A call to serve the poor

‘I’m going to keep doing this until God calls me to heaven’

By John Shaughnessy

At 90, Lucious Newsom hitches up his blue bib overalls and climbs into his white van, preparing to continue his work as “the Lord’s beggar for the poor”—a role he has served for 18 years in Indianapolis.

Pulling the van away from the curb, the retired Baptist minister-turned-Catholic waves goodbye to some of the 89 Hispanic families who have just spent the last 30 minutes filling their laundry baskets and milk crates with free tomatoes, onions, peppers and other vegetables—produce that Newsom begged for and collected from an Indianapolis company shortly after he awakened at 4:15 a.m. on this sunny, steamy morning.

Now, as a gold crucifix bounces around his neck—a gift from the families he has just helped—Newsom weaves the van through the city’s near-westside, heading toward a place that he views as a beacon of hope and promise in an area scarred by poverty, crime and drugs.

The place is called “Anna’s House,” a clinic and learning center that will offer food, dental care, medical help and educational services, including tutoring and computer training for children.

Scheduled to open on July 29, Anna’s House is Newsom’s dream to make a lasting difference in the lives of people who struggle against the odds. The house is named in honor of Anna Molloy, a 10-year-old blond-haired, brown-eyed member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, who helps Newsom feed the poor from her wheelchair.

“I named it for her because of her hard work and her love of Jesus,” Newsom says. “She’s on oxygen all the time, and she still keeps coming out to help me.”

Newsom parks the van and walks across the street toward Anna’s House.

“People have come together,” he says, his face beaming. “They said, ‘I’ll pay for the siding. I’ll pay for the plumbing. I’ll pay for this and that.’ It’s more than what I hoped for. It’s more than what I dreamed!”

A need to give more

The story of Newsom’s dream overflows with long hours, complete faith, tireless energy and inspiring anecdotes.

Start with the Thanksgiving nearly 20 years ago when he arrived in Indianapolis from Tennessee to serve meals of turkey, pomegranates and vegetables for the poor.

Newsom loved helping, and he loved seeing the grateful looks on people’s faces, so he excitedly asked the minister, “What are we going to do tomorrow?”

When they told him the event was just once a year, Newsom didn’t understand. He wanted to do more. He loved to do more.

He now helps the poor at several locations across the city. He and his volunteers set up tables and stock them with the fruits, vegetables, salads, breads and meats he has collected—so it looks like a grocery store; so it gives the people a choice and a sense of dignity.

Today, people of different faiths contribute to his efforts, but Catholics were the only ones who helped him when he started, he says. He gives special credit to Father Steven Schwab—now the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis—for leading him to the faith.

“That’s the first person who ever helped me,” Newsom says, recalling when he met the priest at St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis. “I'll be forever thankful to him. See NEWSOM, page 8

For 18 years, Lucious Newsom has answered the call to help the poor in Indianapolis with a caring, hands-on approach.

At right, Newsom breaks ground for Anna’s House, a clinic and learning center named in honor of Anna Molloy, who helps him feed the poor from her wheelchair.

Pope urges families to create loving homes

VALENCIA, Spain (CNS)—Surrounded by hundreds of thousands of families from every corner of the globe, Pope Benedict XVI urged mothers and fathers to be open to life and to create a home based on love, acceptance and mercy.

Though this seaport city was still reeling from a July 3 subway disaster that left 42 people dead and dozens more injured, the atmosphere during the pope’s July 8-9 visit was full of joy and celebration.

The pope journeyed to Spain’s third-largest city to help close the July 1-9 Fifth World Meeting of Families and to focus on its theme, “The Transmission of Faith in the Family.”

In his July 9 closing Mass homily, Pope Benedict emphasized that families have a duty to make sure “the good news of Christ will reach their children with the utmost clarity and authenticity.”

Handing down Church teaching and Gospel values also entails consistently living out those same values of love and charity, the pope said to hundreds of thousands of people gathered at Valencia’s ultramodern, outdoor City of the Arts and Sciences center.

Children will be more likely to appreciate and cherish their Christian heritage if they witness their parents’ constant “love, permeated with a living faith,” along with experiencing the support of a Christian community, he said.

In his homily, the pope urged husbands and wives to be open to the gift of life, saying each human is not created by accident or random selection, but is part of “a see FAMILIES, page 2
Rodríguez Zapatero for what the Church sees as promoting policies that attack the family and life. The pope met with Zapatero in a private audience on July 8 in the archbishop’s residence, and reporters said crowds outside jeered the prime minister upon his arrival.

The Spanish daily ABC reported on July 9 that a government spokesman for Zapatero said the half-hour audi-

ence was “extremely cordial,” and that he and the pope talked about “peace, the family, immigration, the future of Europe and, especially, the situation in Africa.”

During his two-day visit, Pope Benedict seemed more interested in accenting what was working and making families thrive than in finger-pointing. During the papal flight to Valencia, reporters asked the pope about gay marriage laws and other measures that challenge Church teaching. The pope said he preferred to “not start on the negative.”

He said stressing what is positive about Christian living can help people see “why the Church cannot accept certain things, but at the same time wants to respect people and help them.”

In some of his speeches, all delivered in Spanish, the pope said laws need to protect families and life not because of Church teaching, but to promote and protect “the integral good of the human being.”

In a written message delivered on July 8 to the coun-

try’s bishops, the pope encouraged them to “continue dauntlessly” in their efforts to remind people that acting as if God did not exist or that pushing faith out of the public sphere “determines the truth about humankind and compromises the future of culture and society.”

Organizers said at least 800,000 people attended the weekend meeting and that close to 1.5 million people saw the pope in the city over the weekend.

The city was festooned in the colors of the Vatican and this year’s meeting, with yellow and white flags, banners and flowers. Thousands of people lined the six-mile route from the airport to the city center to see the pope riding in his white popemobile, to cheer and wave banners, and to toss colorful confetti on the papal convoy from highway overpasses. Streets were packed with babies pushed in carriages, toddlers riding on adults’ shoulders, teens sporting homemade T-shirts, parents and grandparents, all trying to spot the pope, with flags, umbrellas, hats and thousands of flapping, hand-held fans.

The pope made the site of the subway disaster his first stop after his arrival. He laid a wreath of white flowers and bowed in prayer at the entrance of the Jesus subway station with the city’s archbishop, mayor, some members of the royal family, and scores of emergency workers. Later that day in the city’s Basilica of the Virgin, the pope met with family members of those who died when two subway cars overturned after crashing against the tunnel walls.

He greeted the grief-stricken families individually after they prayed together before a statue of Our Lady of the Needy, the city’s patroness.

Correction

A photo caption published in the July 7 issue of The Criterion incorrectly identified two Italian Heritage Society board members. Nino Morone and Salvatore Petruzzii helped James Divita and Joe Giaccolitti (not pic-

ured), all of Indianapolis, carry a statue of Mary during the religious procession on June 10 that is a traditional part of the Italian Street Festival at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

Pope Benedict XVI comforts a relative of one of the victims of the July 3 subway disaster while visiting the basilica in Valencia, Spain, on July 8.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—As the U.S. Senate moved closer to a vote in July on House-passed legislation prohibiting federal funding of stem-cell research that involves the destruction of human embryos, a Colombian-born Vatican official was speaking out on that research.

"To destroy the embryo is equivalent to an abortion," said Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, head of the Pontifical Council for the Family, in an interview with an Italian Catholic magazine. "And excommunication applies to the woman, the doctors, the researchers who destroy the embryo."

He stopped short of saying that Catholic politicians who vote in favor of research that destroys embryos would automatically excommunicate themselves. But politicians who are "believers must demonstrate consistency," and should not approach Communion if they approve "unjust laws that destroy man and go against the rights of the child," the cardinal added.

