Far left, Jessie McGuire Blessinger of Knoxville, Tenn., a pilgrim who traveled with the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, carries a portrait of Blessed Mother Theodore Guérin as she attends the nun’s canonization ceremony.

Left, Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson, general superior of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods; Philip McCord and Providence Sister Marie Kevin Tighe offer gifts to Pope Benedict XVI during the canonization ceremony for four saints, including Blessed Mother Theodore Guérin, on Oct. 15 at St. Peter’s Square in Rome.

St. Peter’s Square is seen during the canonization ceremony of four new saints by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican on Oct. 15. The pope canonized Mexican Bishop Rafael Guizar Valencia of Vera Cruz; Italian Father Filippo Smaldone; Italian Sister Rosa Venerini; and Mother Theodore Guérin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.
Mother Theodore Guérin’s path to sainthood

1798
Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born on Oct. 2, 1798, at Étables-sur-Mer on the northern coast of France.

1823
Anne-Thérèse entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir, France, on Aug. 18, 1823. She was given the name Sister St. Theodore. The name “Theodore” means “gift of God.”

1840
Sister St. Theodore and five other Sisters of Providence arrived at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on the evening of Oct. 22, 1840. Four American girls were waiting to join them.

1841
On July 4, 1841, the first academy was opened. It was called Saint Mary’s Female Institute, the forerunner of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

1840-1856
The Congregation of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods was established, as were many schools and other good works. Sister St. Theodore was given the title “Mother Theodore” as foundress of the new community of women religious.

1856
On May 14, 1856, after spending only 16 years in America, Mother Theodore Guérin died.

1856-1909
The story of Mother Theodore’s life of heroic virtue was told and re-told. She had great faith and trust in God, and performed many works of love, mercy and justice among God’s people.

1908
Providence Sister Mary Theodosia Mug was cured after praying at the tomb of Mother Theodore.

1909
Bishop Francis Silas Chatard, bishop of Indianapolis, formally introduced the cause for Mother Theodore’s canonization as a saint.

1992
Mother Theodore was given the title “Venerable” after a thorough study of her life and virtues was approved by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome.

1998
Mother Theodore was given the title “Blessed” by Pope John Paul II on Oct. 25, 1998, after many medical doctors, theologians and cardinals had studied the circumstances associated with the cure of Sister Mary Theodosia Mug.

2005
The second miracle required for canonization, the healing of Philip McCord, was approved in Rome in July by the medical doctors, a panel of theologians and a group of cardinals from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

2006
At a Consistory meeting in Rome in July, Pope Benedict XVI announced that Mother Theodore would be canonized on Oct. 15, 2006, in Rome.

Timeline information courtesy of Sisters of Providence.

In Loving Memory of Rev. Clarence R. Waldon and Congratulations to Sr. Mary Quinn, SP for her dedication to Holy Angels Parish

With Love From Holy Angels Parishioners
Pope Benedict XVI declares Mother Theodore Guérin a saint

By Sean Gallagher

VATICAN CITY—In a festive liturgy at St. Peter’s Square attended by Catholics from across Indiana and around the world, Pope Benedict XVI made history on Oct. 15, solemnly declaring Mother Theodore Guérin as the first canonized saint from Indiana.

According to Providence Sister Marie Kevin Tighe, it’s now up to us to fill the state with saints.

Minutes after the conclusion of the liturgy, she expressed her hope that all Hoosiers might see that becoming a saint, if not necessarily officially canonized, should be every person’s goal.

“I don’t know how that’s going to happen, but that’s my great hope,” she said. “We can take pride in her by informing ourselves about her life and her holiness.”

Pope Benedict did just that in his homily at the Mass, telling the thousands that nearly filled St. Peter’s Square about her life as a religious, first in France, then in Indiana.

With ... great spiritual strength. Not just a strong woman. She was that. But she had great spiritual strength in the midst of adversity. She challenges us to imitate her in that way.”

Philip McCord walked next to Sister Marie Kevin in the offertory procession.

“She's the employee of the Sisters of Providence at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods whose eye ailment was cured after he sought St. Theodora’s intercession. It was this miracle, confirmed by a thorough Church investigation, which resulted in the canonization.

The night before the canonization, McCord spoke about serving at St. Peter’s Square for a rehearsal and seeing St. Theodora’s banner.

“I was standing there with Sister Paula Damiano looking at it and I said, ‘Is your heart beating as fast as mine?’” he said. “We thought they were going to be covered. So that was a big surprise to walk in and there it was. It was so great.

The fact that McCord could see the portrait of the woman that he daily offers a prayer of thanks was due to her intervention in his life through her prayer on his behalf to God.

“I had one good eye [before], but I was able to see it much better with two,” he said.

She is continuing to give,” he said. “There are other stories coming in all the time of other healings and other intercessions. And as people learn about her and about what she did with her life, she’ll be there for them, too.”

The Sisters of Providence certainly hope that she will continue to be there for them. But their superior general, Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson, said that this presence may very well be a challenging one.

“Now what?” she said during an interview just outside St. Peter’s Square shortly after the liturgy.

“I think that’s the question. What is ahead of us? What is the work that we have to do?”

Thoughts about the future of her own congregation might have been in her mind during the liturgy as well.

But Sister Denise, like Archbishop Buechlein and Sister Marie Kevin, also recognized that the message of the canonization of her community’s foundress was that becoming a saint is the purpose of every human life.

“To sit in that square and to be surrounded by the statues of the saints, and to have so many people who I think were there out of their own goodness and their own love of God, it made me feel as if there are an awful lot of people in this world that want to do the right thing, who want to be good.”

Indiana pilgrims see new saint as impetus to strive for holiness

By Sean Gallagher

VATICAN CITY—Pilgrimage groups from Indiana and across the country joined pilgrims from Taiwan and across the country joined pilgrims from Taiwan and France in Rome on Oct. 15 to celebrate the canonization of St. Theodora Guérin, the 19th-century foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

“Aside from getting married and having my kids, this is probably the most awesome moment in my life,” said Julie Bowser, a participant in the archdiocesan canonization pilgrimage.

In part, it had deep meaning for Bowers because of what Indiana’s first saint did for him, he knows that he is not alone.

