about 480 percent, from 5,500 to 32,000.

Not so widely known has been the aging of the episcopate, which was detailed for the first time by the Vatican.

One might expect that, especially with a greater number of Third World bishops, the average age would have decreased. In fact, during the period from 1978 to 2004 the average age of bishops increased more than 5 years, from 62 to 67.4 years, the Vatican said.

The oldest episcopate is in Europe, where the average age of bishops is now above 69. In North and South America, bishops average 67.8 years of age, in Oceania 67 and in Africa 63.6.

The Vatican said another indicator of the same phenomenon was the number of bishops age 65 or older, which rose from 39 percent worldwide in 1978 to 59 percent in 2004. In Europe, 64 percent of today's bishops are over 65.

But even in Africa, where some of the youngest Church communities live, 46 percent of the bishops are now over 65, compared to only 22 percent in 1978. That trend may reverse itself as Africa's record numbers of Pope John Paul-era priests move into the age bracket from which new bishops are typically chosen. †



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# A Promise to Keep

## Chastity program helps teens respect themselves and others

By Mary Ann Wyand

Seven students at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond are the newest chastity peer mentors in the archdiocese.

They were welcomed to the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education's A Promise to Keep: God's Gift of Human Sexuality program during a luncheon for all the peer mentors on April 27 at the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

The new peer mentors will present their first abstinence education programs to Catholic grade school students in the Connersville Deanery during May.



Jenna Knapp

"We're really excited about the expansion of A Promise to Keep in Richmond," said Margaret Hendricks, program director for the 12-year-old abstinence education curriculum

presented at Catholic grade schools and parish religious education classes in the archdiocese.

"We have about 420 peer mentors from eight Catholic high schools," Hendricks said after the luncheon. "We've reached about 5,000 middle school students and religious education students this year. I'm so proud of them."

These teenage peer mentors made the decision to live chaste lives before they joined the volunteer program, she said. When they teach the curriculum and profess their beliefs to younger children, it reinforces their commitment to wait for marriage.

St. Andrew parishioner John Purcell of Richmond, a junior at Seton Catholic High School who hopes to become a

physician, said he "felt it was something that I just had to do because it's so neat to be able to talk to other students about [chastity] instead of having an adult try to explain things. It gives structure to how you understand what the Church is teaching [about abstinence]."

Leigh-Anne Valentini, a sophomore at Seton Catholic High School and member of St. Mary Parish in Richmond, said she thinks the chastity program is "really important and will help a lot of kids" make the right decisions in life.

"It tells the kids that they are doing the right thing," Leigh-Anne said, "and reassures them to do what is right."

Leigh-Anne said she and John have been dating for about a year and know how important friendship is in their relationship as high school students.

During the luncheon, several peer mentors spoke to the students about their beliefs and experiences in the classroom setting.

Bishop Chatard High School senior Mary Glassmeyer, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, told the teenagers that she enjoys teaching adolescents how to make the right decisions about sexuality.

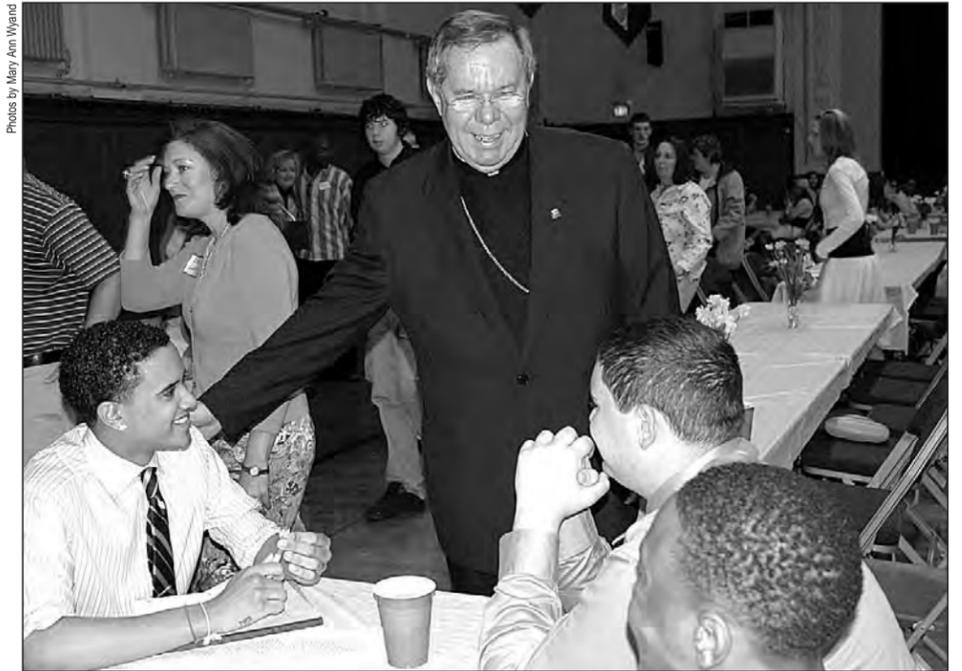
"Chastity is a gift from God," Mary said, "and the A Promise to Keep program helps others experience this gift."

St. Agnes parishioner Andrew McMasters of Nashville, a junior at Brown County High School, teaches the A Promise to Keep curriculum in the Bloomington Deanery.

"In fifth-grade, I signed a card that said I would save myself for my future



Shawn Azman



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein talks with Cardinal Ritter High School seniors Brian Klemm, from left, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis; Kyle Echeverry, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis; and Tshaka Khumalo of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, who is living with a host family in the Indianapolis West Deanery. The archbishop thanked all the teenagers for their volunteer service as chastity peer mentors and praised them for having the courage to stand up for what they believe by promoting abstinence to younger students.

spouse," Andrew said, "and this promise still holds true today."

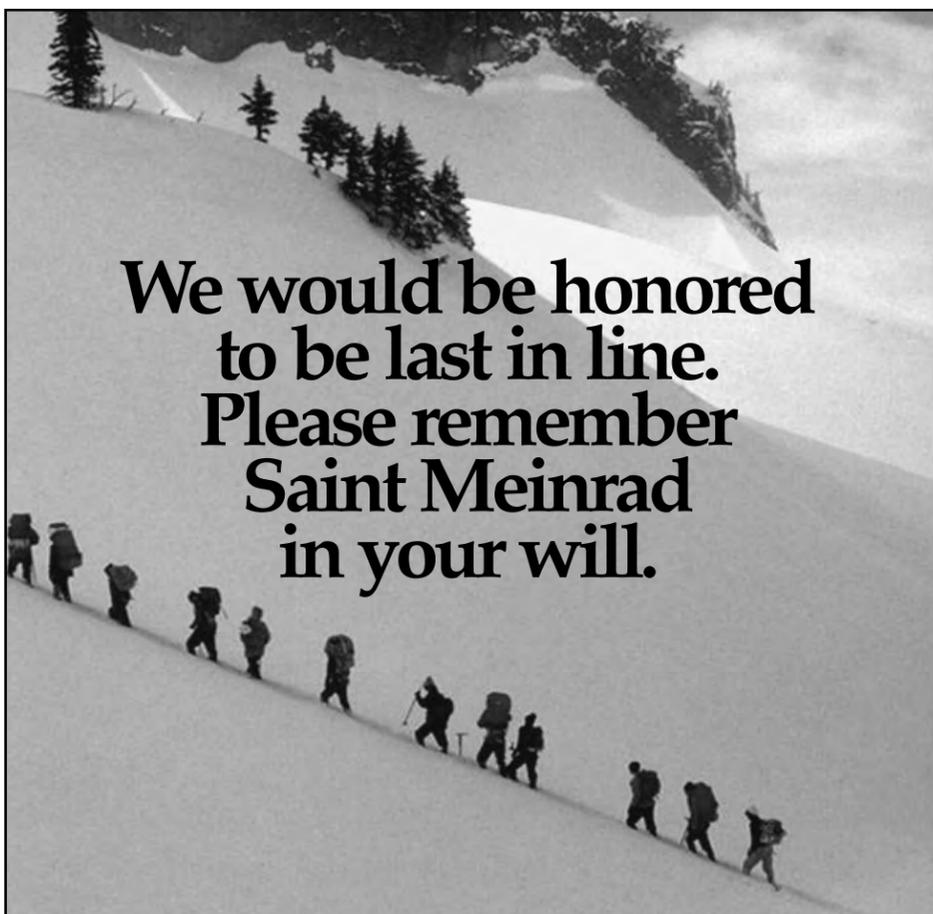
Roncalli High School senior Lisa Watness, a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, will pursue studies in nursing or another medical career as a San Damiano Scholar at Marian College in Indianapolis.

"Chastity helps me feel closer to God," Lisa said. "It helps me respect others ...

and it makes me a stronger person. I am proud to say that I am keeping that promise until marriage. My parents have constantly inspired me to be the best person that I can be. [By practicing] chastity, I find the best version of myself."

Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School senior Jenna Knapp, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, participated in

See PROMISE, page 17



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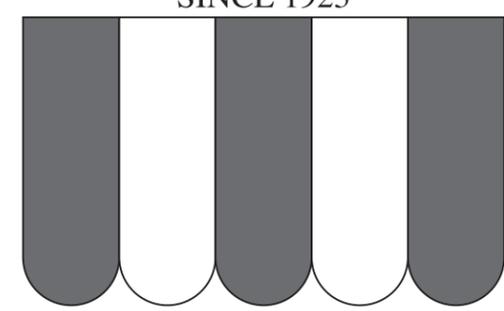
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## Editorial



CNS photo/Bob Rolier

"Isabel," a Muslim woman who asked that her real name not be used, poses with her 3-month-old baby outside Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington. Even though she is now a legal U.S. resident, her husband's pending deportation order is a source of stress.

# We are all immigrants, the pilgrim people of God

People who travel from one place to another in search of a new earthly home and a better life are called immigrants. People who wander from place to place in search of their spiritual homeland, and a better way of living, are called pilgrims.

Every baptized Christian is a pilgrim on a journey to the better world that is to come. Every one of us is an immigrant in search of our final resting place, our heavenly home.

The debate that is raging today over immigration reform would benefit from this fundamental spiritual perspective: None of us "owns" the land we live in or the turf we protect so jealously. We are stewards, not owners, of this land and this nation.

It is true we are a nation of laws. These must be respected. And it's true that we have to have borders (physical and cultural boundaries) that safeguard our identity and protect us from those who would do us harm. But we are stewards of this great land, not owners in any absolute sense.

The God who gave us this place asks us to do two things as his stewards (caretakers, custodians or guardians). He asks us to care for this land and its people. He asks us to share our abundant blessings with others.

Immigration reform should not be about ethnicity, race, economic or social status. It should be about the stewardship of our nation—taking care of and sharing the incredible gifts that we have all received as temporary residents of this earthly homeland. Immigration reform should not be about politics or privilege. It should be about helping one another to find our true dignity and our ultimate destiny as fellow pilgrims journeying toward God.

Pope John Paul II addressed the opportunities and challenges of immigration in his apostolic letter, *The Church in America*:

"The Church in America must be a vigilant advocate, defending against any unjust restriction the natural right of individual persons to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another. Attention must be called to the rights of migrants and their families and to respect for their human dignity, even in cases of non-legal immigration.

"Migrants should be met with a hospitable and welcoming attitude which can encourage them to become part of the Church's life, always with due regard for their freedom and their specific cultural identity" (cf. *Ecclesia in America*, #65, The Question of Immigrants).

We must be vigilant in the defense of human life, and in the stewardship of our nation's freedom and its heritage. We must govern by the rule of law. We must secure our borders and protect our citizens. But all of this must be done with the proper perspective. This land does not belong to us. It is God's country—given to us not to hoard or dominate or destroy, but to cherish, cultivate, develop and share.

As a pilgrim people, we know what it means to be homeless, to be on the way to a better life and a new world. As disciples, we know that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life. We are called to follow him—the one who had nowhere to lay his head, the one who wandered from place to place until the Father called him home.

We are all immigrants, the pilgrim people of God. Let us fight for the kind of immigration reform that ensures human dignity and the right to work. Let us urge our government leaders to secure our borders, and protect us from those who would destroy our freedom and our security.

But let us never forget that we are stewards, not owners, of this land and all its abundant blessings. We are all immigrants, sojourners in search of our true spiritual homeland, regardless of who we are, where we were born or what our economic, social or legal status may be.

As fellow travelers with Christ, let us pray in the words of Pope John Paul II:

*Lord, grant that the Church in America may flourish and grow richer in the fruits of holiness.*

*Give us strength to proclaim your Word with courage so that the world may know new hope.*

*Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, pray for us!*

— Dan Conway

(Daniel Conway is a member of the editorial committee of the board of directors of Criterion Press Inc.) †

## Be Our Guest/John Jaffe

# Wanted: More theological guidance for Catholics in the pews

An April 21 letter to the editor underscores the prevailing lack of theological knowledge rampant among modern Catholics. The writer appears to be more a Quaker or Jehovah's Witness than a Catholic.

He wrongly states that "all killing is murder." Murder, as defined in *Webster's Dictionary*, is "the unlawful killing of a human being." Murder is a mortal sin, but not all killing is murder.

The earliest Hebrew translations of the Ten Commandments found in the Torah use the Hebrew verb "ratsach," associated with criminal acts of killing; murder. The Hebrew verb "harag" more closely covers killing in general, including all forms of life, and was not found in the earliest texts.

These differences were made clear by rabbinical scholars in the 16th century when the English King James version of the Bible appeared. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible, translated the commandment using a word that means "murder," not "kill." St. Augustine, using that translation, made it clear that this commandment did not pertain to every type of killing, to include capital punishment.

To further substantiate the above, it would be very "un-God-like" for God to give the Hebrews the Ten Commandments, admonish them not to "kill," then lead them across the Jordan where they promptly fought and killed the inhabitants to gain that land, all under his leadership and direction. God, by very definition, cannot be illogical, or "un-Godly." God is perfect.

It is reprehensible that Catholics today are left in a perpetual state of confusion concerning, for example, war, self-defense, etc. What are the children

of soldiers or law enforcement officers supposed to think when they read uninformed writing?

I put the blame on many of today's religious clerics. Not long ago, I had this same conversation with two priests, one newly ordained, pertaining to this commandment. I was met with blank stares, and the comment, "I've never heard that."