"No one in the world is authorized to contradict the doctrine of the Church on the matter of life at all stages," he said.

U.S. theologians and ethicists contacted by Catholic News Service were split on the significance of Cardinal Lopez Trujillo’s comments and the role it might play in any Senate vote.

"It’s a fitting time for some Vatican officials and others in high places" to speak out against embryonic stem-cell research, said Father Tad Pacholczyk, director of education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. "It is a matter of the gravest urgency."

But the priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., said he did not see "anything fundamentally new" in the cardinal’s comments, since both abortion and research that destroys embryos are "actions directly against an innocent human being" already proscribed in canon law.

"It is a new application of the same mode of thinking," he said.

Jean Porter, John A. O’Brien professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, said she sees a fundamental difference between the unborn child in an abortion and the early human life she called a "zygote."

"Do I agree that they have the same status as human beings? No, I don’t," she said in a 15-minute telephone interview with Catholic News Service.

Porter said she also has problems with the idea of an excommunication taking place "latae sententiae," that is, automatically at the time of the offense.

"Excommunication is supposed to be a public assessment" that someone has violated a serious Church law, she said. "I’m not sure what the point would be if it is not done publicly."

Canon law distinguishes between "fœderæ sententiae" excommunication, imposed following a formal judicial or administrative process, and "latae sententiae." Canon 1398 states: "A person who procures a completed abortion incurs a latae sententiae" excommunication.

Ron Hamel, senior director for ethics at the Catholic Health Association, said Cardinal Lopez Trujillo’s remarks underscored "the moral gravity of destroying embryos in order to obtain their stem cells."

"The destruction of embryos, whether in the womb or in the lab, is the ending of an innocent and vulnerable human life and, therefore, morally wrong," he said. "It could well be that excommunication would apply to those who actually destroy embryos to obtain stem cells."

Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is CHA president and CEO, said it is also important that embryonic stem-cell research not be confused with "the morally legitimate and laudable research on adult stem cells, which the Church endorses and encourages."

When politicians take up the issue, as is expected before Congress begins summer recess at the end of July, they will have three separate bills on which to vote: the Stem-Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, passed by the House more than a year ago, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006, and the Alternative Pluripotent Stem-Cell Therapies Enhancement Act.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops opposes the House-passed legislation, but supports the other two bills, said Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of the USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, who called fetuses farming "an alarming development."

"This is being presented as the new paradigm for human cloning," he said. "Before it gets established, we think it should be banned."

The fetus farming bill would prohibit "the solicitation or acceptance of tissue generated for research purposes," which Doerflinger said some states "seem to allow" in their current legislation.

The Alternative Pluripotent Stem-Cell Therapies Enhancement Act would increase federal funding into ways to derive pluripotent stem cells without destroying embryos.

Under the terms of a unanimous consent agreement approved before the Senate took its Fourth of July recess, all three bills will be presented for 12 hours of debate, with no amendments permitted and a 60-vote majority required for passage.

Doerflinger said there is "a reasonable chance of all three passing," and President George W. Bush would likely sign the two bills backed by the Catholic Church. But Bush has vowed to use his first veto on the Stem-Cell Research Enhancement Act if it passes in the Senate.

Although there might be sufficient votes in the Senate to override a presidential veto, it is unlikely that supporters of the legislation would be able to muster enough votes for an override in the House of Representatives, where it was approved last year on a 238-194 vote, Doerflinger said.

But whatever the resolution in Washington, discussion of embryonic stem-cell research is likely to continue at the Vatican, in many U.S. states and around the world.

"The debate is intensifying," said Father Pacholczyk. "And it’s important to understand the real gravity of what’s at stake."

Richard W. Smith
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CNS photo/M. W. Lensch, Children’s Hospital Boston
CNS photo/Phil Lorkowski, USCCB
Making the world a better place

The two richest men in the world were in the news recently when Warren Buffett, the second richest, decided to give most of the wealth he has accumulated to Bill Gates, the richest, so it can be used for charitable purposes.

He did this after Gates announced that he will step down as chief executive officer of Microsoft in two years in order to work full time on the charitable causes that will be funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

It's hardly unusual for people who have accumulated fortunes to establish foundations in order to do good. That's where most foundations came from—Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, for example, or here in Indianapolis the Lilly Endowment.

For the Catholic Church in this country, FADICA (Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities) helps wealthy Catholics use their money to do the most good. No other foundation, though, has ever come close to approaching the size of the Gates Foundation.

Our interest now, however, is not with the size of the Gates Foundation or even with the vast amount of good it should be able to accomplish.

What we find most interesting is Gates’ decision to abandon corporate life in order to devote his talents to distributing his foundation’s money.

We feel sure that we will not always agree with where some of that money will go, just as we disagree with the way the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have distributed some of their money, but we applaud Gates’ determination to try to improve the world.

It’s something that we can all emulate. We don’t have to be multi-billionaires to do so. Each of us should be on the lookout for ways that we, too, can contribute toward improving the world.

We’re not suggesting that you quit your job or give up your career, as Gates plans to do—although many people in midlife or earlier do exactly that.

Most of our priests and religious these days are men and women who have had other careers before recognizing their call from God. Numerous other people these days reach the point of being sufficiently well off financially that they can abandon their careers to do something they’ve always wanted to do, and which they consider more useful for society.

The Catholic Church teaches that we all have vocations—calls from God. Those vocations change as we age. What God calls us to do as a young man or woman isn’t necessarily the same thing he calls us to do in our 40s, 60s or 80s. At whatever age we happen to be, we should be praying, “What do you want me to do now, God?” We must never stop discerning our vocation.

Even while in the midst of the most productive years of our lives, there are countless opportunities to contribute to the Church and to society. Opportunities are not always known for its volunteers.

Alexis de Tocqueville, in his celebrated De la democratie en Amerique (Democracy in America), written in France after his travels in America in the 1830s, credited Americans’ willingness to volunteer as one of our greatest attributes.

Today, of course, our parishes couldn’t function without volunteers, and neither could so many of the Church’s charities and schools. It would be impossible to total up the number of volunteer hours each year in this archdiocese alone.

Naturally, retired people have more time to give to such work. There are opportunities for distributing Communion to the sick or helping in hospitals and hospices as well as at the St. Vincent de Paul facilities or food distribution. Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, president emeritus of the University of Notre Dame, once wrote, “The key to life’s success is the ambition to do as much as you can, as well as you can, for as long as you can, and not to despair over the things you cannot do.”

We can’t all use our fortunes to try to improve humankind, as Bill Gates has been doing and plans to do more. But we can all search for ways to use the talents that God has given us to try to make the world a better place.

— John F. Fink

Opinion

Be Our Guest/Karla Snegas
Tobacco use continues to be a serious health problem for many Hoosiers.

In your recent “Family Health Supplement” in the June 16 issue, I was disappointed to see only one sentence reference to tobacco use. This says to me that The Criterion sends a message that tobacco use is not a serious health problem.

In fact, this is not true. Tobacco use remains the No. 1 cause of preventable death, disease and needless suffering. Every day, Hoosiers die from smoking-related diseases. Indiana has the second highest smoking rate in the country.

As Catholics, we are called to minister to the poor. Of those adults in Indiana who have not earned a high school diploma, one out of two is a smoker.

Internal tobacco documents were required to be released as a result of the law suit between several attorney generals and the tobacco companies during the 1990s. These documents show that the tobacco industry preys on the poor.

As Christians, I believe we need to shed light on what these companies are doing to addict and kill those who are the least able to protect their own health.

What can Catholics do? First, if you have children or grandchildren who smoke, then quit smoking. There are resources in every county of Indiana to help those smokers escape.