“Very frequently, I looked up [at her],” said Sister Marie Kevin, who participated in the offertory procession at the Mass. “And I saw her there as I always see her — as a woman of spiritual strength. Not just a strong woman. She was that. But she had great spiritual strength in the midst of adversity. She challenges us to imitate her in that way.”

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One-hundred twenty Sisters of Providence also made their way to Rome for the canonization of their foundress.

Was one was Providence Sister Jane Gibson, who ministered to the elderly at St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis.

“It’s a dream that’s come true. I never thought that I would see this,” said Sister Jane, who has been a member of the order for 53 years.

Although she has striven for holiness as a religious for more than half a century, the canonization led Sister Jane to say enthusiastically how much she still wants to be like St. Theodore in her ministry.

“I hope that I can be like Mother Theodore and walk in the footsteps of Jesus as I go along and look at each one and say, ‘You’re made from God and I love you.’”

See PILGRIMS, page 12A

Your regular issue of The Criterion is inside

The regular Oct. 20 issue of The Criterion is inside and includes the full pages of this keepsake edition.

Although they are in the center, the pages are designed to be pulled out. The regular section is labeled page 1B to 16B.

Our regular features are included there: Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein’s column, Faith Alive!, the Calendar of Events, the Opinion page, Obituaries and other local news.

— Mike Krokos, editor

The Pfister family would like to extend our joy of this momentous occasion. We have been dedicated to the life of Saint Mother Theodore Guérin, and we are excited that her work will now be shared with the world. She has always been a big influence in our lives. We congratulate the Sisters of Providence.

Pfisters
The family of Ben and Emma Pfister

— Mike Krokos, editor
With the foresight to
advance cardiology
5-star rated by HealthGrades® in treating heart attacks in 2005.

The courage to listen and anticipate
Consistently improving our services and facilities, including a
$40 million expansion currently under way in Mooresville.

Rebuild and restore
Top 5% in the nation for overall orthopaedic care.

With machines, medicine and faith
A philosophy of healing that incorporates our Franciscan values of
compassionate concern, joyful service and respect for life.

We are
leading the way
With three convenient hospital campuses, a medical staff of more
than 700 doctors and 4,000 employees to serve your needs.
In Rome, Andrea Ambrosi serves as advocate for canonization

By Sean Gallagher

Andrea Ambrosi could be described as a “saint maker.”

This was a term used by religion journalist Kenneth Woodward in his 1990 book Making Saints to describe those who serve as advocates of potential saints in the rigorous investigative process established by the Holy See’s Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

The Catholic Church teaches that only God truly “makes” saints. But in the sacramental view of the Church, there is an acknowledgement that God works through his creation and through human agents.

Ambrosi is one such agent. In his work for the congregation, he served in this role for the canonization cause of St. Theodora Guérin.

For more than a decade, traveling many times between his office in Rome to Indiana, he played a key role in shepherding her cause every step of the way to the Oct. 15 canonization liturgy at St. Peter’s Square.

Q: How long have you been a postulator in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and how did you enter this ministry?
A: I became a postulator following the apostolic constitution Divinae Perpetuae Magnitudo, which came into effect in 1983, which allowed laypeople to occupy this role.

In reality, I had been working on causes of beatification and canonization since 1972 as a trainee and since 1977 as a counselor and defense attorney, a figure provided for by the former norms in effect according to the Code of Canon Law.

Q: Do you have a special meaning for men and women today?
A: Yes. Yes, it will, especially because it brings me particular joy. To see this special for you, and if so, in what way?

Q: Will you be present at the canonization Mass? Will this liturgy be special for you, and if so, in what way?
A: Yes, it will, especially because it brings me great pleasure to see causes from the United States of America, something you do not see very often. To see this brings me particular joy.

Q: Do you see something of the character of Blessed Mother Theodore in Sister Marie Kevin Tighe, the vice postulator of the cause?
A: Yes, there is a great tenacity in furthering the message of love and compassion, characteristics which are particular to the Sisters of Providence.

Q: Although the canonization of Blessed Mother Theodore is ultimately due to the heroic virtue she showed during her life and God’s answering of her prayer for Philip McCord, how would you say that her Oct. 15 canonization will be a credit to the ministry of Sister Marie Kevin?
A: I would say that the spreading of awareness of Mother Theodore Guérin and her ministry as well as the diffusion of veneration to Mother Theodore is a credit.
Miracle man
An answered prayer has changed Philip McCord’s life

By Sean Gallagher

A serious eye illness. Weeks of growing concern. Some time alone in an empty church.

By Sean Gallagher

It was this simple chain of events—common to the lives of many people—that led Philip McCord to be in the offertory procession for the canonization Mass of St. Theodora Guérin at St. Peter’s Square in Rome on Oct. 15. More than five years ago, McCord, the director of facilities management for the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, was facing the possibility of a corneal transplant. Although not Catholic, McCord went into the sisters’ Church of the Immaculate Conception and asked for the intervention of their foundress.

He noticed an improvement in his vision the very next day. And when he later visited an eye specialist, he was told that he no longer needed the transplant surgery.

Q: You’ve talked about the enormity of what’s happening. How have you tried to come to terms with the fact that you’re right in the middle of it?

A: I’ll tell you the thing that I’ve realized is that how small a part in it I really am. The focus is properly and needs to be on Mother Theodore and her whole life. And there have been a number of other healings. It just brought home to me yesterday. … So I’m just grateful to be a part of it.

Q: Has the miracle changed what’s it’s like for you to come there to work on an ordinary day with the sisters?

A: You kind of have to understand that my eye being healed is just one of the blessings of being here. Working with the sisters is rewarding on a daily basis. We are treated well. We are treated respectfully. We have authority to do our jobs. We’re respected for those abilities.

Q: What are your thoughts about what will be like participating in the canonization Mass?

A: First of all, my wife and I have never been to Rome. My wife is so excited that she’s packed and unpacked twice. I’m sure that as I’m standing there it will seem unreal that this is the pope. [Laughs.] I’m really right here in St. Peter’s, and I have a part in this. It’s pretty overwhelming.