Catholics don't get complicated theology in Sunday homilies, leaving many in the pews uncertain how to address current issues in our lives.

Another problematic area is an understanding of the Church's traditional position on "subsidiarity," support for the poor. It hasn't been fully explained. There are people who need help, but there is a fine line between giving help and becoming an "enabler."

Do we encourage people to change their lives for the better, discarding habits and lifestyles that are harmful and even deadly, or do we just regularly and routinely give them "stuff" to the point they become ever more dependent? It may make us feel better, and relieve our guilt for having achieved a degree of "success," but how does it effect those to whom we give?

Faithful Catholics may be assured that the Church does indeed have very good answers for the questions we have. While some homilists are very good, it is unfortunate we do not get the core teachings, but rather a politically correct, "light" version of theology on Sundays and from Catholic News Service columnists.

(John M. Jaffe is an Indianapolis resident and member of St. Barnabas Parish.) †

## Letters to the Editor

### The Da Vinci Code's lies not worth supporting

On May 19, *The Da Vinci Code* movie comes to theaters.

We have heard a lot about the anti-Christian and anti-Catholic dialogues in the book, but the overall purpose for the story is in Chapter 74. It is all about sex!

Dan Brown's fictional story discredits the divinity of Jesus, the integrity of the Apostles and the authenticity of the New Testament.

The Catholic Church is presented as a major obstacle which has tried to control our spiritual access to God. Brown concludes that by eliminating the Catholic Church as the sole conduit to God, mankind can be free at last to commune directly with God through sex. In the story, it is ritualized, illicit, group sex.

It is good to hear that Archbishop Angelo Amato, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican, is urging Catholics to boycott the film. A financially successful *Da Vinci Code* movie would just ensure that we would have more of the same.

As for me and my family, we will follow the archbishop's request and boycott.

Michael Chamblee, Nashville

### Thanks for dialogue related to etiquette

I was pleasantly surprised, but a little flabbergasted when I read the various articles and letters published about proper Church etiquette.

Surprised, because the problem has been occurring for a number of years without any Church representatives or officials commenting to any great extent.

I have to conclude that the problem has become so prevalent to most people that someone, at least at *The Criterion*, made a decision (of courage) to print some comments on proper dress and behavior for Mass.

When I read the first article about the matter, I also knew *The Criterion* would be receiving the usual letters, which would state in so many words, that "... God does not care what I wear to Mass."

And, low-and-behold, in the April 28 issue, there it was!

However, in that letter, the writer did not mention children running up and down the aisle during Mass, nor did he mention that since God did not mind what clothes he wore, he did not see anything wrong with wearing shorts, garden clothes, golfing clothes or "rags" to wedding Masses, funeral Masses, holy day Masses or ordination Masses. Since he did not mention these situations, I assume that he feels that since God does not care, anything goes!

I'm sure that someone more informed and articulate than I could explain that while God may not care what you wear to Mass, he might appreciate an individual going to a small degree of effort to dress accordingly, and also the respect that the individual is showing. Perhaps some clergy could indicate the individual might feel that he is showing a little respect for God, and the sacrifice that he made for mankind.

I would surely be pleased to hear the clergy boost up the courage to diplomatically touch on this subject during or before Mass. Sometimes, I have the feeling that they are fearful of offending us, and do not want anyone to feel guilty.

Thanks for printing the articles relating to proper etiquette.

James H. Drummond, Indianapolis

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



# SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

## BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

### Encyclicals are important vehicles for teaching in our Church

This week, I begin a consideration of the encyclical “God is Love” recently issued by Pope Benedict XVI.

I do so because most folks do not really have the opportunity to read or study papal encyclicals. Yet they are important vehicles for teaching in our Church. My reflections will be presented as a series over the next several weeks.

In a cover letter to an Italian magazine that printed his entire encyclical, Pope Benedict said that he realized the encyclical “God is Love” could seem difficult to understand at first, but he hoped he had answered some basic questions about the Roman Catholic faith.

“At the beginning, in fact the text might appear to be a bit difficult and theoretical,” the Holy Father wrote. “But when you move ahead with the reading, it is clear that I only wanted to answer a few very concrete questions regarding Christian life.”

The *National Catholic Register* printed a collection of secular media headlines that tried to sum up the pope’s sophisticated theological ideas.

*Deutsche Welte*, Germany: “Benedict’s Ode to Love”; *Sydney Morning Herald*: “Persuasion Rather Than Stern Reminders in Papal Reflections on Love”; *Chicago Tribune*: “Poetic Explorations of Love Set

Foundation for New Papacy”; *Globe and Mail*, Canada: “An Unexpected Letter of Love From the Pope to His Church”; *Irish Examiner*: “Sexual Love Needs to Be Purified”; *The Australian*: “Pope Gets Back to Basics”; and the *Register’s* personal favorite: *Agenzia Giornalistica Italia*: “Encyclical Will Be Sold In Supermarkets and Highway Restaurants.”

The nearly 16,000-word encyclical was issued on Jan. 25 of this year in seven languages. It is addressed to all Catholics and is divided into two sections: one on the meaning of love in the history of salvation, the other on the practice of love in our Church.

The Holy Father said he wanted to “speak of the love which God lavishes upon us and which we in return must share with others.” He said that personal love and the practice of charity are profoundly inter-related.

Much of the secular media and some religious media folks were taken by surprise at the theme of the Holy Father’s first encyclical. As George Weigel wrote in a syndicated column, “Those who bought the cartoon of ‘God’s Rottweiler’ might have imagined a first encyclical titled ‘No You Don’t.’ The real Ratzinger, the real Benedict XVI wrote something quite different: an encyclical of affirmation, an invitation to ponder more deeply and live more

completely ‘the heart of the Christian faith’—the claim that God is love.”

The encyclical begins with a phrase from the First Letter of John, “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him” (1 Jn 4:16). The pope said this line expresses the heart of our Christian faith, which understands the Creator as a loving God and which sees Christ’s death as the ultimate sign of God’s love for us.

At the beginning of his letter, the Holy Father wrote: “We have come to believe in God’s love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction . . . . In a world where the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance or even a duty of hatred and violence, this message is both timely and significant.”

The Holy Father must, as George Weigel asserts, have jihadist Islam in mind. He has spoken of the danger of a “clash of

civilizations.” The Christian God of love is not a violent God or one who desires violent conflicts of religion.

If one follows the Holy Father’s speaking, preaching and writing in this first year of his pontificate, he is clearly seeking to find once more a place for God, a loving God in our world. He mentions frequently that our world is attempting to live as though God does not exist or, at best, that God belongs in the private pious thoughts of individuals, not in the public arena. “I wish in my first encyclical to speak of the love which God lavishes upon us and which we turn must share with others. God’s love for us is fundamental for our lives and it raises important questions about who God is and who we are.”

The pope said we “immediately find ourselves hampered by a problem of language. Today, the term ‘love’ has become one of the most frequently used and mis-used words, a word to which we attach different meanings.”

We will have to keep in mind the meaning of the word love in the different cultures and in present-day usage. †

#### Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for May

**Seminarians:** that they will be faithful to prayer and study, and persevere in their desire to serve God and the Church as priests.

## Las Encíclicas son vehículos importantes para la enseñanza en nuestra Iglesia

Esta semana doy inicio al análisis de la encíclica “Dios es amor,” publicada recientemente por el Papa Benedicto XVI.

Esto lo hago ya que la mayoría de la gente realmente no tiene la oportunidad de leer o estudiar las encíclicas papales. Sin embargo, éstas constituyen vehículos importantes para la enseñanza en nuestra Iglesia. Mis reflexiones se presentarán como una serie a lo largo de las próximas semanas.

En la carta de presentación para una revista italiana que publicó la encíclica en su totalidad, el propio Papa Benedicto dijo que se daba cuenta de que la encíclica, “Dios es amor,” podría ser difícil de entender al principio, pero que esperaba haber respondido algunas de las preguntas básicas sobre la fe católica-romana.

“En efecto, al principio el texto podría parecer un poco difícil y teórico,” escribió el Santo Padre. “Pero a medida que se avanza en la lectura, se torna claro que solamente deseaba responder algunas pocas preguntas muy concretas sobre la vida cristiana.”

The *National Catholic Register* imprimió una colección de titulares laicos que trataban de resumir las sofisticadas ideas teológicas del Papa.

*Deutsche Welte*, Alemania: “La oda al amor de Benedicto”; *Sydney Morning Herald*: “Persuasión en lugar de firmes recordatorios en las reflexiones papales sobre el amor”; *Chicago Tribune*: “Exploraciones poéticas sobre el amor plantean las bases del nuevo papado”;

*Globe and Mail*, Canadá: “Una carta de amor inesperada de parte del Papa para su Iglesia”; *Irish Examiner*: “El amor sexual necesita purificación”; *The Australian*: “El Papa repasa las ideas fundamentales”; y el preferido del *The Register*: *Agenzia Giornalistica Italia*: “La encíclica se venderá en supermercados y restaurantes de carretera.”

La encíclica de casi 16,000 palabras se publicó el 25 de enero de este año en siete idiomas. Va dirigida a todos los católicos y está dividida en dos secciones: una sobre el significado del amor en la historia de la salvación; la otra, sobre la práctica del amor en nuestra Iglesia.

El Santo Padre dijo que deseaba “hablar del amor del cual Dios nos colma, y que nosotros debemos comunicar a los demás.” Dijo que el amor personal y la práctica de la caridad se encuentran profundamente interrelacionados.

La mayoría de los medios de comunicación laicos y algunos compañeros de los medios de comunicación religiosos se sorprendieron del tema de la primera encíclica del Santo Padre. Tal y como escribió George Weigel en una columna sindicalizada: “Aquellos que creyeron en la caricatura del ‘Rottweiler de Dios’ quizás se hayan imaginado una primera encíclica titulada ‘No, no puedes.’ El verdadero Ratzinger, el verdadero Benedicto XVI, escribió algo bastante diferente: una encíclica de afirmación, una invitación a reflexionar más profundamente y vivir de manera más íntegra ‘el corazón de la fe cristiana’, la afirma-

ción de que Dios es amor.”

La encíclica comienza con una frase de la Primera Carta de Juan: “Dios es amor, y quien permanece en el amor permanece en Dios y Dios en él” (1 Jn, 4:16). El papa dijo que esta frase expresa el corazón de nuestra fe cristiana, que entiende a nuestro creador como un Dios amoroso y ve la muerte de Cristo como la máxima señal del amor de Dios por nosotros.

Al comienzo de su carta el Santo Padre escribió: “*Hemos creído en el amor de Dios*: así puede expresar el cristiano la opción fundamental de su vida. No se comienza a ser cristiano por una decisión ética o una gran idea, sino por el encuentro con un acontecimiento, con una Persona, que da un nuevo horizonte a la vida y, con ello, una orientación decisiva. En un mundo en el cual a veces se relaciona el nombre de Dios con la venganza o incluso con la obligación del odio y la violencia, éste es un mensaje de gran actualidad y con un significado muy concreto.”

El Santo Padre debió tener en mente la guerra santa del Islam, tal y como afirma George Weigel. Habló sobre el peligro del “enfrentamiento de las civilizaciones.” El Dios cristiano de amor no es un Dios violento o que desee conflictos religiosos violentos.

Si uno sigue el diálogo, los discursos y las escrituras del Santo Padre a lo largo de este primer año de pontificado, se da cuenta claramente de que está buscando una vez más hallar un lugar para Dios, un Dios amoroso, en nuestro mundo. Menciona con frecuencia que nuestro mundo está intentando vivir como si Dios no existiera o, en el mejor de los casos, que Dios se repliega a los pensamientos particulares y piadosos de cada uno y no tiene cabida en la escena pública. “Por eso, en mi primera Encíclica deseo hablar del amor, del cual Dios nos colma, y que nosotros debemos comunicar a los demás. El amor de Dios por nosotros es una cuestión fundamental para la vida y plantea preguntas decisivas sobre quién es Dios y quiénes somos nosotros.”

El Papa dijo que nosotros “A este respecto, nos encontramos de entrada ante un problema de lenguaje. El término ‘amor’ se ha convertido hoy en una de las palabras más utilizadas y también de las que más se abusa, a la cual damos acepciones totalmente diferentes.”

Debemos tener en cuenta el significado de la palabra amor en las diferentes culturas y de su uso en nuestros días. †

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis

#### La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para mayo

**Seminarios:** ¡Que ellos sean fieles a la oración y estudien, y continúen en su deseo de servir a Dios y la Iglesia como sacerdotes!

# Events Calendar

**May 12**  
St. Mary Church, 600 St. Mary's Ave., Frankfort, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese). **Veneration of Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, veneration until 4 p.m. Information: 765-654-5796.

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei meeting**, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast and program at Priori Hall, \$10 members, \$15 non-members. Information: 317-842-6917 or [Lumen\\_Dei@comcast.net](mailto:Lumen_Dei@comcast.net).

**May 12-13**  
Holy Cross High School, 5144 Dixie Highway, Louisville, Ky. (Diocese of Louisville). **May-fest**, Fri. 6 p.m.-1 a.m.; Sat. 4 p.m.-1 a.m., food, games, face painting. Information: 502-447-4363, ext. 106, or [www.holycrosshs.com](http://www.holycrosshs.com).

St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **Little Sisters of the Poor, rummage sale**, furniture, household items, china, antiques and clothes, Fri. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 317-872-6420.

**May 12-14**  
St. Joseph Church, 319 E. South St., Lebanon, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese). **Veneration of Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe**. Information: 765-482-5558.

**May 13**  
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Catholics of India, Mass**, 11 a.m., pitch-in dinner to follow. Information: 317-329-4320.

Providence Cristo Rey High School, 75 N. Bellevue Place, Indianapolis. **Placement test**, 8:15 a.m. Information: 317-592-4069.

St. Vincent Women's Hospital, 8222 Township Line Road, Indianapolis. **Natural Family Planning (NFP) class**, 9-11 a.m. Information: 317-228-9276.

Holy Cross Central School, 125 N. Oriental St., Indianapolis. **Fiesta and auction**, dinner, 5-7 p.m., silent auction, 6-8 p.m. Tickets sold at door, \$5 adults and \$2 children. Information: 317-638-9068.

**May 14**  
Holy Family Council, Knights of Columbus Hall, 200 N. Lynhurst Drive, Indianapolis. **Breakfast**, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Information: 317-240-3782.

St. Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oaklandon Road, Indianapolis. Youth-led praise and worship, **eucharistic adoration service**, 6 p.m., fellowship following service. Information: 317-826-6000, ext 151, or e-mail [mheck@saintsimon.org](mailto:mheck@saintsimon.org).

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Monte Cassino pilgrimage**, "Mary, Handmaid of the Lord," Benedictine Brother Cyril Crawford, presenter, 2 p.m. (CDT). Information: 812-357-6501.

MKVS and DM Center, Rexville (located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South, 12 miles south of Versailles). **Mass**, 3:30 p.m., healing service, with Father Elmer Burwinkel, pitch-in dinner. Information: 812-689-3551 or e-mail [frburwink@seidata.com](mailto:frburwink@seidata.com)

or log on to Schoenstatt Web site at [www.seidata.com/~frburwink](http://www.seidata.com/~frburwink).

**May 16**  
Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, 3360 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Veneration of Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, Mass, 7:30 a.m., veneration until 9:30 p.m. Information: 317-924-4333.

**May 17**  
Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Saint Meinrad School of Theology, **Ecclesial Lay Ministry formation workshop**, "Special Issues in Ministry Ecumenism." Information: 812-357-6721 or 800-334-6821.

Calvary Cemetery Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898.

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Ninth annual **Sister-to-Sister Celebration**, Bible study, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

**May 18**  
Blessed Theodore Guérin High School, 15300 N. Gray Road, Noblesville, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **Catholic Professional and Business Club**, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast following Mass. Registration: [www.cpbcc-ld.org](http://www.cpbcc-ld.org).

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery Chapel, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898.

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr.

Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Ninth annual **Sister-to-Sister Celebration**, gospel concert, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

Marian Inc., 1011 E. St. Clair St., Indianapolis. Catholic Charities Indianapolis, **Adult Day Services, "2006 Summer Breezes" fundraising dinner**, 6-10 p.m., \$50 per person. Information: 317-251-0626 or [ccollet@mcleodusa.net](mailto:ccollet@mcleodusa.net).

Indiana Repertory Theater, Upperstage, 140 W. Washington St., Indianapolis. **St. Joan of Arc School and St. Thomas Aquinas School education fundraiser, "Triple Espresso,"** 6 p.m. reception, 7:30 p.m. performance, \$100 high honor roll includes reception, performance and preferred seating, \$75 honor roll reception and performance, \$31.50 home-room detention. Information: 317-255-6244.

**May 19**  
Knights of Columbus, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. Catholic Business Exchange, **Mass**, 6:30 a.m., buffet breakfast and program, \$10 per person. Information: [www.catholicbusinessexchange.org](http://www.catholicbusinessexchange.org).

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Ninth annual **Sister-to-Sister Celebration**, youth night, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **"Cancer 101," free seminar for cancer patients and their families**, noon-2 p.m. Registration: 317-257-1505 or e-mail [StFrancisHospitals.org](mailto:StFrancisHospitals.org).

**May 19-21**  
St. Joseph Parish, 125 E. Broadway St., Shelbyville. **Parish festival**, rides, crafts, food, Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m., Sun. noon-10 p.m. Information: 317-392-0639.

**May 20**  
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Veneration of Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, prayer with the image at Clinic for Women (abortion facility), 3607 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Information: 317-923-6246.

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, Parish Hall, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. Ninth annual **Sister-to-Sister Celebration**, prayer breakfast, 9 a.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, multipurpose room, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Singles' Country Western Night**, 7:30-9 p.m., \$5 per person. Information: 317-289-8430.

Ursuline Motherhouse, 3115 Lexington Road, Louisville, Ky. **Women's Panel, "Empowering Women,"** 9 a.m.-noon. Information: 502-896-3915 or [bfreeman@ursulineslou.org](mailto:bfreeman@ursulineslou.org).

**May 21**  
Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Faith Formation Team, **"Apologetics from A-Z,"** sessions for children 4 years and older, sessions for adults, 11:15 a.m.-11:55 a.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

Holy Cross Parish, 125 N. Oriental St., Indianapolis. 10th annual **Health Fair**, 11:30 a.m.-

1:30 p.m. Information: 317-637-2620.

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. Ninth annual **Sister-to-Sister Celebration**, Mass, 10 a.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **40th anniversary of ordination of Father Larry Crawford**, Mass, 11 a.m., luncheon following Mass. RSVP: 317-291-1459.

St. Paul Parish, 9798 N. Dearborn Road, Guilford. **St. Paul's Ladies Sodality, hot breakfast bar buffet**, 7:30 a.m.-noon (EDT), free-will donation. Information: 812-623-2349.

Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. World Food Programme, **"Fight Hunger: Walk the World,"** 2:30 p.m. Information: Fight Hunger Web site.

Aurora Knights of Columbus #2111, 208 Fifth St., Aurora. **St. Mary School, chicken dinner**, noon-6 p.m., free-will donation. Information: 812-926-0060 or e-mail [catalano@catholicexchange.com](mailto:catalano@catholicexchange.com).

Plainfield High School auditorium, 709 Stafford Road, Plainfield. **Positive Thinking Seminar, "How to Transform Your Life by Transforming Your Mind-Spring Clean Your Life,"** Becky Gaynor, presenter, registration, 1 p.m. seminar, 2-4 p.m., \$30 early-bird rate. Information: 317-837-8214 or e-mail [bregistration@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bregistration@sbcglobal.net). †

## Regular Events

### Monthly

**First Saturdays**  
Holy Angels Church, 740 W. 28th St., Indianapolis. **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**, 11 a.m.-noon. Information: 317-926-3324.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, Chapel, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Apostolate of Fatima holy hour**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-357-8352.

St. Michael Church, 519 Jefferson Blvd., Greenfield. **Communion service**, 9 a.m., rosary, meditation on the mysteries. Information: 317-462-4240.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Devotions, Mass**, 7:30 a.m., sacrament of reconciliation, rosary, meditations following Mass. 317-888-2861.

St. Thomas More Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. **Mass**, 8:35 a.m. Information: 317-831-4142.

St. Nicholas Church, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Drive, Sunman. **Mass**, praise and worship, 8 a.m., then SACRED gathering in the school. Information: 812-623-2964.

**Second Mondays**  
Church at **Mount St. Francis**. Holy hour for vocations to priesthood and religious life, 7 p.m.

**Second Tuesdays**  
St. Pius X Parish, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. **Support Group for Separated and Divorced Catholics**, 7 p.m. Information: Archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries, 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596.

**Second Thursdays**  
St. Luke Church, 7575 Holliday Drive E., Indianapolis. **Holy hour** for priestly and religious vocations, 7 p.m. Information: 317-259-4373.

Oaklawn Memorial Gardens, Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Chapel, 9700 Allisonville Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass** (except December), 2 p.m. Information: 317-849-3616.

**Second Fridays**  
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei meeting**, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast in Priori Hall, \$10 members, \$15 guests. Information: 317-919-5316.

**Second Saturdays**  
St. Agnes Parish, Brown County Public Library, Nashville. Brown County Widowed **Support Group**, 3 p.m. Information and directions: 812-988-2778 or 812-988-4429.

**Third Sundays**  
Christ the King Church, 1827 Kessler Blvd., E. Drive, Indianapolis. **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**, 2 p.m.-7 a.m. Monday, rosary, 8 p.m. Open until midnight.

Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council #437, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Breakfast buffet**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., adults \$5, children under 12, \$2.50. Information: 317-631-4373.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Church of the Immaculate Conception, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Mass**, 11 a.m., sign-interpreted. Information: 812-535-3131, ext. 434.

**Third Tuesdays**  
St. Francis Medical Clinic, 110 N. 17th Ave., Suite 300, Beech Grove. **Chronic pain support group**, 7-8 p.m. Information: 317-831-1177.

**Third Wednesdays**  
Holy Name Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Holy hour** and rosary, 6 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454.

St. Francis Home Health, 438 S. Emerson Ave., Greenwood. **Cancer support group meeting**, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-257-1505.

St. Francis Hospital, 1201 Hadley Road, Mooresville. **Cancer support group meeting**, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-257-1505.

Mary, Queen of Peace Church, Blessed Sacrament Chapel, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. **Divine Mercy Chaplet**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-745-5640.

St. Jude Church, 5353 McFarland Road, Indianapolis. **Rosary**, 6:15 p.m. Information: 317-783-1445.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 Troy Ave.,

Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m.

**Third Thursdays**  
Our Lady of Peace Mausoleum Chapel, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m.

St. Elizabeth and Coleman Pregnancy and Adoption Services, 2500 Churchman Ave., Indianapolis. **Daughters of Isabella**, Madonna Circle meeting, noon, dessert and beverages served. Information: 317-849-5840.

St. Joseph Church, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Adoration of Blessed Sacrament**, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Mass, 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

St. Vincent de Paul Church, 1723 I St., Bedford. **Catholic Women in Faith meeting**, 7-9 p.m., open to women 18 years and older. Information: 812-275-6539.



## Girl Scouts help soldiers

Members of Girl Scout Troop #970 from St. Matthew Parish in Indianapolis pose with 14 cases of Girl Scout cookies that they recently sent to Pfc. Anthony Stout, who is serving in Iraq. The gift was sent as part of the Girl Scouts' "Gift of Caring" campaign. Posing in the photo are, clockwise from the top, Erica Stout, Private Stout's wife, and Girl Scouts Katharine Otolski, Emily Welch, Amelia Siler, Emily McNulty, Ashley Confer, Jacqueline Kowal, Liz Blanford and Shannon Scott.

# 'Bishop Bruté Days' will offer young men fun and spiritual growth

By Sean Gallagher

The Bishop Bruté House of Formation at Marian College in Indianapolis will sponsor "Bishop Bruté Days" on June 14-17 at Bradford Woods Retreat Center near Martinsville.

"Bishop Bruté Days" will be a retreat for young men ages 13-17 who, according to a promotional brochure, "are seeking to grow closer, and who are open to the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood."

The retreat will involve spiritual events such as daily Mass, eucharistic adoration, opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and other devotional prayers and spiritual conferences.

Recreational activities such as canoeing, swimming, scavenger hunts and campfires will also be offered.

Father Robert Robeson, the director of the Bishop Bruté House of Formation, will oversee the retreat. He recently discussed who the event is geared toward.

"It's not necessarily just for kids that know they're going to be a priest or young men who have any degree of certainty," Father Robeson said. "At that age, between 13 and 17, you just can't be certain. But we want to help them to consider the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood."

The number of retreatants for the retreat is limited to 40. Registration by June 1 is requested, although it may be closed earlier if it reaches its limit.

In addition to Father Robeson, the retreat will be staffed by the resident seminarians of the Bishop Bruté House of Formation. Other archdiocesan priests will also be involved in "Bishop Bruté Days."

"It's great for [the seminarians] because it shows them

File photos by Sean Gallagher



Father Robert Robeson, director of the Bishop Bruté House of Formation at Marian College in Indianapolis, distributes Communion to seminarian Joshua Cappel, a freshman resident of the house of formation and member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, during a Mass at the St. Francis Hall Chapel on Marian's campus on Oct. 25, 2005.

that there are younger kids who are serious about their faith," Father Robeson said, "who are really trying to grow in their faith and grow in their desire to serve Christ."

Seminarian Aaron Thomas, who is finishing his second year at the Bishop Bruté House of Formation, is looking forward to the event.

"When I was younger, there really wasn't much talk

*'At that age, between 13 and 17, you just can't be certain. But we want to help them to consider the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood.'*

—Father Robert Robeson

about vocations," he said. "And I think this is all a part of sort of restoring a culture that invites young men to discern vocations and young women to discern vocations to the religious life."



Seminarian David Proctor, a junior resident of the Bishop Bruté House of Formation at Marian College in Indianapolis and member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, and Jeff Read, a seminarian for the Evansville Diocese and resident of the house of formation, pray Morning Prayer at the conclusion of a Mass at the St. Francis Hall Chapel on Marian's campus on Oct. 25, 2005.

"By building a culture that's more inviting to that, I think we'll have a future of hope and we won't have such a vocation crisis."

Whether the young men who participate in "Bishop Bruté Days" ultimately do or do not discern a call to the priesthood, Father Robeson is convinced that it will help them grow closer to Christ.

"There's nothing more important in your life than your relationship with Christ," Father Robeson said. "And this will help them in their relationship with Christ and in their preparation to be a servant of Christ in the Church."

(Registration for the retreat costs \$40. For more information about "Bishop Bruté Days" or to register, call 317-955-1485.) †

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# Injuries don't stop accident victim from getting first Communion

MARYDEL, Md. (CNS)—Christina Trice processed into Immaculate Conception Church in Marydel on April 30, her hands piously folded and a look of determination on her face.

Like the other girls among the 16 children receiving their first Communion, 7-year-old Christina wore a white dress, veil and shoes. But she also sported white satin wheel covers on her wheelchair, which had extensions supporting her outstretched legs.

Her presence was a testament to the prayers of loved ones, the care of her doctors and nurses, and her own willpower.

Eleven days earlier, Christina was critically injured in a car accident in nearby Dover, Del. She was knocked unconscious and suffered a concussion, fractured pelvis, lacerated kidney and spleen, and punctured lungs, according to her mother, Barbara Trice, who was driving the family car when the accident occurred. Christina's right ear was almost severed, and she was bleeding profusely.



The immediate concern was not whether Christina would make her first Communion, but whether she would survive.

Christina Trice, 7, receives her first Communion from Father Chris LaBarge as Joan Muschner, principal of Immaculate Conception Sunday School, assists her during the celebration at Immaculate Conception Church in Marydel, Md., on April 30. Eleven days earlier, Christina was critically injured in a car accident in nearby Dover, Del.

"We're lucky to be here—very, very lucky," Barbara Trice told *The Dialog*, newspaper of the Diocese of Wilmington, Del., which includes a portion of Maryland. "I thank God for her being here," she said at the church.

Father Chris LaBarge, pastor, cited Christina's recovery in his homily. "One of the things we are witnessing today is the power of prayer," he said. "A week ago, we didn't think Christina would be here."

Turning to Christina, he asked, "A week ago, you didn't think you would be here, did you?" She shook her head no.

In the Gospel reading, the risen Jesus told his disciples that they were to be his witnesses.

"We are witnesses to God's work in our lives," Father LaBarge said.