I call the Indianapolis Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Second, support smoke-free work sites, restaurants and entertainment venues. Every worker deserves a smoke-free work place. Those less fortunate often work in the very establishments that are not smoke-free. Their health is no less precious than ours. Secondhand smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals. More than 60 of those chemicals are known to cause cancer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, anyone with heart disease should avoid more than 30 minutes exposure in smoke environments.

In June, the U.S. Surgeon General released a report on secondhand smoke. His conclusion was that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

Third, make smoke-free issues a part of your parish’s health ministry. There are resources available through faith organizations to reduce Indiana’s tobacco use rates. You can find out about this organization by calling 317-472-1055.

(Karla Snegas is the executive director for Indiana Prevention and Control, the state agency responsible for Indiana’s comprehensive tobacco control program. She can be reached at 317/924-St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.)

Letters to the Editor

Urge Congress to abolish the death penalty

When I read in the June 30th edition about the death penalty in the Philippines and Pope Benedict XVI, I rejoiced. I feel it is significant that another country has passed a law to abolish the death penalty.

President Macapagal-Arroyo’s presentation of this law to the pope acknowledges the Church’s stand on this issue.

The United States is now one of only a few countries to hold to this unnecessary practice. I pray that we will press Congress to follow the example of the Philippines.

The death penalty does not deter crime. The police and other justice workers do not have a right to take the life of others. The cost to keep an inmate on death row is significantly higher than serving a life sentence. The only real reason left for the death sentence is the understandable human inclination for revenge.

The Mosaic law contains mandates to control the excessive tendency toward revenge. “But if injury ensures, you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.” (Ex 21:23-24), and “Limb for limb, eye, tooth for tooth!” The same injury that a man shall suffer shall be done to him. (Ex 21:24-25)

These laws were made so that a person could use only equal injury in payment for harm done. They reflect the minimum of justice.

That was then. Jesus Christ has come among us to call us to a higher standard. He came to fulfill the law of love and mercy. Read all of Chapter 5 in the Gospel of Matthew, but especially Mt 38-39: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth!’ But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil.”

And Mt 44-45: “But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.”

Let the teachings of Jesus move you to contact your state and federal representatives about abolishing the death penalty.

Nora Cummings, Indianapolis

Vocations camp story is worth the read

Sean Gallagher’s story about the vocations camp was well-done in the June 30 issue of The Criterion. Some of the quotes from the participants were amazing, and I was moved that someone so young could be so aware of his future.

Thanks,

Audrey L. Fagan
Director of Marketing and Communication
Marian College, Indianapolis

Continue to pray for the poor souls in purgatory

We must not forget to pray for the poor souls in purgatory. Many have no one to pray for them.

Purgatory is a place where a soul goes at death if it has sins on its soul that have been confessed and forgiven, but for which the person must do more penance.

We must not think that the one, two or three “Our Fathers” that the priest gives us as a penance after confessing our sins pays the full price for these sins.

Of course, they are forgiven, but a time of cleansing, or purifying, is required before the soul may enter heaven. See the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1454, 1455) and 1472.

We can shorten this purging process for the dead by praying for them, and by fasting and making other sacrifices offered up for the living. We can also shorten our own cleansing time while still here on earth by accepting our crosses cheerfully, without complaining, offering them up as repentance for our sins and failures.

Our grandparents and mothers had a great deal in purgatory, we are told to offer it “up when we complained about some problem, sickness or hurt.”

We should pray for the poor souls in purgatory, either for specific souls or for all souls. If a soul is in purgatory, it needs the prayers of the living. They can no longer help themselves.

Winfred E. Moody, Indianapolis
En el plan creativo de Dios, y por eso el papel principal de Jesucristo son nuestros ancestros en la fe. Vemos cómo Dios comienza a revelar su bolo de la presencia del único y verdadero Dios, simbolizado en el contrato que Dios preparó, vinieron a ver la tierra que Dios había engendrado. En ellos, y por medio de sucesivos elecciones, Dios hizo una elección que se refleja en la historia del pueblo de Israel. Dios, por medio de sus profetas, convocó a los israelitas a ser un pueblo especial, una nación santa, un pueblo elegido para Dios y para su reino en pleno abarque la unidad de toda la familia humana. Este “nuevo pueblo de Dios” es el pueblo de Cristo. "el nuevo Pueblo de Dios" es la Iglesia. Congregados y guiados por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica.

Otro rasgo que la Iglesia es una organización social con el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica. En vez de ello y por el poder del Espíritu Santo, este “pueblo” es una unidad orgánica.
July 14

Our Lady of Providence ISt. High School, 7801 S. E cider 43rd St., Indianapolis. Parish festival, 6-11 p.m., rides, food, music, entertainment. Information: 317-945-3350.

July 14-15

Holy Spirit Parish, 2243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. Parish festival, 6-11 p.m., rides, food, music, entertainment. Information: 317-353-3404.

July 15

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, 23670 Salt Fork Road, bright Parish festival, music, food, 3 p.m.-midnight. Information: 317-656-8700.

July 16

St. Matthew Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Pro-Life Ministry: living will and advance directives workshop, Msgr. Joseph Schaefer and Carl R. Hill. 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-294-8532.

July 17

Our Lady of Providence Parish, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. "Retrouvaille Weekend," peer ministry program for couples suffering from divided love, anger, and need for forgiveness. Information: 317-236-1586 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596. July 18

Ritter's Frozen Custard, 3219 County Line Road, Greenwood. Ice cream fundraiser, 5-8 p.m., proceeds benefit Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove. Information: 317-788-7581.

July 19


July 19-20


July 21

Our Lady of Providence Parish, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. "Toib Festweek" for engaged couples. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail m.facebook.com.

July 22

St. Meinrad Parish, 777 S. 11th St., Indianapolis. "Holy Hour, 2:30 p.m., Mass, 3 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel. Information: 812-357-6721 or 800-334-6821.

July 23

St. Meinrad Parish, St. Meinrad. Quilt show, 10 a.m.-1:45 p.m. Information: 317-357-5533.

July 25


July 26

Pleasant Run Golf Course, 601 N. Arlington Ave., Indianapolis. "Chris Hutt Memorial Golf Outing." shotgun start, 8 a.m., $100 per person includes golf, cart and dinner. Information: 317-322-4286.

Kingdom's Island Cincinnati, Ohio. "Cyo Kings Island Family Day," 9 a.m.-5 p.m. through CYO Office. 500 Stevens St., Indianapolis, IN 46204. Information: 317-652- 9311.

July 26-27

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Saint Meinrad School of Theology. 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. ELM formation workshop. "The Challenge of Pro-Leadership II: Planning and Organizing." 8:30 a.m. Wed.- 4:30 p.m. Thurs. Information: 317-672-6521 or 317-354-6621.

July 27-29


July 28-29

Super 8 Motel, 20562 E. Holt Road, Indianapolis. Parish festival, 5-11 p.m. food.

July 29

St. Matthew Parish, 777 S. 11th St., Indianapolis. Mitchell Hog roast, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Information: 317-839-5333.

July 30

Our Lady of the Most 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 a.m.-15 p.m. Information: 317-676-4478.

St. Augustine Parish, 18020 Lafayette St. Leopold. Parish picnic, 1 a.m.-5 p.m., games, quilts. Information: 317-842-5413.
Bishop urges Medjugorje visionaries to stop claims

LONDON (CNS)—The bishop whose diocese includes the Bosnian village of Medjugorje has urged six alleged Marian visionaries to stop claiming that Mary has been visiting them for 25 years.