Q: What are your thoughts about the fact that, as a non-Catholic, you’ve played an important part in the life of the Catholic Church?

A: Mother Theodore never made any distinctions with the people that worked for her. She cared for them all and worked side by side with them all. So that’s just really consistent. It’s not a big surprise.

Q: Has your experience of the miracle and all of the things that have happened since then made an impact on your life of faith?

A: It has. I was raised Baptist. But it was kind of crammed down my throat. My dad’s a lay minister.

And so I just kind of frankly rebelled against the whole process. But I’ve worked for a Catholic hospital.

And for sure in the past 20 years I’ve attended way more Masses than I have anything else.

To tell you the truth, I’ll admit to my being lazy and if the study and the process weren’t so daunting, I’d probably be Catholic.

But every time I think about doing it [I think], ‘Well, I’ll get to it later.”

Q: How would you say that this has had an impact upon your relationship with God?

A: My dad is so deeply faithful that I was always looking to be cynical. And that’s kind of an easy cop-out. You don’t really have to face things. Well, I had something happen to me that you need to face.

I’m much more prayerful [now]. I try to at least once a day talk to Mother Theodore and tell her thank you again.

Q: The sisters of Providence frequently talk about how they feel her spirit at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Do you think that this has been a strong reality for you since the miracle happened in your life?

A: I’ve seen it a lot, just in the way they live and work with each other. … I have to tell you, they work at making things right more than anybody I’ve ever known. And I think the core of that is they ask themselves what guidance they have from Mother Theodore. What did she do in similar circumstances? The stories about her life have a big impact on their lives and my life.

Q: Does the example of her life give you some guidance now?

A: Well, I’ll tell you, first of all, when things get hard here, you kind of think about their history.

And I tell everybody that after some of the things that happened to her, I’d have packed up and gone home. … But her perseverance through all of this was remarkable. So that kind of keeps you going.

— Philip McCord

Q: After you get back from Rome, there won’t be any more steps to go through in this whole process.

A: Do you think your life will be changed after that?

A: It will be a little quieter. But it will have been changed because one of the things that’s happened with this is that really neat is that I had a call … from a friend of mine that I used to work with in Valparaiso that I hadn’t seen in about 10 years who’s working in Indianapolis now. … I had a cousin call me that I hadn’t seen in ages and some friends that I talk to.

Q: Has being interviewed frequently by reporters been an adjustment for you?

A: Yeah. I don’t seek attention. So I’m not all that comfortable. But I’ve always sent up a prayer. “Please, God, don’t let me embarrass the sisters.” †
SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS—On Oct. 15, hundreds of thousands of people filled St. Peter’s Square in Rome. From this enormous assembly walked a small woman born 82 years ago in New Albany. She was part of the offertory procession that was led by Pope Benedict XVI, who minutes earlier had canonized the Church’s four newest saints, including St. Theodora Guérin.

The small woman had a deep and abiding love for St. Theodora from the time she was in the first grade at the former Holy Trinity School in her hometown. Later, she followed in the saint’s footsteps by joining the religious community that St. Theodora founded in 1840, the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

And after decades of ministry in a wide variety of fields, this woman, Providence Sister Marie Kevin Tighe, dedicated herself to the sole task of promoting St. Theodora’s canonization cause, a task she described as the “cherry on top of my life.” She helped shepherd it all the way to St. Peter’s Square.

The story of how Sister Marie Kevin made it from New Albany to Rome is, in many ways, the story of how God, in his providence, has led her every step of the way.

The birth of a vocation

Although Sister Marie Kevin was introduced to the Sisters of Providence and first learned about their foundress at Holy Trinity School, it wasn’t until her high school years that her vocation started to emerge.

“It was a Sister of Charity [of Nazareth] who said to me one day in the middle of a mission bazaar, ‘Did anyone ever tell you, you might have a vocation to be a sister?’ ” she said. “And I said no, and that was the end of the conversation.”

Later, however, she discussed the possibility with the associate pastor of her parish. When he asked her what community she might want to join, her answer was immediate.

“Right away I said, ‘I want to be a Sister of Providence.’ ” she recalled.

Soon thereafter, she transferred to a high school at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods for young women contemplating joining the community.

She entered its novitiate in 1942. Though, as a young sister, Sister Marie Kevin said that she was not “indoctrinated” in the teachings of St. Theodora, she said the legacy of her community’s foundress was like the air she breathed.

“We never lost sight of her influence, and the power of her wisdom and strength,” Sister Marie Kevin said. “Her courage and her fortitude under great difficulties were always the undergirding impetus for us to carry on the mission that she established.”

Driving the mission

Starting in 1944, Sister Marie Kevin helped carry on the mission of Catholic education that St. Theodora had begun a century before.

She taught or served as principal at many Catholic schools in Illinois and Indiana, including St. Philip Neri School, St. Luke School and former Bishop Chaminard High School, all in Indianapolis, and St. Aimee School in New Castle.

At all of these places, Sister Marie Kevin introduced her young charges to St. Theodora, just as her predecessors in the Sisters of Providence had done for her at Holy Trinity School.

Renewing the mission of St. Theodora in her own community was an important task given to Sister Marie Kevin in the years following the Second Vatican Council when she was asked to be a member of its renewal team.

This leadership had a profound impact on Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson.

Now the community’s superior general, she was relatively new to the community when Sister Marie Kevin was serving on the renewal team in the 1970s.

“She was a very, very decided, and, of course, I was taken with it,” Sister Denise said. “It made sense to me.”

Sister Marie Kevin’s thinking, according to Sister Denise, was closely tied to St. Theodora.

“She has a strong sense of her influence, and the power of her wisdom and strength. Her courage and her fortitude under great difficulties were always the undergirding impetus for us to carry on the mission that she established.”

— Sr. Marie Kevin Tighe

We never lost sight of her influence, and the power of her wisdom and strength. Her courage and her fortitude under great difficulties were always the undergirding impetus for us to carry on the mission that she established.

Providence Sister Marie Kevin Tighe has promoted St. Theodora Guérin’s canonization cause for 10 years and served as its vice postulator for the last four years.

In 1949, a diagnosis of gastro-esophageal cancer forced her to pull back. This, too, was not unlike St. Theodora, who suffered from severe gastrointestinal problems for much of her adult life.