He called on Christina "to tell people how much a difference prayer has made in your life. Prayer is powerful." Father LaBarge noted that many people in Marydel and beyond had prayed for her recovery.

The Saturday after the accident, Christina was supposed to attend a first Communion retreat.

"She asked, 'Am I going to be able to receive first holy Communion?'" Barbara Trice said. "At that point, I didn't have an answer for her."

But, she added, "You can't hold this child down. She's got a very strong will."

Christina returned home from the hospital on April 28. The doctors, nurses and staff "worked really hard to make sure that when we left there Friday, she was good to go," said Barbara Trice, who was not seriously injured in the accident.

Christina's first Communion classmates helped the girl's spirits, making her cards and signing a quilt, which was later signed by her doctors and nurses.

After Mass, Christina said she was glad to receive the gifts. "They cared about me," she said of her classmates.

Receiving first Communion was "good," said Christina. She spoke little; her mother said the day's excitement and 12:30 p.m. Mass start left her daughter fatigued.

Christina must stay off her feet for six to eight weeks so her pelvis can heal, her mother said. Barbara Trice marvels at how Christina survived the accident. Christina had jumped into the front seat of the car that day rather than the back, she recalled. Had Christina been in the rear passenger-side seat where she normally sits, Barbara Trice said, she would have been killed because that part of her car bore the brunt of the impact.

"I think the angels were holding on to her," Barbara Trice said. "Somebody had to be looking after us." †



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~ Spoken by one of the four founding Daughters of Charity who arrived in Indianapolis in 1881 to start St. Vincent

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## Parishes and schools are at heart of evangelization

By John Valenti

The new *National Directory for Catechesis* for the United States challenges us to provide opportunities for a



John Valenti

parish-centered, lifelong process of ongoing faith formation, including evangelization, the outreach element of total Catholic education.

As Jesus Christ is at the heart of all catechesis, the goal is to lead all believers

to a deeper knowledge and love of Christ and the Church, and a firm commitment to follow him. "Evangelizing Catechesis" refers to the totality of the Church's efforts "to make disciples" (Mt. 28:19).

Kim Orbik, administrative assistant for the Archdiocesan Schools Consortium, recalled the story of a family that came to discuss their tuition status.

"Mom, son and grandma came to see me here at the Catholic Center to discuss their options," she said. "As I walked them downstairs to leave, the little boy stepped in front of me, looked up at me and said, 'I love you.'"

"I thought, 'Oh my gosh! This is why I am here,'" Orbik said. "This family was in need, and I was able to help them. This is why I am here—to help those families in need that are less fortunate than me. I love my job. Each and every day, I thank God for giving me this opportunity."

For all of the challenges to Catholic education, it is not merely a question of adaptation, but of missionary thrust. The very challenges we face in culture are the very reason our parishes and schools exist to serve others.

They are centers of evangelization and apprenticeship in the Christian life, with special attention to those who are most vulnerable—the socially and economically disadvantaged, the poor and marginalized, urban dwelling and Hispanic, the Gospel-less and also students with disabilities.

Several evangelizing efforts are featured in this special supplement in *The Criterion*. They include:

- Christ Renews His Parish (CHRP) 10th anniversary at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis,
- Small Church Communities' ministries of discipleship and evangelization,
- St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, which serves as an anchor for the Hispanic community,
- and Special Religious Education's (SPRED) special needs and how they are welcomed in parish communities.

This renewed evangelizing mission affords an opportunity for people to interact in an environment which favors their Christian formation. Parishes and schools provide a place where faith and culture are intertwined in all areas of life.

This evangelization effort is both the ecclesial purpose and the essential Catholic identity of everything we do in Christian formation.

It is our privileged way of exercising the virtue of charity by initiating hearers into the fullness of Christian life.

(John Valenti is associate director of evangelization and faith formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.) †

Submitted photo



Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general of the archdiocese, baptizes Mark Robbins of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg as friends and relatives watch in April 2005.

## A sense of belonging Program reaches out to Catholics with disabilities

By John Shaughnessy

Roni Wyld asks you to listen to just one story—a story about a woman who desperately wanted what many people seek in life: a sense of belonging and connection.

"Benita was 40 and mildly disabled," recalled Wyld, the director of the archdiocese's Special Religious Education (SPRED) program. "She wasn't going to church. She told her mother it was because she didn't feel she belonged at church. Her mother came to a meeting about SPRED and told Benita about it.

Benita said she would only come once."

During that visit, something clicked for Benita as she watched the effort to welcome people with developmental disabilities into a small community of faith within her parish.

"Within one month, she told her mother she wanted to go to church," Wyld continued. "By Holy Thursday, she was a greeter with me. She hugged people, said 'hi' and took up the gifts. SPRED gives people another entrance into church. We don't try to separate people. The goal is for them to become part of the parish community. Benita is the shining example of that."

The SPRED program is designed to reach Benita and the other nearly 4,000 Roman Catholics with disabilities in the archdiocese. Wyld is hoping to expand the program, which currently involves people from 22 parishes, including Benita's parish—St. Malachy in Brownsburg.



Roni Wyld

"It's just wonderful to see and to know that the Church is getting involved in this way," said Father Daniel Staublin, the pastor of St. Malachy Parish. "It's a great sign that we try not to leave anyone behind. It puts the face of Christ on everyone. And the people who get involved in the program get as much out of it as those they're helping."

In its 10th year in the archdiocese, SPRED trains up to eight volunteers from a parish, helping them create a small community of faith for people with developmental disabilities.

Wyld said the program has found a powerful home in the Richmond parishes of Holy Family, St. Andrew and

St. Andrew Parish. "It's just a wonderful program. Anyone who has the slightest interest in getting involved should.

"It really brings the Word of God more concretely to our friends, and quite frankly to ourselves. Sometimes, we make our faith too complicated for ourselves. Just trying to share the message with our friends makes us think about it a little more concretely."

Wyld has felt that impact, too.

"To me, SPRED is the one place where the Holy Spirit is most evident in my life," Wyld said. "You go to groups and you can just feel that sense of the Holy Spirit being there. Awesome things happen in groups."

That leads to another story from Wyld. It's about a man named Ted. He's autistic and has been a member of SPRED for eight years. With his disability, Ted often repeats what people say to him, but he doesn't share his own thoughts. At least he didn't until one special moment in a SPRED session.

"In our sessions, we set up an altar," Wyld recalled. "There was a statue of two people hugging—the prodigal son and his father. Debbie Armenta [one of the instructors] was going around the circle and showing it to everybody, saying, 'Do you see them hugging? Do you see how happy the man's face is?' Ted reached out and grabbed the statue and just said, 'Amen!' It was the first time all year he said something on his own. That's why I'm involved in SPRED."

Tears welled in Wyld's eyes as she shared that story.

"We find Christ in our relationships," she said. "I love working with people who have special needs. They have a clear concept of God and their relationship with him. They know he exists and they know he loves them. Their belief that God loves them is simple and clear." †

*'They [people with special needs] have a clear concept of God and their relationship with him. They know he exists, and they know he loves them. Their belief that God loves them is simple and clear.'*

— Roni Wyld

St. Mary, under the direction of Father Todd Riebe.

"Father Todd is wonderful in welcoming the group," Wyld said. "During Lent, they had Stations of the Cross for the community. It lets people see people of special needs as another member of the parish, that they need the sacraments as much as others do."

Denise Gray has noticed that connection in her four years as a leader of the SPRED program in Richmond.

"I felt a calling to do something with the Church," said Gray, a member of

# Christ Renews His Parish reconnects St. Barnabas parishioner to faith

By Sean Gallagher

In 1998, Russell Dias felt that he wasn't being fed in his life of faith. A member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis since 1979, Dias was on the verge of splitting his time between his parish and churches of other denominations. But then he got a phone call from a friend who invited him to participate in a Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) renewal weekend. Nothing has been the same since for Dias, who said the weekend helped him "reconnect" to the Church and to Christ. "Christ was there," he said. "He was always there. It was me who wasn't there. And so I reconnected." Dias has now gone from drifting away from his parish to being firmly planted in its heart.

In the years following his CRHP experience, Dias has launched a "Bob Evans Ministry" in which as many as a dozen men gather at 6 a.m. every Friday at a Bob Evans restaurant on Indianapolis' south side to discuss the upcoming Sunday Mass readings and support each other in their lives of faith. He has helped establish small Church communities at St. Barnabas. And Dias and his wife, Judith, are helping to lead the parish's marriage preparation program. "Russ has certainly done a lot," said Father James Farrell, pastor of St. Barnabas Parish. "He's taken that renewed faith that came to him through the Christ Renews process, and just let it shape his life and let it shape his participation in the parish."



St. Barnabas parishioner Russell Dias of Indianapolis, second from right, speaks during a small Church community gathering on April 26 in the Indianapolis home of Bill and Kathy Rice, also members of St. Barnabas Parish. Joining Dias at the meeting were, from left, Kathy Rice, Jane Schrader, Rick Schrader, Judith Dias and Kathy Delpha, all members of St. Barnabas Parish.

But, Judith Dias said, CRHP has helped her husband at a more fundamental level. It helped him to evangelize. "He's not afraid to witness for his faith, and I'm not either," said Judith Dias, who participated in CRHP several months after her husband did. "We're not afraid to pray with people and to pray for people, and to find out where they are in their life." But it was not always this way. Shortly after completing his CRHP weekend, Russell Dias, who owns his food

brokerage company, was having lunch with executives from Kroger. He was wearing a bracelet with the letters "WWJD" that he received during the weekend. When asked by his customers what those letters stood for, he thought for a moment and said jokingly, "Well, for me, it's three choices. What would Jesus do? What would Judith do? And what would Judas do?" "And so we laughed," Dias said. "When I left that lunch, I thought,

'You're never going to do that again because that was denial. You made this wonderful weekend. And you could not confront them that you were a Christian. You couldn't do it.' Now, when asked about his bracelet—which Dias still wears—he doesn't fall back on wit. He simply tells it like it is. "Now I say, 'Well, it's 'What would Jesus do?'" And I let it go at that," Dias said. "The other way is humorous and

See RENEWS, page 16

## Small Church communities help connect faith with daily life



Msgr. Paul Koetter, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, talks with parishioners during a recent retreat for members of small Church communities at the Indianapolis West Deanery parish. More than 35 small Church communities meet once or twice a month at parishioners' homes to pray, listen to Scripture and discuss faith in everyday life.

By Mary Ann Wyand

Connecting faith with daily life is the focus of small Church communities at several parishes in the archdiocese. Nationally, more than a half million Catholics are involved in small Church communities that promote discipleship and evangelization in parishes and cities. St. Bartholomew parishioner George Moon of Columbus compares the small Church community experience to the faith relationship that the first Christians shared in the early Church when they gathered at homes for worship and friendship. Moon joined the parish 38 years ago, and saw his faith community more than double in size with the consolidation of St. Bartholomew and St. Columba parishes in 1994 and construction of a large church. With 1,620 households, he said, it's important to have small Church communities so parishioners can share faith and friendship in addition to praying together during weekly Masses.

communities when he was pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. In a written reflection titled "Where Two or Three Are Gathered—Connecting Word, Faith and Daily Life," Father Davis noted that the small-group experience reminds him of Jesus' promise to his disciples, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20). "If we gather in the name of Jesus to study the Word of God, to share our lived experiences in the light of our faith or simply to experience friendly conversation with other believers, we can count on Christ Jesus being present in our gathering. This is an awesome gift and privilege, one that has blessed me more than I can say." St. Monica Parish, which marks its 50th anniversary this year and has 2,700 households, has 36 small Church communities, said Jean Galanti, who serves as pastoral associate and is a parishioner. They gather every month to share their faith as well as help with Church and community service projects. When the groups evolve from discipleship to evangelization, Galanti said, members find that helping others deepens their faith. One small Church community in the parish organized a picnic for non-Catholic friends, she said, and another group celebrated Easter with soldiers at Camp Atterbury that were training for military service in Iraq. Another small Church community helped a non-Catholic spouse with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process so she could join the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil this year, Galanti said. Members of another group help the Little Sisters of the Poor care for elderly residents of the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis. St. Monica parishioner Mary Ann "Dede" Swinehart of Indianapolis said members of her small Church community helped in countless ways when her first husband, Mike Stomoff, died unexpectedly. "When Mike died, the group was

See CHURCH, page 11

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"We have 13 or 14 small Church communities in our parish that have evolved during the past six years," he said, with up to 12 members who meet once or twice a month in parishioners' homes. "As you grow together and learn more about one another, you become closer," Moon said. "Just like in the early Church, you get to tell your story in conjunction with the Scriptures. As you share your story, you learn from others and your faith deepens. You can't do that on Sunday at worship." Small Church communities "intimately connect faith and life," he said, through Scripture, prayer, community and outreach. "If you're going to be Church, that's where evangelization comes in," Moon said, "either in helping others or bringing in new members. ... Nationally, studies show that, in small Church communities, a very high percentage of members go to Mass on Sunday, receive the Eucharist often and are involved in leadership in their parish." Father Clem Davis, St. Bartholomew's pastor, also promoted small Church

# A welcoming presence

## St. Philip Neri School is an anchor for Hispanic families

By Mike Krokos

Maria Lomeli laughs as she talks about the various hats she wears as secretary at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis.

She served as a preschool assistant for four months before moving to the administrative job at the school two years ago. While her regular duties now include working closely with principal Maureen Reynolds and answering the phone and the myriad of questions that come from the students on a daily basis, she also serves as an anchor for the many Hispanic families who come to the pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade school for assistance.

"Most of them I know from Mexico," Lomeli said of many of the families who have found a school home for their children at St. Philip Neri.

A native of Tala, Mexico, a city near Guadalajara, Lomeli moved to Indianapolis 13 years ago. Many of the newer Mexican families come from Tala, and they feel very much at ease when they see Lomeli's welcoming presence at the school.

"I work a lot with the Hispanic families [who come to the school]," Lomeli said. "I help them with paperwork and other concerns they have."

"I can support them and translate for them too," she added. "I am a multipurpose person."

Lomeli, who is bilingual, also does her best to make sure the Hispanic students don't fall back into old habits—like only communicating with her in Spanish.

Whenever they stop by to see her, "I'm trying to talk with them in English," she said. Although she wants the students to be comfortable at school, Lomeli said she also knows it is important for them to become fluent in their new language.