Bishop Ratko Peric of Mostar-Duvno, Bosnia-Herzegovina, said the Church “has not accepted, either as supernatural or as Marian, any of the apparitions” said to have been witnessed by a group of people from Medjugorje.

“As the local bishop, I maintain that regarding the events of Medjugorje, on the basis of the investigations and experience gained thus far throughout these last 25 years, the Church has not confirmed a single apparition as authentically being the Madonna,” he said. He then called on the alleged visionaries and “those persons behind the messages to demonstrate ecclesiastical obedience and to cease with these public manifestations and messages in this parish.

In this fashion, they shall show their necessary adherence to the Church, by placing neither private apparitions nor private sayings before the official position of the Church,” he said.

“Our faith is a serious and responsible matter,” he added. “The Church is also a serious and responsible institution.”

The bishop made his comments on June 15 during a homily at a confirmation in this parish.

On June 25, thousands of pilgrims converged on Medjugorje to mark the 25th anniversary of the onset of the alleged apparitions.

Marian experts continue to debate the significance of Medjugorje, and several have published books—arguing from enthusiastically supportive to skeptical—to coincide with the anniversary.

At the Vatican, officials said they are still monitoring events at Medjugorje, but emphasized that it was not necessarily the Vatican’s role to issue an official judgment on the alleged apparitions there.

More than once in recent years, the Vatican has said that dioceses or parishes should not organize official pilgrimages to Medjugorje. That reflects the policy of the local bishops. But the Vatican has also said Catholics are free to travel to the site, and that if they do the Church should provide them with pastoral services.

Since June 24-25, 1981, the alleged visionaries together claim to have received more than 30,000 messages.

But Bishop Peric said in his homily that “so-called apparitions, messages, secrets and signs do not strengthen the faith, but rather further convince us that in all of this there is nothing either authentic or established as truth.”

He said in February that Pope Benedict XVI expressed similar doubts regarding the events of Medjugorje, the so-called apparitions, messages and visions of Medjugorje, all the while recognizing the Holy Father’s right to give a final decision on these events.

He also warned his audience of a “schism emerging in the region between the Church and more than a dozen Franciscan brothers and priests who have been expelled by the generality of the Order of Friars Minor in Rome because of their disobedience to the pope.”

He said that the expelled Franciscans “do not only have not been illegally active in these parishes, but they also have administered the sacraments profanely... or they have assisted at invalid marriages.”

Bishop Peric said he shared the view of Bishop Zanic that the visions and the Franciscan “schism,” which began under Pope Paul VI in the 1970s, are linked.

Bishop Peric of Mostar-Duvno, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on June 25, the 25th anniversary of the start of alleged Marian apparitions. Despite the lack of Vatican confirmation of the apparitions, millions of pilgrims have visited Medjugorje since 1981, with many reporting positive spiritual benefits.

—By Ed White in Rome

—By J. Michael Miller in Rome

Legacy for Our Mission:

For Our Children and the Future

Father Williams Reflects On His First Year as a Priest

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o-somethings are often filled with ambigui

guity as they search for a calling in life. Faced

with hundreds of career options before becoming a man of God, Father Bill Williams struggled to determine what his life would look like but was determined to find true happiness in the end.

While studying at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Father Williams maintained his firm commitment to the Church.

“My faith was ingrained in me,” he says. “It was just who I was.”

Father Williams left school after two years to take time to explore his life’s calling, reflecting upon encouraging words from friends and family.

Considering the possibility of the priesthood, he met with then-archdiocesan vocations director Father Paul Ertel, and it suddenly became clear. “He explained that there is an open door I could walk through.”

Father Williams says, “What I felt in my heart was the Holy Spirit, and the voice of others was the Holy Spirit moving through the Church. Underneath this I had a growing desire that people have told me for years, and I decided to give God a chance and be the man I was called to be.”

Father Williams explored that calling at Saint Meinrad School of Theology in Southern Indiana. He adjusted to living with other men in a small area, experiencing daily prayer and attending Mass every day.

“In order to be a man of God, I had to be a man with God,” he says. “These new routines had to take root in me.”

Eventually, Father Williams transferred to St. John Vianney College at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota and also studied at the North American College in Rome. During those years, he developed a deeper love for the academic and philosophical sides of the Church by studying those who had served in the past.

On June 4, 2005, then-Deacon Williams was ordained at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. After serving for a full year, Father Williams feels like he has been a priest “forever” and notes how comfortable he is with his priestly ministry.

The first year has kept Father Williams busy but fulfilled as the associate pastor of St. Simon the Apostle Parish and the chaplain at Father Thomas Sceicina Memorial High School, which are located in Indianapolis. His days at the high school include leading morning prayers, teaching, presiding at weekly Mass, hearing confessions and speaking with students and teachers. Father Williams spends his afternoons at St. Simon leading marriage preparation and spiritual direction, hearing confessions and talking with parishioners who seek his assistance.

“The blessings are countless,” he says. “People come to me with personal, intimate parts of their lives, needing guidance, direction and leadership. It has been humbling to know that people trust me and seek my guidance.”

Father Williams believes the most helpful action people can take in supporting young priests—in addition to contributing financial assistance through the Legacy for Our Mission campaign—is to pray for their success and write notes of encouragement and gratitude. “Financial support is vital, but spiritual and emotional support is huge!” he says.

Father Williams’s path to the priesthood may have been longer than that of others. But by taking time to listen to his heart and the words of loved ones, he was able to learn God’s plan for him and find what he was looking for all along.

“God instills a desire to find happiness, but what we think is happiness is not,” he says. “I think I’ve found true happiness.”

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocesan capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the local and changing needs of Archdiocesan Ministries such as seminarian education. By contributing to the Legacy for Our Mission campaign, a portion of your gift will be allocated to future ministry needs and distributed to efforts such as seminarian education.

A woman kisses a cross while another prays in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on June 25, the 25th anniversary of the start of alleged Marian apparitions. Despite the lack of Vatican confirmation of the apparitions, millions of pilgrims have visited Medjugorje since 1981, with many reporting positive spiritual benefits.
After collecting the money from friends, Bahler phoned

deceiving, says Bill Bahler, a volunteer who has worked

temptation to believe he is “a soft touch.” That image is

can be seen in the distance.

Butcher, 33. “He’s done a lot for this neighborhood. The

the street.

the man like a friend and listens to

the New Testament. Newsom greets

pushes a shopping cart past Anna’s

of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis.

“I want you to go one time with me to church. I’ll take you to

The man says he needs $60. Newsom gives him the money as the man tells him, “I get upset sometimes, but

mean we’re going to eat tonight?’ Bahler says. “She told me how the little girl of the other

project in the afternoon.

God’s touch of life

Bahler wishes he would have kept a book of the blessed moments that seem to surround Newsom.

God’s touch of life

“Lucious’ faith has taught that you pray and put God in your life, there’s no limit to what you can do.”

—Pete Molloy

6-year-old daughter.

“The mother who was volunteering came crying,” Bahler says. “She told me how the little girl of the other

Tips to what you can do.

—Pete Molloy

By John Shaughnessy

When a couple decided to celebrate their 60th wed-

ding anniversary by jumping out of an airplane, Bob

Havercost made the sky-diving dream possible for an

88-year-old Indiana man and his 81-year-old wife.

He also helped a young woman live her dream for

speed—putting her in a two-seater dragster that roared
down an Indianapolis drag strip at 158 mph.

Newman to tell him he was giving the money to the man. 

Bahler phoned Balmer and told him the man con-

fessed that he didn’t need the money. When Bahler asked

Newsom how he gained that confession from the man, 

Newsom said, “I told him I was going to represent them before the judge.”

“He’s taught me discernment,” Bahler says. “You don’t always give people what they want. You don’t always say yes. He expects people to take care of themselves.