For 72 days, Sister Marie Kevin was a patient at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. A surgery to treat the disease resulted in the removal of half of her stomach, half of her esophagus, her spleen and part of her diaphragm.

Despite the gravity of her situation, Sister Marie Kevin not only survived but also recovered her health quickly. Although she has a deep love for St. Theodora, Sister Marie Kevin never prayed to her for a cure and does not think that her recovery was a miracle.

But the epilogue was profoundly important for her.

After ministering for so long with such determination to help young people learn and communities to renew, she gained a broader perspective on her life from facing cancer.

“I understand now in a way that I never could have before that my life, even if I live to be 99, is about one inch long,” Sister Marie Kevin said. “And on both ends of that inch there’s a long line—one that goes backward toward eternity and one that goes forward to eternity.

“I’m not going to cling to this inch. I want to live it to the full. But I know that, you know it, it’s not the whole show.”

Placing the cherry on top of her life

Soon after looking death in the face, Sister Marie Kevin was given the chance of a lifetime: Providence Sister Nancy Nolan, the community’s superior general at the time, asked her to become the new promoter of St. Theodora’s then beatification cause.

She thought that Sister Marie Kevin was the “perfect fit” for the ministry.

“She is a very energetic person in spite of her years and the poor health she herself has endured through the years,” Sister Nancy said. “And she took that on and ran with it with a vengeance, and has done just
Sisters of Providence hold hands as they pray the Lord’s Prayer during the eucharistic liturgy on Oct. 15 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The 11 a.m. Mass was celebrated by Father Daniel Hopcus, chaplain of the congregation, seven hours after the canonization Mass in Rome.

Deanery representatives from the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries process in with candles and banners at the beginning of the Oct. 15 Mass for youths at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. About 300 young people attended the Mass honoring St. Theodora Guérin.

Concelebrants for the canonization ceremony and Mass at St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 15, including Indianapolis Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, right, kiss the altar during the ceremony. Four people, including Mother Theodore Guérin, were deemed saints during the ceremony.

Providence Sister Jane Gibson of Indianapolis applauds as she waits to enter St. Peter’s Square in Rome for the Oct. 15 canonization Mass. To her immediate right is Mary Weber, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis.

A tapestry hanging from the facade of St. Peter’s Basilica shows Mother Theodore Guérin, one of four new saints canonized by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican on Oct. 15. St. Theodore founded an order of nuns still active today and was a pioneer in Catholic education in Indiana in the 19th century.

A banner carried by Sister Jane Gibson of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the order founded by Mother Theodore Guérin, flies during the procession from the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome to St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 15.

A banner carried by Sister Jane Gibson of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the order founded by Mother Theodore Guérin, flies during the procession from the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome to St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 15.

Three representatives of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the order founded by Mother Theodore Guérin, bring up relics of their foundress as the canonization ceremony at St. Peter’s Square in Rome on Oct. 15. The sisters are, from left, Sister Jeanne Bergado O’Han, Nancy Nolan and Diane Rea.

The archbishop of Indianapolis prays during an Oct. 16 Mass of Thanksgiving for the canonization of Mother Theodore Guérin the previous day. The Mass was celebrated at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome.

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What Mother Theodore Guérin means to me

By Sean Gallagher

Although she died 150 years ago, St. Theodore Guérin continues to send ripples through the lives of countless Catholics across the archdiocese to this very day.

Many were taught by members of the Sisters of Providence at various levels of their education and learned about the sisters’ foundress, especially on Oct. 22, the order’s Foundation Day.

Others have developed a spiritual bond with St. Theodore and sought her intercession when they or a friend or a loved one was ill.

Now that she is canonized, St. Theodore belongs to the whole world. But there is a special place for the first Hoosier saint in the hearts of many Catholics in central and southern Indiana.

The following stories show what St. Theodore means to three archdiocesan Catholics.

A window of memories
Each day when Father James Wilmoth opens and closes St. Roch Church, he looks up with love at a stained-glass window of St. Theodore Guérin. The window calls to mind the saint who has been a part of his life for 61 years and who was an inspiration for his priestly vocation.

It also reminds Father Wilmoth of his deceased parents, Dutch and Mary Jane Wilmoth. The priest paid for the window in the recently restored and renovated church with some of the money that he inherited from his mother when she died.

“I couldn’t think of any better way to spend that money than to give it to St. Roch to pay for that window,” said Father Wilmoth, the pastor of the Indianapolis South Deanery parish. “It’s very touching to me.”

Growing up in the 1940s on Indianapolis’ near-east side, Father Wilmoth recalled his mother telling him about St. Theodore. He also learned about her from the Sisters of Providence who staffed St. Philip Neri School, where he followed in his mother’s footsteps as a student.

“Every one of our classrooms back then had a picture of Mother Theodore Guérin,” he said. “So every year as I went all the way through grade school, I learned more and more about her. She’s been very special to me since I was 6 years old.”

After completing the eighth grade, Father Wilmoth became a seminarian. His love of St. Theodore and all she did to build up Catholic schools in Indiana filled him with the desire to continue to build up Catholic education as a priest.

“All the time that I was in the seminary, Mother Theodore was someone that I always thought about,” he said. “And, of course, when I got ordained as a priest, I had the opportunity to be put in a school as a teacher. Well, that was just the nearest thing in the world because, there again, I was able to kind of continue doing what she had taught.”

In addition to teaching at the former Bishop Bruté Memorial Latin School of Indianapolis and Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, Father Wilmoth has always served in parishes that had a school. He is back serving once again as the chaplain at Roncalli.

His own legacy in Catholic education in the archdiocese is now marked in a sense in the window that portrays the holy woman who inspired him to give his life as a priest and servant of Catholic schools.

“The way she lived her life, and how she gave her life for the Lord and what she taught, for us to be able to put her image in one of these windows was a wonderful tribute to her, to Catholic education and to anybody who is a follower of Jesus,” he said.

Seeing holiness through a child’s eyes
To return to his grade-school memories of learning about St. Theodore, Father Wilmoth has to go back more than half a century.