To say the demographics around St. Philip Neri Parish and school are changing would be an understatement. What was founded as an Irish immigrant parish nearly 100 years ago—in 1909—has evolved in recent years into a neighborhood that now is home to a predominately Hispanic population.

The school's population shift in recent years reflects that, said Margarita Solis Deal, the coordinator of Hispanic Services for the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Education.

Nearly 75 percent of St. Philip Neri's 160 students are Hispanic, she said, and that figure will increase to nearly 90 percent for the 2006-07 school year.

"There's been a long Hispanic presence at the school," Solis Deal said, but in the last five years it has exploded. Three to four years ago, the school population was 25 percent Hispanic. Then it went up to 50 percent the following year, and it is now up to 75 percent, Solis Deal said.

The reason? "I think that's what happens when a family finds out they have access to school financial aid," she said. "This is a low-income community, and the majority [of the students] receive financial aid."

Reynolds, the school's principal, noted that more than 90 percent of the student population receives free or



Fourth-grader Regina Casas and fifth-grader Arturo Aguilar count coins and bills as part of their math lesson in teacher Laura Mull's English As a New Language class at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis.

***'I think what makes it [the school] so attractive is that it is very warm and welcoming. It's very family oriented, and we respect the families' backgrounds.'***

—Principal Maureen Reynolds

reduced lunches.

But the financial assistance is only one of the reasons the families are drawn to St. Philip Neri.

The growing Hispanic presence at the school has helped gain the trust of many of the newer parents, Solis Deal said, adding that the demographic connection to Tali has brought many families as well.

"I think what makes it [the school] so attractive is that it is very warm and welcoming," Reynolds added.

"It's very family oriented, and we respect the families' backgrounds."

The school this year also started an English As a New Language program where teacher Laura Mull works with newly arrived students

from Latin American countries, including Mexico and Honduras. In the multi-grade classroom of seven students, "[the students] have an integrated experience with their peers," Solis Deal said.

"It's different," said Mull, a 2005 graduate of Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis, of her first teaching job. "It's exactly what I wanted."

What makes the English immersion program even more unique is the fact that Mull is not bilingual.

"It's one of the few programs in the state like this," Solis Deal said.

"In school, the kids need to be learning English," she added.

While the students are getting acclimated in the classroom, other Hispanic family members are growing accustomed to their new lives here as well. Some tackle whatever jobs come their way while others open businesses in their neighborhood.

"I think they feel very comfortable here," said Father Carlton Beever, who has served as St. Philip Neri's pastor for six years.

At the parish, Father Beever has seen the changing demographic. When he arrived, the parish, which has approximately 380 households, was 50 percent Anglo, 45 percent Hispanic and 5 percent African-American. Today, it is 80 percent Hispanic, 15 percent Anglo and 5 percent African-American. The Hispanic families come from Mexico and Honduras as well as Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

"You can see how it's changed so much," he said.

One reason for that, he said, is many of the older members of the parish have died or moved away, and Hispanics

See SCHOOL, page 16

## CHURCH

continued from page 10

pivotal to me as Church," she said. "They were the constants in my life."

She serves on the board of directors of the National Alliance of Parishes Restructuring Into Communities, which is based in Dayton, Ohio, with Father Davis, and is still a member of her longtime small Church community at St. Monica Parish with her second husband, Jerry Swinehart.

"I know personally what a big difference it has made in my life," she said, "and it's changed the dynamic of the culture at St. Monica Parish for the better. This is how the Church began, sharing things in common, ... their relationship with God and with each other in homes."

Msgr. Paul Koetter, St. Monica's pastor, invited Stefanie Anderson, the communications and marketing coordinator for the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities, to speak to small Church community facilitators on May 3 at the parish about how the groups can evangelize by helping with Church ministries.

Anderson discussed Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, "God Is Love" ("Deus Caritas Est"), as well as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' statements on life issues and social justice.

"It's very important to realize that there are folks at all times who are in need," she said, "without places to live

and without food, and we need to keep that in our consciousness at all times by praying for them and helping them."

Small Church communities offer wonderful faith experiences, said St. Malachy parishioner Roni Wyld of Brownsburg, who is the coordinator of the Special Religious Education (SPRED) program for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education.

Wyld said the model of small faith-sharing groups is the basis of the SPRED program, a process of faith formation specifically designed for people with developmental disabilities.

"We progress on our faith journey by reaching out and helping others," she said. "We try to introduce people to Christ through relationships with others. The goal is to be a small community that opens the door to the larger parish community for people with special needs."

Wyld said she has learned so much about God by talking with SPRED participants about their faith during small-group gatherings.

When a girl from St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis was asked what SPRED means to her, she responded, "It means that when I die, I'll go to heaven."

And during a SPRED retreat at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove last year, Wyld said, five participants didn't want to leave the chapel after the prayer service.

"They just sat and sat and sat," she recalled. "Finally, the young man next to me stood up and said, 'I don't want to leave. I feel like God is in here.'" †

### Springtime

Have you noticed how along a deserted road in springtime grass begins to grow again, and everything seems to explode into new life.

That's how it is with the humanity that surrounds you if you don't look at it with a merely earthly perspective but refresh it with the divine ray of charity. The supernatural love of your soul is a sun that ceaselessly causes life to blossom again. That is all that is needed to cheer up the world and give it again to God.

Chiara Lubich

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## Registration Form Please complete one form per participant

**1**

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# Faith *Alive!*

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## Church helps families strengthen and celebrate faith

By Mary Jo Pedersen

Sue Collins was dying of cancer. Her husband and their two children were struggling to accept her certain death while trying to maintain a semblance of normalcy and balance school activities, sports and work.

What the family desperately needed was help with meals, rides, housecleaning and baby-sitting as well as a community to walk with them in their darkest days. Parishioners provided crisis assistance plus prayerful support during Sue's entire cancer journey.

John and Jean are raising three children in a suburban neighborhood. They are worried about protecting their children from sexually explicit music, graphic movies and glorifications of violence on television which are prevalent in secular culture.

They want a community that has high moral and spiritual values that will support their efforts to raise good, healthy children who have a faith that sustains and guides them. They moved into a parish that has well-developed programs in adult formation and religious formation of children and youth. They found a community of parents who share their concerns and support their parenting efforts.

Juana and Samuel and their four small children recently moved to the United States from Mexico. They are separated from their extended family members and both must work to support their children. As they learn the language and adjust to American ways, they want a community with whom they

can pray in their mother tongue and meet other families like themselves, who want to preserve faith and family traditions. At Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, they found what they needed.

The Leflor children were home alone after school most weekdays. Their mother worked two jobs, and their father spent days and weeks in and out of mental health facilities in an effort to overcome his chronic depression. The family was in debt because of the cost of medicines and treatment, and they had exhausted sources of public assistance.

Their parish's St. Vincent de Paul organization provided them with temporary financial assistance, and family members found support in counseling through their diocesan Catholic Charities.

The Church is comprised of an infinite variety of families, all of whom bring to the Church their unique needs, concerns and strengths.

Any consideration of what families want from the Church must begin with the understanding that the family and the household it occupies is itself a Church—the “domestic Church” of the home.

The Catholic notion of family, articulated by Pope John Paul II in his apostolic exhortation on the family, is that a family is a “true ecclesial community.”

This community of believers is in a constant state of growth and change, so a household made up of a newlywed couple will have different expectations of Church than a household with three growing children.

In 25 years of ministry to families,

## Community is key part of parish

By David Gibson

A report based on a consultation by the Catholic Church in England and Wales with some 15,000 families was published in the summer of 2005 by the British bishops. It represented part of a three-year plan for making parishes more welcoming and supportive of family life.

The consultation found that many families are highly stressed-out by life's economic realities, and that “families often did not cope well with the strains and stresses of modern life.”

The report noted that “over and above any other single finding was our realization of the massive significance to

families of welcoming, loving, accepting relationships both at home and in the Church.”

The importance that people placed on “the community aspect of parish life” was a key finding of the research.

The report noted that “the importance of the Church community as an extended family of acceptance, celebration and support is absolutely indispensable” to the relationship today between the Church and the family, and “more attention must be paid to interpersonal relationships and the deepening of community life within the Church.”

(David Gibson edits Faith Alive!) †



A family attends Mass at St. Peter Claver Church in New Orleans. Any consideration of what families want from the Church must begin with the understanding that the family and the household it occupies is itself a Church—the “domestic Church” of the home.

my experience is that most families consciously or unconsciously want the Church's support in whatever challenge they face in life.

That sounds like a big order! It is. But outreach and service to families in the Church is often a peer ministry accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the gifts of families themselves.

In a pastoral letter on families, the U.S. bishops invited all families to offer support to one another across life's cycles. This means that those who have lost a spouse offer consolation to those who are grieving such a loss. It means divorced people offer programs for those recently divorced. Experienced couples help prepare other couples for marriage and offer marriage enrichment. Young parents gather for mutual support and enrichment.

A rich storehouse of programs and resources exists in parishes and dioceses for families—for example, Ministry of Moms Sharing, Welcome Your Child, Engaged and Marriage Encounter weekends, and Beginning Experience weekends for widowed and divorced people.

A Catholic parish can provide families with a faith community to

accompany them from cradle to grave. On Sunday, households come together in the Eucharist with the intention of becoming the body of Christ. This means becoming a part of one another's joys and sorrows. When one part of the body suffers, all the people suffer together.

Building that kind of parish community is a goal to be strived for, but it seldom is achieved fully. When families feel isolated and marginalized because of their unique needs, the body suffers as well. The challenge is to call forth and empower others in similar life situations to accompany these families on their journey of faith.

The Church's goal in responding to families is not to become a social service agency, but to “enable families to recognize that they are a domestic Church,” and to strengthen and celebrate the faith they have inherited.

Each time one family reaches out to another, the Holy Spirit accomplishes that goal in them.

(Mary Jo Pedersen is coordinator of the Leadership in Family Life Training Program for the Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb.) †

## Discussion Point

### Parish life supports families

#### This Week's Question

What support do you as a parent find in parish life for your family?

“We find a sense of community. We have one child already in [the parish] school. What the children are taught there helps develop what we teach at home. Also, our religious education programs address adults as well as children.” (Steve Jones, Portland, Ore.)

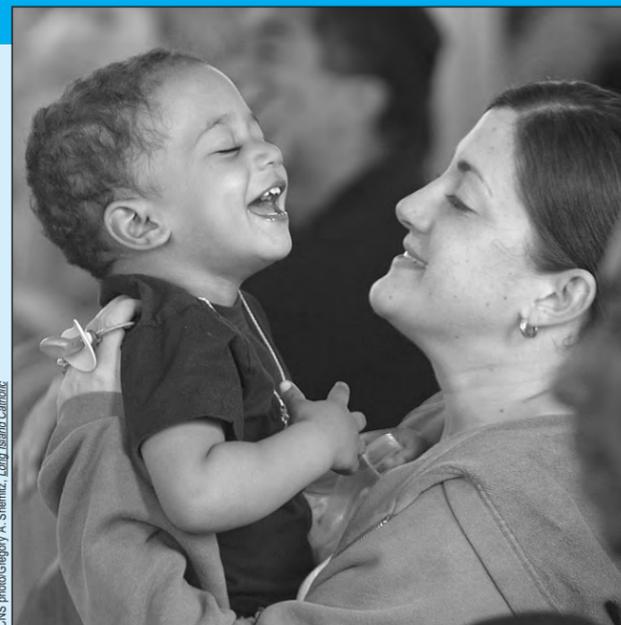
“Our baby is 16, but when our children were little the parish helped form them with child care during Mass and as they grew. There were messages that came through homilies, the church bulletin and structured activities. I only wish there was more for teenagers.” (Sally Wilkins, Amherst, N.H.)

“As parents, my wife and I are the prime catechists with the responsibility to pass on our faith to our children. At church, obviously, we have the Mass. We're very fortunate to have a Catholic school that our four children attend. Then there's the communal life with other families in the parish.” (Tom Ritchie, Hovelock, N.C.)

#### Lend Us Your Voice

How would you tell a skeptical person that your faith makes sense to you? What would you say?

To respond for possible publication in an upcoming edition, write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100 or send an e-mail to [cgreene@catholicnews.com](mailto:cgreene@catholicnews.com). †



CNS photo Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

## St. Paul: His conversion and first preaching

Saul could not have been less prepared for what happened to him on the road to



in Jerusalem.

What happened next is described in the Acts of the Apostles in three places (Acts 9:1-19, 22:5-16 and 26:12-18). I encourage you to read at least one of the accounts, but the details of Saul's being knocked to the ground by a bright light that left him blind, and the voice of Jesus that asked why Saul was persecuting him, are well known.

This encounter with Jesus couldn't have been more profound. It completely transformed Saul, who immediately became convinced that the Jesus who had been crucified was alive. Later, he was to

say, "I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ" (Phil 3:12).

There was no doubt in Saul's mind: From what he knew about the Jewish Law and about Jewish aspirations for the Messiah, Jesus was he. He was the Christ (anointed one), Lord, Messiah, Son of God—all descriptions in Judaism of the one who would come and replace the Law. From now on, Saul understood, acceptance of Jesus was what mattered, no longer obedience to the Law.

After being led into Damascus, he was blind for three days until Ananias laid hands on him. After recovering his sight, he was baptized and immediately began to proclaim in the synagogues that Jesus was the son of God.

Then he went for a short time to Arabia (Gal 1:17). This was not today's Saudi Arabia, but more likely modern Jordan, which then was ruled by the Nabataeans. Their king, Aretas IV, ruled from Petra, a tourist site today. He probably didn't stay there long, though, because Jews were not very welcome in the year 34. Dominican Father Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, who

has spent years studying Paul, wrote, "I would give him a week at the most."

So it was back to Damascus, where Saul stayed for about three years, preaching his new faith. Perhaps this is also where he learned his trade of tent-making, since there is no evidence that he worked at a trade previously. He wanted a trade whose tools were easily portable, and in demand wherever he might travel, and would allow him contact with people. Tent-making in the first century met all those requirements.

In the year 37, though, things got dangerous for Saul. King Aretas apparently didn't like Saul's preaching and tried to arrest him. But he was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped.

So he left Damascus, never to return. Rather than return to Tarsus, though, Saul decided to go back to Jerusalem. It had been several years since his conversion, and he thought it was about time he met Peter. Saul had been preaching about Jesus, and it was time he learned what he was really like. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

## Congratulations, Mom, whoever you are

Mother's Day is a fine idea. We should honor the women who brought us into this world, even though they were also the ones who could take us out at any moment and sometimes did, if only figuratively.