HAVERSTICK

*Havercost built the house,” says Molloy, the father of Anna. “He told me I didn’t have enough faith. He said what we needed, God will provide. He convinced me to start out to reach, to ask people for what I needed. So many people responded.

“Lucious’ faith has taught me that when you pray and put God in your life, there’s no limit to what you can do.”

When his cell phone rings, Newsom reaches into a pocket of his bib overalls—the overalls he wears each day “to

meeting with St. Jude for a while. The idea that there’s a patron

great sense of devotion to the saints. He’s been fascinated

in his bones. He has a strong sense of the sacramental. He has a

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Closeted Sun. & Mon.

(Anyone wishing to get involved in the project, or con-

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Mother Teresa—one person at a time,” said Havercost,

who started making wishes come true for senior citizens

Havercost has made his own special path since he

He wants to provide 1,000 bags of groceries for

wanted help paying the man $149.

“I get if you part of it, how much can you come up with?

“I remember sitting down with Lucious and telling him we had to have a major fundraiser to raise $100,000 to help

“Lucious’ faith has touched my life,” said Molloy.

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Wanted: 1,000 grocery bags of food to feed families in need

By John Shaughnessy

When a couple decided to celebrate their 60th wed-

ding anniversary by jumping out of an airplane, Bob

Havercost made the sky-diving dream possible for an
Spirituality in song
St. Paul's priest reflects on Christian messages in U2 lyrics

ST. PAUL, Minn. (CNS)—As a college student in the 1980s, Father Erich Rutten first associated the Irish rock band U2 with “great political rock.”

Then he discovered one of the band’s early albums from 1981 titled “October.” Listening to songs such as “Claro de Luna” and “Rejoice,” with references to Jerusalem and the themes of death and resurrection, he realized that “virtually every song on the album is explicitly Christian,” he said.

Interested in things spiritual, he started to learn more about U2 and pay attention to the lyrics—even in songs that seemed more like political songs or love ballads.

“They’re a Christian rock band” without calling themselves one, he told The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

“They steered a very interesting course. They didn’t go with the explicitly Christian band label. They developed their artistry—their music—in such a way that they did an excellent job of bringing in common, everyday symbols and stories to amplify the Christian message.”

Father Rutten, who was ordained for the archdiocese last year and is an associate pastor at St. Paul, is still a U2 fan, and he’s become more well-known for it. At the invitation of the young adult series Theology on Tap, he developed a PowerPoint presentation last year on the Irish band to share at one of the local gatherings.

He pointed out that Bono was born in 1960 in Dublin, Ireland, to an Anglican mother and Catholic father. His real name is Paul Hewson and his nickname is short for Bono Vox, which means “good voice” in Latin. It also was the name of a hearing aid shop in Dublin.

Bono has said he grew up with a strong religious faith, mostly attending his mother’s church, but did not become attached to one particular denomination.

“From his household, he was very sensitive to the ways in which people of faith hurt each other, just across denominational divides,” Father Rutten said. In fact, in a song on the 1987 album “The Joshua Tree,” Bono sings of a place “Where the Streets Have No Name.” It’s an image of heaven, free of tension and division, “not divided by what side of the street you live on,” the priest said.

Father Rutten said band members have commented that whenever they play the song live, they “feel the power of God.”

The priest said some might expect the band to rant against U.S. foreign policy, but instead it presents a Christian view of hope. The 2004 song “Vertigo” carries a sense of being off-balance, as if there’s nothing firm to stand on, Father Rutten noted.

“That’s how they describe the modern world.”

Later in the song, Bono sings: “Your love is teaching me how to kneel.” It’s the idea that “in the midst of the chaos or the confusion or the vertigo, you can find some stability through faith,” Father Rutten said.

But U2 makes no pretense of having all the answers. The priest said the band’s spirituality is one of questioning and attempts to be comfortable with mystery or apparent contradictions.

Some people see that questioning as a lack of faith. But Father Rutten sees it as a mature faith. “Even in the midst of questioning,” he said, “there’s that implicit trust and faith that the love of God is beneath it all.”

At Mass in Valencia, pope uses what tradition says is Holy Grail

VALENCIA, Spain (CNS)—King Arthur and his knights and Indiana Jones looked for it, and most recently Dan Brown’s sleuth, Robert Langdon, hunted it down in The Da Vinci Code.

But these legendary and fictional characters had nothing on the quest of the Catholic Church for the Grail.

The custodian of the “Holy Chalice” of Valencia, Spain, Monsignor Jose Maria Sancho, told Catholic News Service the church is asking the Vatican to help verify the authenticity of a vessel that some historians claim is the chalice of the Last Supper.

The host city of Pope Benedict XVI’s third pastoral journey abroad on July 8-9 is home to the church, which is eager to help the pope “see” the chalice.

The chalice is a 55-inch vessel that weighs 4,806 pounds and has been kept since 1437, according to a paper written by Msgr. Jose Sanchez-Villalba, the Valencia archdiocese’s liturgy commission.

“From the very beginning its lineage is one of questioning and attempts to be comfortable with mystery or apparent contradictions,” he said.

Some people see that questioning as a lack of faith. But Father Rutten sees it as a mature faith. “Even in the midst of questioning,” he said, “there’s that implicit trust and faith that the love of God is beneath it all.”

U2’s Bono performs to a sell-out crowd of 90,000 at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City in early February. As a college student in the 1980s, Father Erich Rutten, associate pastor at the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, Minn., said he first associated the Irish band with “great political rock.” Later, the U2 fan came to feel the group was a Christian rock band, without its members calling it one, he told The Catholic Spirit, archdiocesan newspaper of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

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Priests and religious help others through prayer and service

By Erin McNulty

“Jesus took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciple’s feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

“When he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, ‘Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.’ (Jn 13:4-5, 12-15).

In this passage from the Gospel of John, Jesus is clearly giving the disciples instructions. He is telling them what they are called to do as his followers.

The disciples became the first bishops. Therefore, Jesus not only orders the disciples to serve others, but also all of the Church as Christ’s body.

Brothers, sisters and priests serve others every day through their normal duties. Their many obligations always include prayer and sacrifice.

Not only do they serve others in these ways, they also serve the whole community by caring for the sick, compromised and poor of the community.

The most notable and powerful way that all brothers, sisters and priests serve others is through the power of prayer. Every day, these dedicated servants pray to Jesus, many times on behalf of others. The Church’s religious also often supplement their prayer with sacrifice.

Prayer and sacrifice are only two of the numerous hidden ways they serve others. However, for the many cloistered orders of brothers and sisters, these acts of love are the predominant figures in their service to the Church.

Though priests, brothers and sisters often serve others in a spiritual form, they help with physical aspects as well. Nearly all the religious of the Church assist the sick in some way or form.

Priests administer the anointing of the sick to the dangerously ill. Sisters and brothers often have their communities built to accommodate through evangelization.

This community is also assisted through prayers, brothers and sisters by the Spanish Masses and charity homes where their children will be cared for by religious sisters.

Perhaps the best example of a Church religious following Jesus’ call to minister to others is Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Mother Teresa, incredibly tiny and delicate, lifted people covered with worms and filth, and carried them to a bed to be cleaned, nursed and cared for by her order. This simple nun showed the love of Jesus to the rest of the world.

The following prayer by Pope Paul VI illustrates the need to pray for more vocations so that they might be able to do Jesus’ work here on earth. Many prayers are also needed for those that are called to the religious life of the Church, that they might hear and accept that call.

Every Catholic in the Church today has the ability to do this by encouraging and praying for those that are called so that they might recognize and follow that call.

Oh Jesus, Divine Shepherd of souls and Lord of the harvest, you called the Apostles to be fishers of men.