Abbey Hensley is creating her own memories right now. She is a third-grader at St. Malachy School in Brownsburg, and recently learned about St. Theodore.

At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, I have now walked where a saint walked, and that makes me happy,” said Abbey, whose school was founded by the Sisters of Providence.

Abbey learned about St. Theodore from her parents and by visiting the Heritage Museum at Providence Center on the grounds of the motherhouse of the religious community that St. Theodore founded in 1840.

“I love to pray and talk to … Mother Theodore,” Abbey said. “I love Mother Theodore so much, and when I go to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods with my mom and grandma, I learn to love her more and more.”

Her love for St. Theodore has led her to share the saint’s story with others.

“I’ve told my friends about Blessed Mother Theodore and how special she was, and about how I was hoping she would become a saint,” Abbey said. “Now it’s come true.”

Keeping a promise
Julie Young knew little about St. Theodore or the religious community she founded in 1840 when she began her studies in the Women’s External Degree program at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

But “on a whim,” Young decided to visit St. Theodore’s tomb at the Sisters of Providence’s Church of the Immaculate Conception.

“I asked her to get me through my education,” said Young, a member of St. Thérèse of the Infant Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. “I literally made a deal with her and said, ‘If you get me through this, somehow I will give it back to you.’ I still believe I made a very important friend.”

As a sign of love for his parents and St. Theodore Guérin, Father James Wilmoth

As a sign of love for his parents and St. Theodore Guérin, Father James Wilmoth donated money to St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis for the creation of a stained glass window of St. Theodore that was installed in April as part of the church’s restoration and renovation.
Young people encouraged to follow St. Theodora’s example

SAINT MARY OF THE WOODS—The fruits of St. Theodora Guérin’s tireless work for Catholic education in Indiana became clear on Oct. 15 as 300 high school youths and family members gathered for Mass and a tour of the grounds at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on the day of St. Theodora’s canonization.

The afternoon was a way to bring archdiocesan young people together to take part in this historic day, said Annette “Mickey” Lentz, executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education and Faith Formation.

“Our youth are our future Church, and we have to get them aware of the greatness that has gone before us, and this was the way to do that,” she said.

Lentz, a graduate of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, said she always knew of Mother Theodore Guérin and referred to her as a “woman for all ages.” She said her canonization comes at a time “when the country is most in need and the diocese can be something for others.”

In his homily, Father Jonathan Meyer, archdiocesan director of youth and young adult ministry, called St. Theodora a woman of “P.E.P.” That P.E.P.—providence, evangelization and perseverance—is evidenced in various aspects of her life.

From her trust in God’s will to her perseverance in answering the call to religious life and submitting herself to the difficult task of catechizing a large region, she is a model for young people, he said.

“She is an example to us of a woman who dedicated her whole life to Jesus Christ,” said Father Meyer, who also serves as associate pastor of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis. “How wonderful it is for all of us as young people to answer that same call, to answer that same summons, to share the message of Jesus Christ to the world.”

The youth Mass brought participation from across the archdiocese, including many young people who attend Catholic school or parish religious education programs. Each of the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries had representatives to carry banners for the entrance procession.

Leaders from the Archdiocesan Youth Council, who served in all the liturgical ministries, chose the readings and wrote petitions.

Mandy Maher, who assists in youth ministry at St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish, only had to travel a short distance to take part in the afternoon since her parish is within walking distance of the campus.

She noted that the youth Mass was an opportunity for young people to see a bigger picture of the Church. “I think it was important for our youth to see the Catholic presence around the state.”

Maher also hopes St. Theodora’s example will lead youths deeper into the life of faith. “She had a great devotion to the Eucharist. I hope that the youth can feel her presence and have a greater respect for the Eucharist.”

For those who had a longer drive to the Mass, the archdiocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry sent compact discs out prior to the weekend for youths to listen to on the way. The CD included short narratives on the life of Mother Theodore, songs that were to be used at Mass, a litany and recitation of the rosary.

The bulk of the CD’s work came from Susan Jansen, a familiar face to many Indianapolis South Deenery parishioners, and her company, Lily Publishing.

Matthew Duncan, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, was among the participants who had a longer journey. He called the canonization a “spiritual landmark” for Indiana which, he said, made the long trip worth it. “I believe that she is easy to relate to,” he said of St. Theodora. “She is a great role model of holiness. I hope that I can be a pioneer and take the road less traveled,” he added.

Friends Kelsey Monahan and Matt Yazzie, both seniors at Terre Haute South High School, came together to celebrate and honor their local saint.

Monahan, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, said she felt honored that so many sets of eyes were focused on her city. “I think it’s amazing that so many of the eyes were focused on our city.”

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SAINT
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that day.”

That friendship continued to blossom throughout her time as a student at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. “In each step of that journey, I often relied on her for spiritual guidance,” Young said, “and often prayed that the canonization process would conclude so that this woman, who was so richly deserving, could become a saint.”

When she graduated last year, Young knew she had a promise to keep. “I didn’t know if I should just donate money to the school or what would be the best way to ‘give it back’ to her,” she said. “It was then that I realized that maybe I should use my talents and my degree in writing to help others come to know Mother Guérin in the same way that I did.”

So her first book project became a youth biography of St. Theodorea, which is expected to be published next spring by the Indiana Historical Society.

As The Criterion went to press, both Young and Father Wilmuth were planning to be in Rome for the canonization of the woman who has meant so much to them. On Oct. 15, Abbey expected to be at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods celebrating the canonization with her family and the Sisters of Providence.

“Mother Theodore is a great pick for a saint,” Abbey said.†

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continued from page 14
she said.

The liturgy, as the thousands of worshippers flooded out of the square, some who came to celebrate St. Theodorea’s canonization were separated from their friends.

Among them was Providence Sister Barbara Doherty. Yet while she was concerned about being separated and scanned by constant oppression from the church’s façade.

She had been part of a choir for the Mass made up of Sisters of Providence that sat close to the altar directly in front of St. Peter’s Basilica. The group sat under a banner of her community’s foundress that hung from the church’s façade.