The thing is, mothers are so various it's hard to pin down exactly what motherly qualities we're honoring. Moms range from being like Beaver Cleaver's mother, June, to (God forbid) Mommie Dearest, with everything in between.

This is true despite the mystique of the superiority of mothers, which has been promulgated now and then throughout history. For example, tomes have been written to the effect that men fear the opposite sex because women alone have the "power" to give birth. Or the goddess ideas that maternity bestows a unique wisdom upon women that's not available to men.

We also have sanctified motherhood in the person of the Blessed Virgin. She alone, of all human creatures, surpassed her humanity by her eternal openness to God's will. Here we have the ideal of

motherhood, a model available to all women, whether or not they are believers in her Son.

We like to think mothers fit certain clichés that our culture assigns them. We wish moms to be sweet, kindly caregivers who supply us with a welcoming home, and support our every ambition without argument. They are always there for us.

However, all mothers have faults, never approaching the perfection of Mary. I include myself in this category, as my kids and husband would no doubt be happy to verify. It's when the faults outweigh the virtues that we have a hard time celebrating Mother's Day, but those are the stories that wind up on the front page of the newspaper.

Most of us claim moms who are not that bad; they just have personality quirks and, sometimes, weird behaviors. Often, these are endearing, but they also may be irritating or embarrassing. They're the qualities that cause us to cry, "I'll never do [say, behave] like my mother did, when I have kids!" Famous last words, as we discover one day in the future, when we look into a mirror and see, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, I am my mother after all!"

My mom is a case in point. She would lose her temper and yell, gaining

momentum as she went along. However, the flyswatter was her ultimate weapon of discipline. My husband's mother used a cane switch for such purposes. It disappeared mysteriously one day after it was put to use until, when the family moved some years later, it was found wedged behind a sofa.

My mother also liked to let loose with salty language when provoked. But even she was no match for one of the mothers who lived down our block. She was a churchgoing woman, a straight arrow in every way, but she could tell dirty jokes that would curl a longshoreman's hair. She seemed oblivious to the incongruity of her behavior, and her family just grinned when she did it.

Some mothers are wonderful cooks, while others could not feed their family without a can opener and a husband who grills outdoors. Some are always fashionable, and others are listed under "rummage sale" in the dictionary.

In short, all mothers are different except for two things: they love us, and we love them. Deeply and forever.

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

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

## A Mother's Day call for modesty in clothing

When I graduated from Cathedral Grade School in Belleville, Ill., my



mother and I carefully chose a pale blue pique dress for me to wear to the ceremony at which I would receive a four-year scholarship to the Academy of Notre Dame, an area high school.

The bishop would present this award, and we wanted to be sure my dress was acceptable. Mom and Dad and I stopped at the sisters' convent for approval. I passed inspection.

Before graduating from high school, I attended a prom, and my date took me to visit the Notre Dame sisters for approval. This was during the years when girls were encouraged to buy only clothes with a "Marian" or "Marylike" tag, and my gown was not, so I was concerned. Again, no problem!

In later years—and even today—I was and am appalled to see prom photographs with young ladies wearing what I consider

inappropriate attire.

So it was with much interest that I received a report about "Project Mother's Day 2006" from *Christian Newswire*. The Family Life Office in the Diocese of Lincoln, Neb., co-sponsors this call to Catholic action with The Leaven, a lay apostolate founded by Alton and Juliana Davis in 1987 in honor of Catholic teaching on chastity.

On Mother's Day, Pius X Catholic High School in Lincoln is hosting a celebration of womanhood, including the veneration of the Blessed Mother. The speaker will be Colleen Hammond, the author of the rapidly selling book *Dressing with Dignity*.

Dressing with dignity was the message my friends and I learned from the "Marylike" movement and the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and this should not be lost to the current generation of young women. The Lincoln event will give men and women an opportunity "to petition area merchants to provide tasteful, modest fashions in keeping with women's sacred dignity," according to *Christian Newswire*. Area Knights of Columbus councils

were also asked to sponsor appropriate fashions, with young ladies ages 13 to 18 participating. Since more than 90 applied for this, winners were chosen by brief essays on modesty. A panel of judges rates models for "feminine genius," a term used by the late Pope John Paul II in "*Mulieres Dignitatem*," an encyclical "on the giftedness of women." The Leaven, a non-profit organization, will present cash awards to the top three young women.

Until checking Colleen Hammond's Web site ([www.colleenhammond.com](http://www.colleenhammond.com)), I did not know there are specific companies being endorsed for proper attire—even some for men.

This year, organizers for this Mother's Day event took as patronesses two strong women: Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, and recently canonized St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Next year, perhaps Hoosier Catholics could conscientiously follow in the footsteps of this Lincoln, Neb., project.

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

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

## Remembering the Church's Original Top Model

Somewhere between the time that girls learn to recite the alphabet and to tie their shoes, they learn to scrutinize their bodies.



Five-year-olds go on diets. Sixteen-year-olds shop for prom dresses and breast implants. They're not just in Beverly Hills. They live across the country; some come from supportive

Catholic families.

I once baby-sat a 4-year-old who clung to her towel at the pool. "I like how my stomach looks when I lie down," she observed.

Now in her formative teen years, chances are she was one of the 5 million Americans that tuned into UPN's March premiere of "America's Next Top Model 6."

The models will pose for pictures, nibble carrots and bicker with a feistiness that belies their bony bodies. They don't weigh enough to donate blood, but they seem capable of drawing it.

My friend, Katie, and I, humanitarians that we are, meet the weight requirement to give blood. To ensure that we don't drop dangerously close, we recently did lunch at The Cheesecake Factory.

Katie, a new college graduate, is putting part of her first real paycheck into electrolysis. She's pondering plastic surgery in the future: "Liposuction, breast augmentation and a lift, too."

I shuddered. She sounded like a shopper rattling off her grocery list.

"Aren't we supposed to be in our prime?" I asked, wistfully. Our calorie-conscious guilt was spoiling the feast before us.

I think Katie has watched a few too many episodes of E!'s "Dr. 90210," a reality TV show that chronicles plastic surgeries and the lives of its surgeons. Katie has a crush on Dr. Robert Ray, the buff Brazilian who once said: "I'm a psychiatrist with a knife." (Yikes!)

Terms like "through-the-navel breast enhancement" are now part of an American girl's lexicon. And its techniques are part of her anatomical knowledge. Strange. And sad.

That's another dimension of this beauty craze: Women should take every measure to fight aging, but pretend their good looks are effortless.

It got me thinking about my models of beauty, my grandmothers. They're lovely, inside and out.

Their wrinkles are a sign that they've embraced life. They've furrowed their brows in contemplation and lifted them in surprise. They've pursed their lips in frustration and puckered them in affection. They've shed tears of joy and wept tears of sadness. They've smiled broadly and laughed loudly.

Why freeze those marks of a well-lived life?

It strikes me as ironic that TV's sweeps month—full of models and plastic surgeons—coincides with Mother's Day, a celebration of life-giving women. It also falls during Mary's month, a celebration of The Church's Original Top Model. She said "yes" to the Lord's will even though it spurred societal disapproval.

While today's stars are shallow, Mary modeled depth. While they are fickle, Mary modeled fidelity. While they clamor for the spotlight, Mary deflected it to her maker, saying, "Holy is his name."

That doesn't mean I'm going to abandon the pursuit of health or overcome the pressure to be pretty. That's part of being a young adult. But it helps to remember my real models.

(Christina Capecchi is a Catholic Press Association award-winning writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

Fifth Sunday of Easter/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 13, 2006

- Acts of the Apostles 9:26-31
- 1 John 3:18-24
- John 15:1-8

The Acts of the Apostles, once again, furnishes the first reading for the liturgy in the season of Easter.



This weekend's reading is about Paul and Barnabas. In the story, Paul—who had been converted on the road to Damascus and had spent much time learning about Jesus—

attempts to join the Christian community in Jerusalem. The community fears him, and not without cause. Paul had been a very strident opponent of the Christian Gospel, and had persecuted Christians in Jerusalem.

Understandably, these same Christians must have wondered what dark purpose lay beneath Paul's wish to enter their faith community. Was he looking for ways to entrap Christians or to frustrate what they did in the name of Jesus?

As intercessor, Barnabas, already part of the community, spoke for Paul. He urged Paul's admission into the community.

Paul stayed in Jerusalem, speaking boldly about Jesus wherever he went. Apparently, such fervor was not always appreciated among those people who were not of the Christian fold. In fact, some people tried to kill him.

Christians rescued Paul by taking him to Caesarea, the Roman capital of the region, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea located slightly north of modern Tel Aviv. There, they put Paul on a ship bound for Tarsus.

Meanwhile, as Acts says in this reading, the Church in Palestine was growing and its faith was deepening.

Also once more, the First Epistle of John supplies the second reading for this week's liturgy.

As was the case in the readings for the past weekends, this passage is moving

and compelling in its eloquence. It refers to its readers as "little children." This form of address in itself is highly expressive. Believers, as are all humans, are vulnerable. They are weak. They are limited. Yet, in a most special way, true believers are God's children. If they are without sin, God will protect them from peril.

St. John's glorious Gospel provides the last reading.

Last weekend, the Lord gave us the beautiful image of the Good Shepherd. He is our leader. He guides us away from danger.

This weekend, the image is no less telling and descriptive. Jesus is the vine. We believers are the branches. This image was as immediate in its message to the first hearers of these words as was the story of the Good Shepherd. The society in which Jesus lived was agrarian. Viticulture was well known. Everyone knew about vines, and everyone knew what vine growers did for a living.

In last weekend's Gospel, Jesus appeared as our guide and protector. In this weekend's reading, the link between believers and Jesus is revealed. His life is within believers. Without Christ, they can accomplish nothing. In Christ, they can live forever.

## Reflection

The Gospel presents us with a wonderfully consoling fact. If we truly love the Lord, if we really are disciples, then the very life of Christ is in us. Powered by this life, enlightened by the light of Christ, we need not fear anything. We can anticipate eternal life.

It is a message repeated in the lovely passage from First John that is read as the second lesson for this week's Liturgy of the Word.

Part of the divine plan for Redemption in Christ is how we approach the Lord, and how we live with the Lord. The Church is very frank this weekend in giving us these details. It is more than a question of good intentions or personal conviction. Christ lives in the Church, and we must spiritually incorporate ourselves into the Church to be joined into the vine

## Daily Readings

Monday, May 15

Isidore  
Acts 14:5-18  
Psalm 115:1-5, 15-16  
John 14:21-26

Tuesday, May 16

Acts 14:19-28  
Psalm 145:10-13ab, 21  
John 14:27-31a

Wednesday, May 17

Acts 15:1-6  
Psalm 122:1-5  
John 15:1-8

Thursday, May 18

John I, pope and martyr  
Acts 15:7-21

Psalms 96:1-3, 10  
John 15:9-11

Friday, May 19

Acts 15:22-31  
Psalm 57:8-12  
John 15:12-17

Saturday, May 20

Bernardine of Siena, priest  
Acts 16:1-10  
Psalm 100:2, 3, 5  
John 15:18-21

Sunday, May 21

Sixth Sunday of Easter  
Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48  
Psalm 98:1-4  
1 John 4:7-10  
John 15:9-17

that is the Lord.

Paul had indeed been converted, but he saw being part of the Church as critical. Thus, he sought admission into the

Christian community in Jerusalem. A secondary lesson in evangelization is presented in Acts. Barnabas reached out to him to bring him into the community. †

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

## Jesus experienced anguish while dying on the cross

As our Savior is dying on the cross, he says, according to Matthew's Gospel, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46).

Knowing that, according to the prophecies, death was inevitable, what was the reason for his apparent despair? What did it mean? (Illinois)



There is no doubt that Jesus suffered much of our human desolation, grief and aloneness at the time of his Passion. It was an agonizing torture so severe that it caused him to sweat blood and brought him close to a feeling of almost total dereliction.

We say "close" because the cry itself is an expression of profound faith and trust in the midst of all the pain.

The words you quote are the beginning of Psalm 22, the psalm to which this and other Gospels frequently refer to describe what was happening, physically and spiritually, in the Passion of our Lord.

Numerous verses of Psalm 22 are quoted either directly or indirectly by Matthew in these passages:

- "He relied on the Lord. ... Let him rescue him if he loves him."
- "My throat is dried up like baked clay."
- "They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones. ... They divide my garments among them."

These words of the psalmist, among others, obviously inspired the evangelists in portraying how Jesus fulfilled the will of his Father and climaxed his life of totally unselfish love by becoming, as St. Paul says, "obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8).

Even though the psalm expresses great mourning and sorrow, however, it is ultimately a cry of peace and victory, such as one might expect Jesus to proclaim in his final minutes.

"All the ends of the earth shall remember and return to the Lord. ... To him alone shall bow down all who sleep in the earth ... and to him my soul shall live" (Ps 22:28-31).

"Let the coming generation be told of

the Lord, that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born the justice he has shown" (Ps 22:32), what God has done.

As a prayerful and observant Jew, Jesus probably knew the words of this psalm by heart.

Perhaps quoting its first verse is Matthew's (and the Holy Spirit's) way of revealing to us the sentiments that were in the heart of Jesus at the end—the moment of his glorification on the cross.

A new priest assigned at a parish in our area almost never says the creed at Sunday Mass.

Is that permitted by the Church?

I feel like I have not fulfilled my Sunday obligation if I haven't attended a complete Mass. (Oklahoma)

The creed is not essential for a valid Mass on Sunday or any other time.

However, official instructions for Mass provide that the creed be recited or sung by the priest and people at least on Sundays and solemn feasts.

There is no liturgical basis for regularly neglecting that part of the Mass.

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, 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](mailto:jjdietzen@aol.com).) †

## My Journey to God

### The Joyful Mysteries

#### The Annunciation

Evening shadows shield her there,  
Rapt in customary prayer.  
There the angel tells the plan:  
Through her, God will come as man.

#### The Visitation

Hardship does not play a part  
In the Virgin's joyful heart.  
There, as blood of ages runs,  
Cousins bless their unborn sons.