Move now the ailing and generous hearts of your youth and make them your followers and ministers. Let them share your thirst of universal redemption for which you renew your sacrifice on the altar every day.

“Extend, oh Lord, your loving call to many pure and generous souls, that they may grow in their desire for evangelical perfection, and may dedicate themselves to the service of the Church and to those who desperately need their assistance and love. Amen.”

( Erin McNulty is the daughter of James and Michel McNulty, members of St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County. Erin, who is homeschooled, just completed the 10th grade and is the 10th-grade division winner in the 2006 Serra Club Vocations Essay Contest. )
Got questions about faith? Page through the new compendium

By Jem Sullivan

Got a question about Catholicism? Whether you’re reading a Bible story to a child, debating Catholic moral teaching with a teenager or discussing claims about Jesus in The Da Vinci Code with a friend, chances are that you’ve searched for answers to basic questions about Catholic beliefs and practices.

To better equip Catholics with answers to such questions, the new Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church comes as a timely addition to any Catholic bookshelf.

The compendium is a more condensed and accessible version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Designed as a “mini-catechism” for the catechesis of children, youth, young adults and older adults, the compendium serves as a handy companion to the catechism.

And in this age of instant information that typically is found in the form of “Frequently Asked Questions,” the new compendium rightly has been called an “FAQ of the catechism.”

How different is the new compendium from the catechism? Do we really need another catechetical reference text?

Some basic facts about the compendium give insight into why this catechetical resource belongs on Catholic bookshelves, in homes and in parishes.

The new compendium is about 200 pages long, one-third the size of the entire catechism. Its contents are arranged in the form of questions and answers, a format that allows it to be used by lay leaders, catechists and lay people.

While the compendium does not replace the catechism, sound catechetical methodology and catechetical materials, it is a must-have for parents, teachers, catechists and lay leaders of faith formation.

In it, we have yet another indispensable catechetical tool.

Today, faith formation is no longer an option, a luxury for a select few. In fact, every baptized Catholic has a right and duty to deepen knowledge of the fundamentals of his or her faith as it is believed, celebrated, lived and prayed.

In the face of confusion, misunderstanding and muddled claims about Christian beliefs, we are reminded in the words of John Paul II that “Jesus Christ is the answer to the question of every human person.”

Catholics know when and where the next question, challenge or misunderstanding about Catholicism will come from, but with the new compendium at hand, most important, it provides a new tool in exploring the meaning of what Catholics believe, celebrate, live and pray.

As Pope John Paul II aptly said, “The blossoms, if we may call them, of faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory-less catechesis. What is essential is that the texts that are memorized must at the same time be taken in and gradually understood in depth in order to become a source of Christian life on the personal level and the community level.”

How might the new compendium serve families, individuals, parishes, Bible study and lay faith-formation groups today?

First, the questions contained in each section of the compendium offer ideal catechetical starting points for discussion, reflection and presentations. Clergy, parents, teachers, catechists and lay people may draw on these questions as springboards for reflection during formal and informal “teaching moments.”

Second, the answers in the compendium offer concise summaries of Catholic beliefs, faith formation or Bible study session.

Since its publication in 1992, the Catechism of the Catholic Church has become what it claims to be—as “a sure and authentic reference text for teaching Catholic doctrine.”

The new compendium brings us even closer to the riches of faith contained in the catechism. Its handy format and compact size make it easy to use and particularly accessible to the growing number of young adults.

The compendium reminds us that faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory-less catechesis. What is essential is that the texts that are memorized must at the same time be taken in and gradually understood in depth in order to become a source of Christian life on the personal level and the community level.

Least be better prepared to “give an account for the hope that is in us.”

Clergy, parents, teachers, catechists and lay people may use the compendium’s 14 artistic images to invite others to contemplate the beauty of faith.

Pope Benedict XVI said, “This book cannot be read as a novel. It must be medi- cated on calmly in its individual parts and its content allowed, through the images, to penetrate the soul.”

(Jem Sullivan teaches at the Pontifical Faculty of the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. She is a writer, lecture- r and catechetical consultant, and serves as a docent at the National Gallery of Art.)

Faith Alive!

Catechism provides much-needed answers

This Week’s Question

When—and why—have you had occasion to turn to the Catechism of the Catholic Church?

“I read it once a week or more because I’m one of the facilitators of Women on the Way ... a women’s ministry at our parish. We take discussion topics from the catechism and the liturgical calendar.” (Stephanie Phelps, Mahomet, Ill.)

“When some of my sons got married, we looked at the rules in the catechism. Also, when I’m told the Church believes a certain thing and I disagree—like the number of holy days—I check to make sure I’m right.” (Mark Sullivan, Doniphan, Neb.)

“I have referred to it for the official word on the

gay issue and to find the Church’s exact wording and position on issues such as divorced and separated Catholics. Whether I agree or not, it gives me the official stance.” (Carolyn Piercak, Brattleboro, Vt.)

“I’m one of the teachers in the Life Teen program. When the kids have questions, or when we’re preparing class for the evening, we always refer to it.” (Mary Pogue, Kelso, Wash.)

Lend Us Your Voice

Do you ever pray for the world you live in? What is your prayer for the world?

To respond for possible publication in an upcoming edition, send your response by e-mail to: cprego@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
St. Paul: Imprisonment in Ephesus

Paul was in Ephesus in the year 53, along with Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla. It seems that at that time, he was imprisoned in the city’s praetorium along with other Christians. The exact cause of the proconsul that this new movement Paul headed was trying to realize, the first main thing the proconsul had to do was to preserve order, so he imprisoned Paul until he could clear up the matter.

It was from this prison that Paul probably wrote more than a dozen epistles, including Galatians, Romans, Colossians and Philemon, although scholars are divided about that.

The Letter to the Ephesians is probably a composite of three letters. The first was a short letter, now Eph 3:1-20, in which he thanked the Church at Philippi for the monitory support brought to him by Epaphroditus, who became ill while in Ephesus.

Paul sent the letter by way of a member of the community at Ephesus, giving Paul an opportunity to learn from this messenger what was going on in Philippi. This letter contains a number of new words that pagans, presumably Roman authorities, were making difficult for the Christians in Philippi. He also reported that there was a feud between the leaders of two house-churches, the women Euodia and Syntyche. Paul wrote a second letter, sending it with Epaphroditus after he recovered from his sickness. He told the church about his imprisonment and gave instructions about Christian conduct, urging the women “to show the women a becoming conduct in the Lord” (Phil 4:2).

After he sent Epaphroditus off with that letter, the appearance realized that he had failed to warn the Philippians about the deluging from Antioch that was visiting Paul’s communities, telling them that they had to be circumcised and follow Jewish law. So he wrote a third letter, now Eph 3:2-21, which repeats much of what he had earlier written to the Galatians.

Also while he was in prison, Paul received a letter from the church at Philippi.

The church there had been founded by Epaphras, whose first convert was Philemon. Epaphras and others came to consult Paul about a problem. The people in Colossae had been influenced by a mystical-ascetic Jewish approach through which they could achieve a mystical asceticism. Paul according to this spirit and appeasement of angels and other spirits. This wasn’t what Paul preached, so Epaphras and others went to Ephesus to consult with Paul.

Paul’s letter affirmed that Christ possessed the sum total of redemptive power, and the Christians at Colossae should not be trying to placate spirits through ascetic practices, according to God’s word and appeasement of angels and other spirits. This wasn’t what Paul preached, so Epaphras and others went to Ephesus to consult with Paul.

The reason I say all this is because I believe you had a blessed moment in your life. I felt such appreciation for these birds, sparrows are a nuisance,” but his pes- simism did not prevent our care. Everyone was shocked, and as I do to my well-loved indoor cats, Zippy and Dot, I comforted them.