“The moment after [Pope Benedict XVI] pronounced the canonization, I turned around and was weeping looking up at her,” Sister Barbara said. “I was right underneath her. From her spot at the top of the square, the sister who served as president of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1984-98 could also see the thousands of people from around the world who had come to celebrate St. Theodorea and the three others canonized by Pope Benedict. Mexican Bishop Rafael Guizar Valencia, Italian Father Filippo Smaldone and Italian Sister Rosa Venerini were also declared saints by the pope.

“I’m very grateful for more people to hear about her [St. Theodorea] all the time,” Sister Barbara said. “And I hope we can spread her name and her goodness across the world in any way that we know how.” There was a large contingent from Mexico among the worshippers. They were there in part to celebrate the canonization of St. Rafael Guizar Valencia, a bishop of Vera Cruz, Mexico, who died in 1938 after ministering for two decades under constant oppression from the Mexican government.

Diame McKeever, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis and a participant in the archdiocesan pilgrimage, appreciated the international makeup of the liturgy’s massive congregation. Whenever you’re with people from other countries, it’s an opportunity to learn about their culture and to share that, especially with your family,” she said. “In my case, I feel it’s important because I do belong to a center-city parish. And we’re blessed to have a lot of children from Mexico. And we had a Mexican bishop canonized.”

In the end, McKeever echoed the sentiments of many Hoosier pilgrims in expressing her near disbelief that she saw the canonization of Indiana’s first saint.

“It’s the event of a lifetime,” she said. “I never thought I would be at a canonization, and especially to have the privilege of attending one for a saint from our own state, to have our archbishop here and all the priests—it was a wonderful experience that I’ll never forget.”†
A dream come true
At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, churchgoers celebrate new saint

By Mary Ann Wyand

SAINT MARY-OF-THE WOODS— Providence Sister Agnes Pauline Meinert received a special birthday present this year.

St. Theodora Guérin, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI at St. Peter’s Square in Rome on Oct. 15, which also was Sister Agnes Pauline’s 90th birthday.

The canonization was “icing on the cake” for Sister Agnes Pauline, who couldn’t believe that this historic and spiritual event happened on her birthday.

“In the summertime,” she said, “when the Holy Father announced that the canonization would take place on Oct. 15, I hollered, ‘That’s my birthday!’”

It was a birthday wish and longtime dream come true, Sister Agnes Pauline said after the 11 a.m. eucharistic liturgy at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse, which began seven hours after the formal canonization Mass at the Vatican.

The motherhouse church was filled for the liturgy, which included a brief message from Providence Sister Denise Wilkinson, general superior of the congregation, who called from Rome after the canonization.

Father Daniel Hopcus, chaplain of the congregation and celebrant for the Mass, began the liturgy by telling the sisters and guests at the motherhouse that Sister Denise said, “Everything [at the canonization] was beautiful, and she was holding everyone at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in her heart and prayers.”

During his homily, Father Hopcus noted that the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time was an extraordinary day for the Sisters of Providence.

Mother Theodore dedicated her life to serving others because she loved God, he said, and never doubted that she was doing God’s work.

“Faced with countless obstacles and setbacks, [Mother Theodore] founded this community in the shadow of the cross,” Father Hopcus said. “[She knew that] if this community that she was establishing was going to last … it would be established on the cross.”

He said Mother Theodore’s canonization “serves as a reminder of her solidarity with all the Sisters of Providence, who God has called to live the life of a saint … to the best of their ability.”

Providence Sister Mary Beth Klingel welcomed the gathering at the start of the Mass.

“Words cannot capture in any way our great joy and the significance of this event,” Sister Mary Beth explained. “Mother Theodore is now a saint of the universal Church, but what a unique privilege it is for all the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, for the State of Indiana and for the United States of America to claim her as our own.”

The Mass was a prelude to the Canonization Liturgy of Thanksgiving for Foundation Day on Oct. 22 at the motherhouse church, which will include Providence sisters who journeyed to Rome for the historic ceremony.

Before and after the Mass, sisters and guests waited in line to venerate the remains of the French-born missionary sister who became the eighth U.S. saint and first Indiana saint earlier that day.

Father Joseph Kern, dean of the Terre Haute Deanery, had already celebrated Masses on Saturday and Sunday so he attended the liturgy as “one of the people of God” in the pews.

The canonization of their foundress is “a real joy, a glorious day, for the sisters,” Father Kern said. “I don’t like to try to predict what the Lord is going to do, but hopefully it will help vocations to the religious life and priesthood.”

Mother Theodore Guérin: A Woman for Our Time

St. Theodora Guérin, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI at St. Peter’s Square in Rome on Oct. 15, the same day that the foundress of the congregation was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI at St. Peter’s Square in Rome. The sisters were enjoying dinner at the motherhouse at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods following an 11 a.m. eucharistic liturgy for the local celebration of the canonization.
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how big Terre Haute, Indiana, is at this moment,” Monahan said. “It gives me a lot of hope that someone from my hometown is a saint.”

Yazge, who attends a Greek Orthodox Church, felt that St. Theodora’s impact extends beyond faith denominations. “Her example is one that any person can follow,” he said. “Even for people who aren’t Catholic, Mother Theodore definitely led an amazing life.”

Sarah Watson, principal of St. Gabriel the Archangel School in Indianapolis and coordinator of the Archdiocesan Youth Council, said she was impressed by the effect that one person had on so many lives. “She didn’t ask to have this impact,” Watson said. “She was just living the life she was called to live.”

Watson said that just as St. Theodora impacted numerous lives around the world, so too could youth do the same if they followed her approach to life. “If we all just live the life we’re called to live, maybe we don’t realize the hundreds and thousands of people we’re impacting on a daily basis,” she said. “It is you who are the Church now. It’s you who will bring Christ to the world,” Father Meyer told the young people.

She’s such an inspiration.”

Providence Sister Jeanne Hagelkamp, president of the new Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis—a work-study ministry of the congregation that will serve low-income students—dressed as St. Theodora to greet sisters and visitors.

“Mother Theodore’s mission, the reason she came to Indiana, was to work among the poor, particularly children,” Sister Jeanne said. “It’s particularly humbling for me to be here today and to know that I’m walking in her footsteps.”