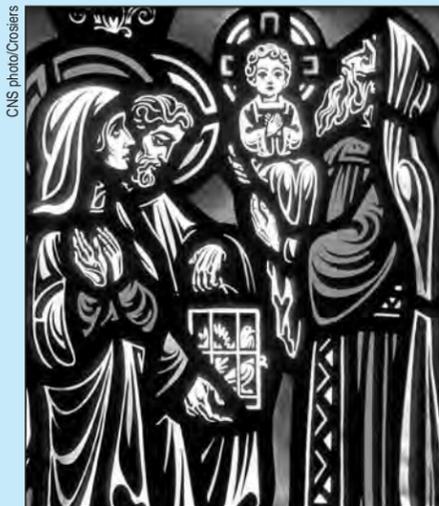
#### The Nativity

Did eagles soar, aspen quake,  
Was all nature roused, awake,  
As the stable, Heaven blest,  
Found the child a place of rest?

#### The Presentation

Exaltation, hearts aglow,  
Wondrous sight, but could they know:  
This first consecration act  
Would remain a sacred fact.

(Dorothy M. Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. A stained-glass window at Nativity Church in St. Paul, Minn., depicts Mary and Joseph at the Temple for the presentation of Jesus and the purification of Mary as prescribed by Jewish law.)



#### The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

Trodden paths and crowded stalls  
Must have heard the frantic calls.  
Then with promises and prayer  
Comes a joy beyond compare.

By Dorothy M. Colgan

# SCHOOL

continued from page 11

are moving into their homes.

That, in turn, has put a different face on the area.

"I think economically this is a struggling neighborhood, a lower-income, middle-class one," he said. "It is no longer an Irish-American parish."

But the parish families that have stayed are doing their part to open their arms to the newcomers, Father Beever said.

"The average parishioners have made a real effort to be welcoming," he said. "We're also constantly making an effort to integrate the two communities."

Three Hispanics now serve on the parish council, he noted.

That is all part of the parish's evangelization efforts, said Father Beever, who through tutoring and two immersion visits to Mexico became fluent in Spanish to better serve the parish. Besides celebrating Mass, he is able to

deliver homilies in Spanish. He and others also encourage the Hispanic families to bring their cultures and traditions to the parish and school.

"We celebrate *quinceñeras* [a girl's 15th birthday where the community celebrates the young lady's transition from childhood to adulthood], weddings and baptisms," he said. "It's helped to encourage them to be a part of the community."

"I do think, to some degree, the school has brought a reconnection for some of the families to Church," Reynolds added.

Father Michael O'Mara, who served as St. Philip Neri pastor from 1991 to 1996 and later again as administrator for 19 months from 2004 to 2006, said Hispanic families are making the most of what the school and parish offer them.

"They are looking for a place for their children to get the best education possible rooted in faith," he said. "It's still good to see a place where immigrants can find refuge and [a place for] their ideals in life." †



Secretary Maria Lomeli and Maureen Reynolds, principal, said the area's growing Hispanic community is finding a home for their children at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis.

# RENEWS

continued from page 10

people will laugh at it, but that's denial."

Judith Dias said CRHP has also transformed the way that her husband relates to other people, both within his family and in the broader community.

"He was always very loving to me," she said. "But he always had a lot of anger inside of him. And he would get

upset at the drop of a hat."

Russell Dias attributed that simmering anger to his relationship with his father, who had suffered from alcoholism.

Instead of having anger color his life, Dias now finds meaning in love.

"We get a tank full of love at birth," Dias said. "It's more than enough for a lifetime. And [Christ] only asks two things—that we share that love with others and that we love him back.

"It's pretty simple. We're the ones that complicate it."

CRHP helped reconnect Russell Dias to himself, his family, the Church and Christ.

Now that CHRP recently celebrated its 10th anniversary at St. Barnabas, Father Farrell would like to see it reconnect young adults.

"We see a lot of young adults in their 20s and early 30s who kind of drift away for a while until maybe they get married and have a child that's

ready for first Communion," he said. "And what I'm hoping is that if we can get more young people involved in Christ RENEWS His Parish, they won't

have to go through that period of estrangement. They'll be connected early on."

But no matter what their age is, Dias said that there are scores of other Catholics like him who are disconnected from the Church, people that could benefit from CRHP.

"There are thousands out there like [me]," he said. "It doesn't have anything to do with the

fact that they're Catholic. It has to do with [the fact that] they're not connected. We have to connect them." †

**'We get a tank full of love at birth. It's more than enough for a lifetime. And [Christ] only asks two things—that we share that love with others and that we love him back.'**

— Russell Dias



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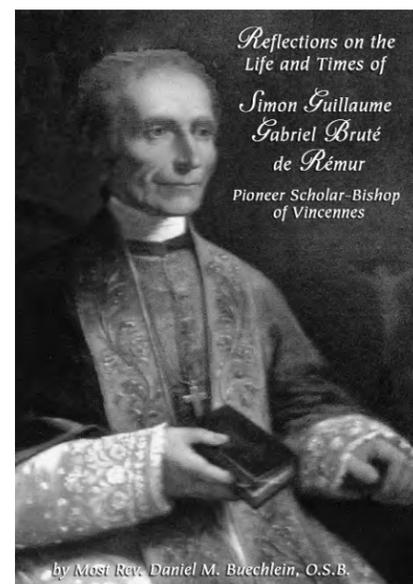
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# DA VINCI

continued from page 1

"*The Da Vinci Code*—the book and probably the film—presents Catholics with one set of problems, and those are best dealt with by knowing the facts of our Church's faith and its history," Archbishop Niederauer said.

"A broader challenge is an entertainment establishment that doesn't know very much about Catholicism, doesn't like what it thinks it knows, doesn't want to learn any more, and can't leave Catholic faith, practice and imagery alone," the archbishop said.

In a letter to Catholics in his diocese, Bishop Michael A. Saltarelli of Wilmington, Del., said: "Many have found *The Da Vinci Code* entertaining. Others have found it offensive. Sadly, some have found it believable. For them, the book may inflame prejudice or precipitate a crisis of faith, because if one takes *The Da Vinci Code* at face value, one could conclude that everything the Church has taught about Christ is a lie."

The letter was published in the May 4 issue of *The Dialog*, diocesan newspaper.

"As the film debuts, it is likely that television and other media will be saturated with *The Da Vinci Code*'s claims. As is so often the case, our precious young people, the future of the Church, are most vulnerable and potentially the most scandalized by

this kind of media onslaught. But good people of any age and background can be confused in a case such as this," Bishop Saltarelli said.

He added, "Neither book nor film should cause you to be discouraged or lose heart. In the Catholic Church, the glory of God has been and continues to be revealed fully and in truth for Christ's faithful people."

The Wilmington Diocese has established a task force to counter *Da Vinci* claims. Task force member Kevin Ruth, chairman of classical and modern languages at Tower Hill School in Wilmington, did his doctoral work at Rutgers University in late medieval and religious theater. He expects he will talk about medieval linguistics and about art history, especially Leonardo da Vinci's painting of "The Last Supper" that is featured prominently in the book.

The biggest problem with the book, according to Ruth, is the "Fact" page at the beginning that stipulates essential plot points as true. For instance, the so-called "Priory of Sion," which Brown says existed for centuries, was created in 1956 in France on forged documents. That's just one untrue "fact," Ruth said.

A scholar's library that the character Sophie examines late in the novel includes titles of real books, Ruth noted, but their authors "are not recognized by secular scholars, they are so far out of what would be considered accurate historical

scholarship."

Ruth doesn't believe many Catholics have had their faith shaken by the book, but he thinks many will begin to "seriously question the motives of the Church."

Archbishop Angelo Amato, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said Catholics should consider a boycott of the film.

Barbara Nicolosi, head of the Act One screenwriting program for Christians in Hollywood, has suggested an "othercott," seeing instead the animated movie *Over the Hedge*, which also premieres on May 19.

But they have to go up against a movie based on a book that has sold 40 million copies and starring Tom Hanks—the biggest box-office star of all time with his movies collectively grossing more than \$3.1 billion.

Matt Pinto, president of Ascension Press in Media, Pa., which developed a ready-made parish program called the Da Vinci Outreach, has had almost 20,000 downloads of material from the program's Web site.

"Our goal is to reach 2,000 parishes nationwide," Pinto told *The Catholic Standard & Times*. "We're already working with 14 dioceses, including the archdioceses of Indianapolis, St. Paul [and Minneapolis], St. Louis, and have had about 50 inquiries for speakers nationwide."

According to Ascension Press, several parishes in the archdiocese have made bulk orders of the publisher's *The Da Vinci Deception: 100 Questions and*

*Answers about the Facts and Fiction of The Da Vinci Code.*

The parishes include Christ the King Parish and St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, both in Indianapolis, Holy Name Parish in Beech Grove, Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, St. Mary Parish in Greensburg and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Aurora.

Indianapolis resident Sandra Miesel, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese has co-authored with Carl Olsen *The Da Vinci Hoax: Exposing the Errors in The Da Vinci Code.*

Father John Vidmar, a priest of the Diocese of Providence, R.I., said his book *The Da Vinci Code and the Catholic Tradition* has gone into a second printing after local bookstores quickly snatched up most of the first run. Booksellers were expecting a renewed interest in critiques of Brown's book with the upcoming movie release.

"People can read things very uncritically," Father Vidmar said, explaining why there was such a demand for books that call Brown to task. "Faithful Catholics want answers to their questions."

To that extent, the Brown book has provided "a teachable moment" for the Church, Father Vidmar told the *Providence Visitor*, diocesan newspaper. He called his book "an opportunity not just to bash *The Da Vinci Code*, but also to teach people about the early Church." †

# PROMISE

continued from page 3

three mission trips to El Salvador and volunteers as a tutor at Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis.

Jenna said she serves as a chastity peer mentor "because of what the Church and my family have taught me. ... I believe in the program because it fosters kids to have self-respect, and to live a life in which their decisions and actions will demand that same level of respect from those around them."

By turning to God, she said, "in his love, we can find strength to put aside temptations and make the right decisions."

Cathedral High School senior Shawn Azman, a member of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, said his parents and his faith taught him that sex is a sacred act and should be saved for marriage.

He said serving as a chastity peer mentor gave him an audience to profess his Christian beliefs.

"I ... hope that I could positively affect others' lives by giving testimony to my life," Shawn said, "and the happiness I can experience by living a life of virtue."

Cardinal Ritter High School senior Brian Klemm, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, said the A Promise to Keep program helps teenagers respect themselves and others.

"I want to give my future wife all of me, not something that has been shared with others," Brian said. "I believe that each and every one of us are influential, not only to ourselves but also to the children we speak to. ... We have all made a choice ... to live a chaste life because we know we are worth it as children of God." †

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# Rest in peace

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

**BEGO, Virginia M.,** 86, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, April 19. Mother of Louise Davis, Dawn Tower, Nicholas and Tony Bego. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 21.

**BRINK, Mary Fitzgerald,** 93, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 25. Mother of Anne Hair, Harriett Majors and John Brink. Grandmother of four.

**BRUHN, Donald J.,** 77, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, April 20. Husband of Rosie Bruhn. Father of Rita Roush, Jean Stubbs, David, Donald II and Thomas Bruhn. Brother of Betty Lou Carlile. Grandfather of seven.

**CORRIGAN, Bartley,** 60, St. Mark, Indianapolis, April 26. Husband of Carol Ann Corrigan. Father of Carol Ann Gallagher, Dede Linzy, Catherine Williamson and Bud Corrigan. Brother of Mary Sherlock and Hughie Corrigan. Grandfather of six.

**De MARINO, Ersilia,** 84, Annunciation, Brazil, April 20. Sister of Elena Bonomo, Ines and Lorenzina De Marino.

**ENDRIS, Mary Jean,** 61, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, April 30. Sister of Daniel Endris.

**FORTWENDEL, Darlene,** 49, St. Pius V, Troy, April 25. Mother of Joey and Scott Fortwendel. Daughter of Gary and Opal (Dixon) Goffinet. Sister of Angie Garrett. Grandmother of three.

**GALLAGHER, John E.,** 66, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 13. Brother of Joseph Jr. and Paul Gallagher.

**GANNON, Francis E.,** 90, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, April 29. Father of Rosie Meunier. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of nine.

**GARVEY, Lawrence P.,** 83, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 24. Husband of Mary Jacqueline Garvey. Father of

Francesca Firstwater, Sharon Roberts, Jean, David, Joseph, Matthew, Michael and Thomas Garvey. Brother of Mildred Anderson. Grandfather of 15.

**GAUSE, Ramona,** 77, Holy Name, Beech Grove, April 10. Wife of Raymond Gause. Sister of Patty Ambs, Martine Thibo, Carole Wilson, Judy Wylie, Rev. James and John Devney.

**GERARD, Nancy Ruth,** 75, St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis, April 24. Wife of James Gerard Sr. Mother of Catherine Salas, Lisa, Susan and James Gerard Jr.

**GETHERS, Delmar D.,** 94, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City, April 20. Father of Diana Buhl, Joan Bundy, Carolyn Stearns and David Gethers. Brother of Eloise Erk, Byron and Melvin Gethers. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 22.

**GIBSON, Robert Joseph,** 75, St. Roch, Indianapolis, April 16. Husband of Ann Gibson. Father of Maria Pittenger, Donna Quint, Rosanne Ward and Tony Gibson. Brother of Dorothy Bueger. Grandfather of seven.

**GILLEY, Imelda,** 91, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, April 23. Mother of Carole Kurtz and Joan Gilley. Grandmother of four.

**GRANTS, Mikelis,** 91, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, April 23. Uncle of one.

**GUERRINI, Ralph,** 76, St. Jude, Indianapolis, April 12. Husband of Joan (Puntarilli) Guerrini. Father of Maria Mercer, Michael, Nicholas and Vincent Guerrini. Grandfather of 10.

**HARTZ, Elsa M.,** 85, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 25. Wife of Bernard Hartz. Mother of Mary Anne Crisp, Jane Neville, Greg and Tom Hartz. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of four.

**HAYDEN, Stephen A.,** 44, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, April 25. Brother of Chip, Jim, Joe and Mark Hayden.

**HEMMELGARN, Anna Marie,** 89, Holy Name, Beech Grove, April 30. Sister of Elenora Meisberger.

**HICKMAN, Mary,** 97, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, April 20. Mother of Maryann Guy and Kathleen Kennedy. Grandmother of six. Great-

grandmother of 17.