Then I remembered an incident years ago when our youngest daughter, Lisa, was still attending Bishop Chatard High School. She was a very shy, her classmates often teased and looked down on her. She felt excluded. I asked Lisa to care for the three sparrows nestlings. We had an indoor cat so we placed the nest in a large box in a first-floor bedroom and closed the door. Calling several vets, I received differing advice. I opened a small area of the box so they could not return to the box. I asked Lisa to care for the three nestlings. Lisa was given a premier to care for the three nestlings. We had an indoor cat so we placed the nest in a large box in a first-floor bedroom and closed the door. Calling several vets, I received differing advice. I opened a small area of the box so they could not return to the nest. Lisa understood her responsibility, and the birds flourished.

I feel such appreciation for these birds, then noticed one of the sparrows about 10 feet away, staring at me. He then

20th Century

The leasting sparrow: A life experience

“I believe you had a blessed moment with that sparrow,” my sister wrote in her eulogy. I believe that my sister had a special way of connecting with nature.

If so, I credit Beverley and her bus- hing, who has kept her home in Belleville, IL, that perpetuates the memory of the great outdoors. I have spent many refreshing hours on their deck or in one of the many lovely parks in the front porch, joyfully observing wildlife.

The impact to which Beverley referred was an experience of a lifetime while living in Hawaii. Beverley and her husband bought property in Belleville, IL, that perpetuates the memory of the great outdoors. I have spent many refreshing hours on their deck or in one of the many lovely parks in the front porch, joyfully observing wildlife.

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The Book of Amos is the source of this weekend’s first reading. Amos was one of the relatively few prophets of whom something is known. Many prophets give some details about themselves, but not many give more than a few details. By contrast, it is known that Amos was from Tekoa, a small village about 10 miles south of Jerusalem in Judah. He herded sheep and tended fig trees. He obviously was intelligent, and he knew the traditions of his ancestors. He spoke during the reign of King Uzziah of Judah, between the years 783 B.C. and 742 B.C. It was a time of prosperity and national security.

Even so, as often has been the case in history, the poor still were in want. The gap between the rich and the less fortunate was evident. Amos saw himself as an authentic prophet. The other prophets of his time, he thought, were hired by the king ultimately to strengthen the king’s rule over the people. Under such arrangements, the other prophets could not be trusted to preach the unadulterated word of God.

This weekend’s reading reports a clash between Amos and a priest in the Jerusalem temple. Amos reasserts his role, insisting that he was called by God to be a prophet.

The Epistle to the Ephesians provides the second reading. In the first century A.D., Ephesus was a major commercial center in the Roman Empire and an important port on the Mediterranean Sea. Shifts in the soil and collections of sediment have left the ruins of Ephesus, in present-day Turkey, some distance from the seashore.

Ephesians, therefore, was a center for the vices and fast business usually associated with such ports. In addition, it was one of the most popular religious shrines in the empire. Its great temple, dedicated to Diana, the goddess of the moon, was one of the marvels of the ancient world. Pilgrims came from everywhere in the empire to venerate the goddess. Accommodating these pilgrims was itself a big business in Ephesus.

The epistle sought to reinforce the Christian commitment of the followers of Christ in the city. This reading serves this purpose by reminding the Christian Ephesians that Jesus died for them, and that in faith they are one with the Lord. St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading.

In this reading, Jesus summons “The Twelve,” the Apostles whom the Lord called by name. Jesus sends them out into the highways and byways. He tells them not to burden themselves with supplies or provisions because God will supply what they need in their travels.

They obediently went out into the countryside and preached what Jesus had taught them. They possessed the Lord’s power. They drove devils away. They anointed the sick—using that ancient gesture of healing and strengthening mentioned elsewhere in the Bible—and cured the sick.

Reflection

The reading from the Epistle to the Ephesians is the centerpiece of this weekend’s Liturgy of the Word. Originally, it was written for a group of believers surrounding on all sides by paganism and hostility. The epistle reassured them and, this weekend through the readings, it reassures us. We have been redeemed. Our knowledge of Christ is neither accidental nor coincidental. God has chosen us. Christ is with us. Still, we need nourishment and guidance as we continue to live on earth. God did not abandon the Chosen People in ancient times. He sent prophets to them. This divine concern endures. God sends us messengers in the person of the Twelve, and in the person of the bishops in the Church, to bring the words of the Gospels even now. Through the Apostles and their successors we have been healed and renewed, we move forward to eternal life. We will not die.

Question Corner

Fr. John Dietzen

Single people have same vocation to follow Christ

Q I am an older woman, baptized at birth, who has always been a practicing Catholic. I’ve had huge personal responsibilities, but have never married. The focus of the Catholic Church is mostly on marriage and families. I understand that because they form the majority of the congregations. Recently, a priest in his homily referred to the sacraments of marriage and holy orders, but said there is no sacrament for single people. I don’t know how to interpret that statement. Fortunately, I believe that God’s love extends to every human being. That keeps me coming to Mass. But did I miss something? Do I belong in a Catholic Church? (Iowa)

A I’m somewhat surprised at the priest’s remark. There is a sacrament for single people, and it is the first and most important sacrament for any Christian. It is baptism.

Married people, priests, and men and women in religious communities receive sacraments or vocations, which are particular ways of living out their baptism.

But single people have the same vocation to follow Christ, and extend his love, and the love of our heavenly Father, into the world. Through the sacraments of initiation—baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist—every Catholic, whether on earth or in heaven, is called upon by God the Father to be a community of love and service to others.

This invitation is repeated in every celebration and reception of the Eucharist. The sixth chapter of St. John’s Gospel, which is his great eucharistic passage, draws out the faith implications and responsibilities that we assume in each Eucharist. Just as Jesus gave his life for us, we are to give our lives for each other “in memory” of him.

St. Augustine put it well in one of his sermons, “With you I am a Christian, for you I am a bishop.” The basic Christian call is the same for all of us, whether we are married, ordained, vowed religious or single, because of the sacrament of baptism. By far, most of the single people that I know are inspired examples of this kind of self-giving. I hope, and have the feeling, that you are trying to live this Christian vocation in your life. It’s the main one that we have in the Church.

My daughter is RH negative and her husband is RH positive, not a happy combination. Their first two children barely escaped the results. Their next three babies died before or shortly after birth. Her physicist suggested a tubal ligature. Since menopause, she has wanted to receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, but she fears she will not be absolved. What should she do? (Ohio)

You don’t indicate whether she had the tubal ligature. If she did or did not, however, the sacraments of confession and Communion are open to her and she need not fear. She has been through a lot of grief and pain, and has been away too long from the support and encouragement that the sacraments can give her. Please ask her to talk with a priest soon.

(A free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about the sacrament of penance is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3515, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of idietzen@sol.net †)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

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

My Journey to God

God’s Love

God’s love is something that no one can explain. We earn it by our faith, love and by sacrifice and pain. It is eternal and unconditional, we have only to endure and not stay. Only can we destroy it when we falter and lose our way. God is patient and forgiving even when we are forsaking. He never fails or gives up even through our hope is failing. God’s love glows with beauty as the brightest star, although his wondrous power appears so out of reach and far. He gives us many gifts that mortals can understand. It is the awesome truth of God’s tender guiding hand.

By Thomas J. Rillo

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington and a Benedictine oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Father Benedict DoHa Bae raises a monstrance during eucharistic adoration at the Northeastern Regional Ultreya of the Korean-American Catholic community on July 4 at Kellern Memorial High School in Uniondale, N.Y.)