Sister Jeanne said many sisters got up at 4 a.m. on Sunday to watch the Eternal Word Television Network’s live coverage of the canonization Mass then prayed together at the original gravesite of their foundress at the mother/daughter cemetery.

Images and artwork of St. Theodora were on display at the Providence Center and Shrine of Our Lady of Providence at the motherhouse, and new road signs decorated portions of U.S. 150 that Gov. Mitch Daniels recently renamed “St. Mother Theodore Guerin Memorial Highway.”

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College senior Lindsey Richardt, a member of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville, helped greet visitors at the Providence Center and Shrine of Our Lady of Providence with three other members of the student presidential corps. “It’s really, really great to be a student on campus right now,” Richardt said. “I love St. Mary’s and feel really honored to be here. It’s very prestigious to attend a school founded by a saint.”

DREAM continued from page 11A

retreat to prepare for his ordination to the diaconate by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on Oct. 28 at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church in St. Meinrad.

“I came here with two other [Saint Meinrad] seminarians from Phoenix and South Korea because we’re going to be ordained deacons in two weeks,” Nagel said. “We thought, ‘What a beautiful time to celebrate the canonization of St. Mother Theodore Guerin.’”

Nagel said it was very humbling to venerate her remains. “I just keep thinking about her words and what it means to become a saint,” he said. “It’s nothing extraordinary, just the ordinary things of everyday life, but to do them with a great love for God.”

Providence Sister Eileen Ann Kelley, a retired sister who read the first reading for the liturgy, said after the Mass that Mother Theodore’s canonization was “beyond description” and she felt overwhelmed by it. “I never thought I would live to see it happen so I have shed more than one tear,” Sister Eileen Ann said. “I think it’s going to have such an impact upon us individually and as a community, and also upon many, many other people.”

Providence Sister Jeanne Hagelkamp, president of the new Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis—a work-study ministry of the congregation that will serve low-income students—dressed as St. Theodora to greet sisters and visitors.

“The Sisters of Providence express our gratitude to Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and all the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for the outpouring of support, interest and affection shown as on the occasion of the canonization of our foundress, Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.”

May all of us respond as generously to the universal call to holiness as this newest Saint of God!”

Sisters of Providence
or SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS
Breaking boundaries, creating hope
www.SistersofProvvidence.org

Photos by Mary Ann Wyand

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin

Seminarians Thomas Aquinas Hong, left, of Busan, South Korea; Paul Sullivan from the Archdiocese of Phoenix; and Rick Nagel from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis venerate the remains of St. Theodora Guérin at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Oct. 15, a few hours after the French-born missionary sister was canonized by the pope. The seminarians are studying for the priesthood at Saint Meinrad School of Theology, and had just completed a three-day retreat to prepare for their ordination to the diaconate on Oct. 28.

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Saint Mother Theodore Guerin

Seminarians Thomas Aquinas Hong, left, of Busan, South Korea; Paul Sullivan from the Archdiocese of Phoenix; and Rick Nagel from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis venerate the remains of St. Theodora Guérin at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Oct. 15, a few hours after the French-born missionary sister was canonized by the pope. The seminarians are studying for the priesthood at Saint Meinrad School of Theology, and had just completed a three-day retreat to prepare for their ordination to the diaconate on Oct. 28.
Updated version of St. Theodora biography to be released

By Mary Ann Wyand

Just in time for Christmas, the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods expect to release an updated version of a popular biography of St. Theodora Guérin. "Mother Theodore Guérin—A Woman for All Time, a Saint of God, written by Penny Blaker Mitchell, is a revised edition of Mother Theodore Guérin—A Woman for Our Time, which was published shortly before her beatification by Pope John Paul II on Oct. 25, 1998, at St. Peter’s Square in Rome.

Now a member of St. Paul Parish in Sellersburg and an employee of Providence Self-Sufficiency Ministries in Georgetown, Mitchell wrote the first book in 1998 when she worked for the sisters’ Office of Congregational Advancement at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

“When we were preparing for the beatification,” Mitchell explained in a recent telephone interview, “it became known that we needed what they call a popular biography … so most anyone could read it and understand who Mother Theodore was and how important she could be in anyone’s life.”

The congregation’s officers asked her to write the book on rather short notice. “I only had a little bit less than six months to get it done,” she recalled. “I was also on the committee planning the beatification, and I did most of the reporting for the congregation’s publications on the beatification. I was pretty busy. It had to be done prior to the beatification so we had to have it to the printer in mid-summer [of 1998].”

She believes St. Theodora—who the Sisters of Providence prefer to call St. Mother Theodore—helped her research, write and edit the biography on time in addition to all of her other responsibilities. “I felt inspired by her presence,” Mitchell said. “I think she was working through me. I firmly believe that. I couldn’t have done it otherwise, especially in six months.”

While writing the book, Mitchell said she wanted people to come to know and love the French-born sister who founded the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in 1840. Today, Sisters of Providence minister in 20 states, the District of Columbia, Taiwan and China.

“I think my main goal at the time was that people would have an opportunity to know her because she was such a wonderful person,” Mitchell said. “Thank heaven and thank Mother Theodore because she was such a gifted writer, and wrote hundreds of letters and kept journals. Otherwise, we wouldn’t be able to know her the way we do today.”

Mitchell said she never doubted that Blessed Mother Theodore would be canonized as a saint of God.

“The foreword and introductory chapters in the book have been updated because there have been changes in the congregation and the programs and ministries since 1998,” she said. “The new part [of the book] is almost everything that has happened since the beatification.”

She said the updated book also includes information about ways that people have received as petitions in her name; she said, “They’re from all over the world. And there’s a chapter on the second miracle of the healing of Philip McCord’s [right] eye that led to her canonization. The last chapter is about the canonization and includes events from the past few weeks.”

Mitchell said she enjoyed reading Mother Theodore’s letters and journals. “She was an excellent writer, and one thing that makes her so easy to relate to is her sense of humor,” Mitchell said. “She had health problems, but was still able to maintain her sense of hope and sense of humor and to do everything she did in her life.”

St. Theodora can be “such a source of strength and inspiration for any woman,” she said, “but I think especially for a woman trying to raise a family alone because in essence that’s what she was doing with the congregation. She didn’t have any money, she didn’t have any support, and the sisters were often cold and hungry.”