**HORNING, Nicholas J.,** 43, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 16. Son of James and Gloria Horning. Brother of Michele Dippel and Matthew Horning.

**KAISER, Luke R.,** 81, Holy Family, Oldenburg, April 24. Husband of Irma Kaiser. Father of Beverly Joyce, Mark, Michael and Steve Kaiser. Brother of Betty Holtel, Rita McGreevy, Carl and Vic Kaiser. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of one.

**KENNEDY, Paul Michael, Jr.,** 59, Holy Name, Beech Grove, April 22. Brother of Franciscan Sister Francis Assisi Kennedy.

**KRAMER, Edgar,** 90, Prince of Peace, Madison, April 17. Husband of Ruth Kramer. Father of Joy, Lisa and Michael Kramer. Grandfather of three.

**LIDDY, Mary Deete,** 86, St. Jude, Indianapolis, April 17. Sister of Robert Liddy. Aunt of several.

**MADDEN, Joseph Stanecart,** 63, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, April 21. Husband of Maureen (Northcutt) Madden. Father of Michelle and Mark Madden. Brother of Barbara Hendry.

**McFARLING, David Earl,** 86, St. Paul, Tell City, April 21. Husband of Adeline (Weisenberger) McFarling. Father of Vicki Brewer. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of five.

**MEREDITH, Mary Wilma Jean (Cloud),** 86, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, March 31. Mother of Nancy Rickly, Jon and Joseph Bowling. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of seven.

**MEUNIER, Alfred F.,** 73, St. Joseph, Sellersburg, April 18. Husband of Roberta Meunier. Father of Karen Keinsley, Linda Van Hook and Kenneth Meunier. Brother of Charles Meunier. Grandfather of eight.

**MOODY, William R.,** 81, St. Louis, Batesville, April 29. Husband of Ethel Moody. Father of Deb Harrington, Donna Ruggles and Chris Vogelsang. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

**NOLOT, Mae,** 89, St. Bernard, Frenchtown, April 15. Mother of Rita Whitaker, James, Mervin and Thomas Nolot. Sister of Ruth Linton, Mary Nolot, Jean Shroud, August and Ralph Smith. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of 38. Great-grandmother of one.

**OWENS, James F.,** 68, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 14. Father of Jenny, Katie, Chris and Steve Owens.

**READINGER, Elizabeth L.,** 81, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute, April 28. Mother of Randy Readinger. Sister of Agnes Davis, Margaret Genovese, Kay Ofsansky and Gene Verostko. Grandmother of three.

**RISK, Lucille C. (Shafer),** 89, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, April 7. Mother of Sandra Corley and John Risk. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of eight.

**RUFING, Yvonne M.,** 60, Holy Family, New Albany, April 22. Wife of Ronald Rufing Sr. Mother of Tina McNelly, Mark, Scott and Tony Cahalan. Stepmother of Michelle Miqwar and Trent Rufing. Sister of Martha Brame, Norma Robinson, Ann Townsend, Paul Book and Ronald Meyer. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of one.

**SAMPSON, Richard H.,** 85, St. Mary, Rushville, April 23. Husband of Stella Sampson. Father of Barbara Brewer, Virginia Ruble, JoAnn, Gerald and Roger Sampson. Brother of Virginia Hanson and Janet Shook. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of three.

**SCHREIER, Robert P.,** 78, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, March 5. Husband of Irene Schreier. Father of Nancy Barker, Susan Rist, James, Jerome, Michael and Robert Schreier. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of four.

**SCHWARZ, Eric Gerard,** 41, St. Gabriel, Connersville, April 20. Son of Bonnie (Schwarz) Callahan and Charles Schwarz. Brother of Jeanie Hinchman, Becky Savoy, Tracy Snyder and Chris Schwarz. Uncle of several.

**SCHWEGMAN, Esther (Meer),** 89, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City, April 4. Mother of Brenda Sheldon, Rebecca Wainright, Franklin, Stephen and Sylvan Schwegman. Sister of Mildred and Ruth Meer. Grandmother of seven.

**SHERIDAN, John,** 84, St. Mary, Richmond, April 10. Husband of Kathleen Sheridan. Father of Loretta Sheridan and Kathleen South. Grandfather of four.

**SISK, Jay Donald,** 87, St. Luke, Indianapolis, April 19. Husband of Barbara Sisk. Father of Mary Jo Healy, Joyce, Marc and Matthew Sisk. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of 13.

**SNEDEKER, M. Leota,** Holy Family, Richmond, April 12. Aunt of several.

**TRAYNOR, Michael,** 74, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis,

April 11. Husband of Anne (McSweeney) Traynor. Father of Jennifer Boyd, Susan Chastain, Joseph, Michael, Paul and Stephan Traynor. Brother of Philomena Breen, Ita Kervick, Jack, Noel and Paul Traynor. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of two.

**TURNER, William,** 87, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, April 7. Husband of Dorothy

Turner. Father of Barbara Williams, Laura, Mary Ann and John Turner. Grandfather of two.

**WELSH, Maurice M.,** 81, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 14. Husband of Helen Welsh. Father of Therese Corsones, Kathleen Loveman, Dr. David, Dr. Michael and Steven Welsh. Grandfather of 12. †

## Benedictine Sister Mary Xavier Mueller taught school for 49 years

Benedictine Sister Mary Xavier Mueller died on March 25 at St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove, where she was a resident. She was 91.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 28 at Our Lady of Grace Monastery Chapel in Beech Grove. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Margaret Mueller was born on Oct. 22, 1914, in Evansville, Ind.

She entered Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in 1934 and made her perpetual monastic profession in 1939.

Sister Mary Xavier was a founding member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

She received a bachelor's degree in education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand and a master's degree at St. Francis College in

Fort Wayne, Ind. Sister Mary Xavier taught at Catholic schools for 49 years, first in Washington, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese.

In the archdiocese, she taught at Catholic schools in Siberia, Clarksville, Bradford, Columbus, Sellersburg, Starlight and Indianapolis.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Evansville, Ind.; Fort Branch, Ind.; and Elberfeld, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese.

Her last teaching position was at Christ the King School in Indianapolis, where she taught for 13 years before retiring to the monastery in 1986.

Surviving are a sister, Rita Kessler of Evansville, Ind.; and a nephew.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Retired Sisters' Fund, Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove, IN 46107. †

## Franciscan Sister Alverna Chandler was a teacher, principal and librarian

Franciscan Sister Alverna Chandler died on April 20 at St. Clare Hall, the health care facility for the congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 91.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 24 at the motherhouse chapel at Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Catherine Elizabeth Chandler was born on May 15, 1914, in Cincinnati.

She entered the Oldenburg Franciscan community on Sept. 8, 1937, and professed her final vows on Aug. 12, 1943.

Sister Alverna ministered as a teacher, principal and librarian at Catholic schools for 54 years.

In the archdiocese, she served at Holy Name School in

Beech Grove, St. Mary School in North Vernon, St. Mary School in Greensburg and the former St. Paul School in New Alsace.

Sister Alverna also ministered at Catholic schools in Ohio. She also spent 21 years serving Native Americans in Pryor, Mont., and St. Xavier, Mont., and Hispanics in Park View, N.M.

In 1995, Sister Alverna retired to the motherhouse, where she was engaged in community service in Oldenburg.

In later years, she resided at St. Clare Hall.

Surviving are many nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †

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# A 'new breed' of priests and religious Franciscan discusses vocations from the 'JP II generation'

By Sean Gallagher

A little over a year ago, thousands filled St. Peter's Square in Rome on the evening that Pope John Paul II died. Millions from around the world found their way to Rome in the days to come to mourn his passing.

Many of them were young people who were either born or became adults while John Paul served as the bishop of Rome.

Franciscan Father Francis Mary Stone, host of the Eternal Word Television Network's youth and young adult-oriented show "Life on the Rock," recently spoke about the seminarians, priests and religious who have come from this "JP II generation" in a presentation on April 5 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

Although 45, he considers himself a part of that generation—albeit at the far end of it.

In his ministry at EWTN over the past 15 years, Father Francis has met many seminarians, priests and religious from the JP II generation.

Based on his observations, he laid out traits of the men and women from this age group that have discerned priestly or religious vocations.

First, he said that many had adult conversion experiences, stating that they had "virtually no childhood aspirations" to the priesthood or religious life.

Because they did not discern their vocation early on, many of them worked ambitiously for a period in the business world.

Father Francis spoke about this aspect from his life, where he worked as a business and litigation analyst in California and Michigan.

"We're familiar with the rabid, unfettered capitalism that the world in some ways—not always subtly either—kind of throws out at us," he said. "We're familiar with the subjectivism, the secularism. We're familiar with moral and doctrinal relativism. That's the culture that the Lord still calls vocations out of."

Because of their experience in the business world, those in the JP II generation who discern a priestly or religious vocation are not looking for another career.

"It's a vocation that has reached into their heart, and taken it and pulled them," Father Francis said. "They're compelled to give themselves fully, 24/7. It doesn't mean that they're perfect. None of us are."

The Church's newer priests and religious



Seminarians from the North American College cheer as bells rang in St. Peter's Square announcing the election of a new pope. In his April 5 presentation at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, Franciscan Father Francis Mary Stone said that Pope John Paul II brought many young people—who later became seminarians, priests and religious—"into the square" and that Pope Benedict XVI "will bring them into the Church."

also come from dysfunctional families, Father Francis said, that have been wounded by "an abortive, contraceptive, euthanasian mentality."

"But our Lord still calls," he said. "There's no doubt about it. He still calls. The response for us is 'Yes.' He's not looking for the perfect. If he wanted the perfect, I certainly wouldn't be up doing 'Life on the Rock.'"

In the wake of the clergy sex abuse crisis, Father Francis said that many young seminarians and priests have no tolerance for the behavior of the priests who abused young children and teenagers.

"We're aware of it," he said. "We see it. And these guys are fed up with it. I can tell you that across the board."

Father Francis also said that many of the seminarians, priests and religious from the JP II generation have a great love for Mary and the Eucharist.

In particular, he said, many of the seminarians have been successful in advocating for an increase in opportunities for eucharistic adoration in their seminaries.

"As a lot of changes happen, it hasn't happened from the top down," Father

Francis said. "It's happened from the bottom up. Seminaries are changing that way."

Next, Father Francis said that this "new breed" of priests and religious see Pope John Paul II as their hero. He also said that Pope Benedict XVI "sees the fire" that his predecessor set in the hearts of many young people, and is now at work to shape that enthusiasm.

"Now he wants in a good sense to contain that fire and move that crowd in the piazza, outside the doors of the basilica, into the basilica, into the heart of the Church," Father Francis said.

He next spoke about this new generation of priests and religious' respect for the Church's discipline of priestly celibacy.

"We have no intention whatsoever of doing away with this longstanding discipline," Father Francis said. "Without a doubt, this new breed clearly sees the reasonableness [of it]. On the natural level, it makes perfect sense. But on the supernatural level, it makes a whole lot of sense as well."

Father Francis said also that the priests

and religious from the JP II generation are marked by a love for the Church and its teaching authority.

"We look to and see the reasonableness of having the authority of the Church," he said. "What a gift. In all its woundedness, in all its foibles, ... [we] thank God that we have the Church hierarchy."

In the question-and-answer period that followed, Father Francis acknowledged that the members of the JP II generation are a minority in their overall age group.

However, he argued that the seminarians, priests, religious and lay members of the JP II generation are placing themselves in positions of influence both in the Church and the wider society.

He said that the growing teenage suicide rate, a growth in drug and alcohol addiction at younger ages, and the continuing breakdown of the family shows that the present is no time for relaxing.

"I tell my friar brothers all the time that we have work to do," Father Francis said. "It's not like John Paul has created this mass of mighty conversions, and we can now sit back and play hoops all day and just take it easy." †

## Franciscan friar embodies qualities of priests from the 'JP II generation'

By Sean Gallagher

In his April presentation at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, Franciscan Father Francis Mary Stone spoke about many of the qualities of priests and religious who have

emerged from the "JP II generation."

Father Francis' own vocation story embodies several of these qualities.

He grew up in suburban Detroit with no interest in his Catholic faith, let alone the priesthood.

"I was bored stiff at Mass," he said.

He later attended Michigan State University and there "broke away from even going to Sunday Mass."

While there, he was a roommate of an evangelical Christian who was up front about his faith in Christ.

"He planted a little bit of a seed there, even though there was no conversion there in my life at that point," Father Francis said.

After his college graduation in the

early 1980s, Father Francis moved to California, where he later earned a Masters of Business Administration.

It was also in California where he became engaged. Although they broke off their engagement about four months before their wedding, Father Francis credits his former fiancée with his moving closer to the Church.

"She was Catholic, and she wanted me to go to Mass," he said. "And though that was really not an ultimatum, it was something that I had to really do. Otherwise, it would be something that would bring about a certain rift in our relationship."

Soon after breaking off the engagement, Father Francis decided to return to Michigan. On his way back, he stopped in Texas to visit a sister who had suffered a miscarriage and was finding much consolation in her Catholic faith.

He was shocked to find that she was going to daily Mass.

"For me, daily Mass was like, 'Who would go to daily Mass?' " he said. "Sunday was hard enough, but you mean every day? To me, it seemed fanatical. If you're going to daily Mass, you're crazed."

However, his sister began to have an influence on him. She gave him the book *True Devotion to Mary* by St. Louis de Montfort, and he read it.

Father Francis was surprised when he found that the radical life of faith described in the book appealed to him.

"My natural personality, which was leaning toward obsessing in sports and women and partying, turned over into my faith," he said. "It was like I couldn't read enough or pray enough."

Although Father Francis has hosted the Eternal Word Television Network's youth and young adult-oriented show "Life on the Rock" for the past three years, he said that in the late 1980s—when he began to discern his vocation—the network's programming didn't appeal to him.

Still, he saw one show that laid out the various qualities in those who might be called to the priesthood. It resonated with him, and so he decided to visit the Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word, a community of friars founded by the network's foundress, Mother Angelica, to minister there.

When he arrived, however, he found that actually going in was a hard thing to do.

"I just drove around saying, 'This is crazy,'" Father Francis said. "This was like really bizarre for me. I loved praying. I loved reading Scripture. I loved going to Mass. But making this step with my background and the culture that I was really a part of, it was like you just don't do that."



Fr. Francis Mary Stone, M.F.V.A.