Daily Readings

Sunday, July 17

Monday, July 17
Isaiah 10:10-17
Psalm 30:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23
Matthew 10:34-11:1

Tuesday, July 18
Camillus de Lellis, priest
Isaiah 7:1-9
Psalm 48:1-8
Matthew 11:20-24

Wednesday, July 19
Isaiah 10:5-7, 13b-16
Psalm 94:5-10, 14-15
Matthew 11:25-27

Thursday, July 20
Apollinaris, bishop and martyr
Isaiah 26:7-9, 16-19
Psalm 102:13-21
Matthew 11:28-30

Friday, July 21
Lawrence of Brindisi, priest an doctor
Isaiah 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8
Romans 8:28-30
Matthew 12:1-8

Saturday, July 22
Mary Magdalene
Micah 2:1-5
Psalm 10:1-4, 7-8, 14
John 20:1-2, 11-18

Sunday, July 23
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Psalm 12:1-2, 5-6
John 2:13-18
Matthew 6:30-34

The Criterion Friday, July 14, 2006

Page 13

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

By Thomas J. Rillo

TheCriterion
REST IN PEACE


FREDERICK, John D., 78, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, July 5. Father of Barbara Runciman, Nancy and Elizabeth Frederick. Brother of Rita Verina and James Frederick.


HILL, Anna June, 80, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, July 4. Sister of Betty June Morgan. John Dickey and Jim Fitzgerald.


MILLER, Maurice Winfield, 84, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, June 23. Brother of Bernard Miller.


SCHNEIDER, David Lyman, 66, St. Luke, Indianapolis, June 16. Father of Judith Blair, Sara Rogoski, Cynthia Whaley and John Schneider.


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WORWITZ, Margaret, 82, St. Peter, Buena Vista, March 20. Mother of Cheryl Quebbeman, Donald and Douglas Worwit. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of seven.

Providence Sister Alice Hemans taught at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Aug. 16, 1951, and professed first vows on June 26, 1994, and final vows on Aug. 15, 1998.

During 14 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered as a teacher and principal at Catholic schools in Indiana and Pennsylvania.

She also taught at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis from 1993-98.

She returned to the motherhouse in June 2004 to begin her ministry of prayer, which she continued until 2006.

Surviving are her mother, Margaret Hemans of California, a sister, Kathryn Mescal of Foster City, Wash., and a brother, James Hemans of Mukilteo, Wash.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.

Statistics are wrong in new Catholic directory

WASHINGTON (CNS)—For people who look to annual statistics to discern Church trends, the statistical tables at the end of the 2006 Official Catholic Directory can be misleading.

The 2,043-page tome, also known as the Kenedy Directory after its New Jersey publishers’ imprint, came out at the end of June.

Because of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina last August, the New Orleans Archdiocese said it could not provide accurate year-end statistics so the entire statistical column under New Orleans is blank.

A transposition of two figures for the Boston Archdiocese led to an overcount of about 2.1 million in the total number of Catholics in the country. The directory shows the total population in the archdiocese as 1,845,846 and the Catholic population as 3,974,846. The larger figure should be the total population and the smaller figure is the Catholic population.

Nationwide, the directory reported a net increase of about 1.3 million Catholics in the United States and its possessions last year. But an accurate total requires subtracting the 2.1 million overcount in Boston and adding the roughly 500,000 Catholics who lived in the Archdiocese of New Orleans before the hurricane, which indicates a decline of about 300,000 Catholics. 1
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We seek candidates for the position of Athletic Director who have demonstrated athletic-leadership and administrative abilities. Coaching experience at the high school level is preferred. Strong communications skills are required, as is proven expertise in relationship building, planning and staff development.
The successful candidate should have a valid Indiana Second-Army Teacher’s License and possess strong Christian faith.
We are seeking candidates who have demonstrated athletic-leadership and administrative abilities.
We have a diverse community of students in spirit, mind and body.
We seek candidates for the position of Athletic Director who have demonstrated athletic-leadership and administrative abilities. Coaching experience at the high school level is preferred. Strong communications skills are required, as is proven expertise in relationship building, planning and staff development.
The successful candidate should have a valid Indiana Second-Army Teacher’s License and possess strong Christian faith.
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A legacy of giving
Late repairman’s gift to benefit nine Catholic ministries

By John Shaughnessy

When he was in his 90s, Rudolph Gasper, who drove a car, enjoyed bowling and even climbed on his roof to fix it. Yet what stunned people even more was a gift he made—a gift that wasn’t revealed until the longtime sewing machine repairman died, three months after he celebrated his 100th birthday.

When his will was being read, it became clear that the man who grew up on an Indiana farm, married at the beginning of the Great Depression and lived most of his life in Indianapolis had saved nearly $1 million during his lifetime.

When his will was being read, another point also became evident: The quiet devotion that the father of three had shown to his Catholic faith in his lifetime was something he wanted to continue beyond his death.

While 40 percent of his estate was to be divided among his children, Gasper also distributed 60 percent of his $993,508.76 to nine Catholic institutions and charities.

‘He’s not a person you leave almost $1 million and he designated 60 percent for charity. The story is so inspiring.’
— Jim Wahnen, director of gift planning for the archdiocese’s Catholic Health Association

The inspiration extends beyond the gift that came after his death—threading its way back to the gift of his life and his faith.

The youngest of six children, Rudolph Gasper grew up on a farm in Jennings County in southern Indiana, where he learned the value of working hard and taking care of the resources that life gives a person and a family. At 21, he moved to Indianapolis, where he noticed a young woman named Elizabeth Campbell during a Sunday Mass.

“He picked her up and gave her a ride to church one day,” recalled his daughter, Mary Miller, with a smile. “They married in 1930 as the Great Depression devastated the economy and lives in the United States. Still, he found a job as a sewing machine repairman. Because of the tough economic times, the couple learned to beugal—except in their devotion to their faith and their love for their three children, Margaret Miller, Mary and Bob.

“His inspiration is to rub up against one of these people. He’s not a person you would visit shut-ins,” said Mary Miller, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “They’d look after people and look in on them. They always went to church. They always went to novenas and Holy Hours. I’d visit with Dad at the assisted living facility and we would say the rosary together. He was just faithful.”

That faithfulness shined through the 64 years of the couple’s marriage, including the last years of his wife’s life. As Elizabeth struggled with her health, Rudolph took care of her so she could stay at home.

“She was in sales and service with sewing machines most of his life,” Mary Miller said. “He retired at 62. After that, he repaired out of his house. He was still doing it in his early 90s. He fixed sewing machines at schools, convents and Marian College. All the sisters knew him. They sent him cards at Christmas.”

The Sisters of Providence, who had attended the Baptist Bible College, 601 N. Shortridge Road. Or, on the east side of Eastgate Consumer Mall. Continuous shuttle bus available from 6 p.m. on.

MUSIC NIGHTLY IN THE BEER GARDEN!

ST. MARTIN’S CHURCH FESTIVAL

8044 York Ridge Road
Yorkville, IN 47022

Saturday, July 22
Prime Rib Dinner
4:30 – 8:00 PM EDST
Texas Hold’em No limit Poker Tournament
4:30 Registration / 5:30 Play Begins
One-time Buy-in of $55.00 / 90 Players Max
Must be 21 or over to play

Live Music by Peppertown
8:00 – 11:30 PM EDST

Sunday, July 23
5 Mile Country Run
9:30 AM
Chicken Dinner
11:30 – 5:00 PM EDST

★★

★★

Kiddy Land
★★

Beef Garden
★★

Games
★★

Raffles
★★

Quilts
★★

License #:108304

Monte Carlo – 6 PM-Midnight every night
Bingo – 7 PM every night
Texas Hold’em Tournament – 6 PM Start every night