“They had to trust in God for everything and use their wits to survive,” Mitchell said. “And heaven knows Mother Theodore had a lot of wit. She didn’t know how to speak English [when she arrived in Indiana]. She wasn’t a young woman. She was sick. But look what she accomplished because she believed she was doing what God wanted her to do.”

Mitchell recommends that people who are in need of spiritual inspiration take time to read about St. Theodora’s life and reflect on her journal entries excerpted in the book. “Put yourself gently into the hands of Providence,” St. Theodora advised her sisters. “... Well, my daughters, ours is a preparation for the generation that will succeed us, and eminent good will be done this way by us. You may not live to see it, but you will have sown the seed, and your sisters will come to reap what will have been sown.”

(Copies of St. Theodora’s popular biography will be available in December at the Providence Center gift shop at St. Mary-of-the-Woods or can be ordered online at www.sistersofprovidence.org. The price had not been determined at press time.)
Every year, 5 million pilgrims journey to Jasna Gora Monastery in Czestochowa, Poland, to pray at the Marian shrine that is the home of the famed Black Madonna. In May, archdiocesan pilgrims led by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein traveled to Poland and the Czech Republic on a 10-day pilgrimage to visit the birthplace of Pope John Paul II and pray at places of significance to the Catholic faith.

During their pilgrimage, they visited Jasna Gora, the largest and most important Catholic shrine in Poland, and celebrated Mass on May 15 at the world-famous monastery founded by members of the Pauline Order. They also posed for photographs underneath a huge bronze statue of the Polish pope located on the bastion of the Holy Trinity at the monastery fortress.

The sculpture, which is more than 7 meters tall, shows the pope smiling and extending his right arm in greeting while holding his skull cap in his left hand.

The pilgrims admired the sculpture, but had no idea that this monument and another similar statue of the pontiff outside St. Laurence Church in Dynow, Poland, have connections to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Golab and Danuta Cwiklinska-Golab, a Polish couple who emigrated to the United States in 1969, originally gave a small statue of the Polish pope located on the bastion of the Holy Trinity at the monastery fortress to Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis in 1962.

During their teenage and young adult years, they were active in the Polish Underground. In August 1999, the Golabs traveled to Poland to participate in the dedication ceremony for the papal statue at Jasna Gora. Polish Cardinal Joseph Glemp presided at the dedication and the statue was blessed.

In his address at Dynow, Golab noted that the monument honors “our beloved Holy Father, the great pope and Pole, and the great warrior of Mary.”

“My wife and I are founding this monument as a tribute to … John Paul II, the great shepherd of our Church, indefatigable proclaimer of truth [and] infallible protector of Poland,” he said. “For our family parish in Dynow, we donate this monument [for] the 80th birthday of our Holy Father as a gift of thanks to the Mother of God for protection over us during our entire life.”

The papal monument “brings closer the presence of two other bishops, the prior of the monastery, and a large crowd of people from the region.”

Thomas Golab was born in Dynow, a small town in southeastern Poland that now has about 6,000 residents. In his address at Dynow, Golab noted that the monument honors “our beloved Holy Father, the great pope and Pole, and the great warrior of Mary.”

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—Thomas Golab

This monument of Pope John Paul II depicts the late Polish pope smiling and extending his arm in greeting. Two copies of the papal sculpture welcome visitors to the world-renowned Jasna Gora Monastery in Czestochowa, Poland, and St. Laurence Church in Dynow, Poland. They were given to the Catholic Church in Poland by Polish immigrants Tomasz Golab and Danuta Cwiklinska-Golab, who have been members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis since 1962.
Archdiocese launches first new Web site in a decade

By Brandon A. Evans

A year of planning, consultation and work culminated on Oct. 11 with the launch of a new Web site for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The site, located at www.archindy.org, was launched just in time to feature ongoing news and photos from the archdiocesan pilgrimage to Rome for the canonization of Saint Theodora Guérin.

The Rome and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods ceremonies are also visited by thousands of people through detailed information on the archdiocesan Web site. The Archives of The Criterion Online Edition have been improved, as has the organization of its homepage.

The Office of Catholic Education will continue to retain its current design and functionality, and may one day be merged into the overall design scheme.

The redesign of Archindy.org is in response to growing demand for more information online, and the responsibility that the archdiocese bears toward using modern means of communication to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Since its launch 21 months ago, The Criterion Online Edition has been visited by nearly 170,000 people who have viewed half a million pages. Parish listings and other basic information on the archdiocesan Web site are also visited by thousands of people each month.

The new Archindy.org Web site is broken into seven categories, each of which are color-coded:

• Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein
• Priest and staff listings
• Parish listings
• Agencies and offices
• The Criterion Online Edition
• Catholic Charities
• Catholic Education

Within these seven areas, all of the archdiocese’s other pages can be found.

The broadest category, “Agencies and Offices,” includes the Web sites of about 25 unique offices or organizations, and features two special sites: Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House and the Legacy for Our Mission capital campaign.

Beyond a fresh design and the inclusion of more offices, the archdiocesan site now features full parish listings with photographs, a full and updated staff listing and other new features. The archives of The Criterion Online Edition have been improved, as has the organization of its homepage.

The Office of Catholic Education will continue to retain its current design and functionality, and may one day be merged into the overall design scheme.

In the coming year, the archdiocese hopes to implement not only online giving, but also a powerful new database that will run the Web site.

This will allow access to more features and the ability of individual offices to more quickly update their sites.

Readers are encouraged to browse around on the site and bookmark it for quick reference. Send any questions, comments or problems to webmaster@archindy.org.

(Brandon Evans is The Criterion’s online editor and the archdiocese’s Web site manager.)

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As a senior chemist then as a research scientist for Eli Lilly & Co. in Indianapolis for more than 25 years. In 1960, he married his wife, who is a physician, left their temporary home in Switzerland to come to the United States. They first settled in Shrewsbury, Mass., where they worked at the Institute of Human Embryology for two years. As teenagers and young adults, the Golabs were active in the Polish Underground for 12 years from 1940-53, fighting against the occupation of Poland by Nazi Germany then Polish and Russian communists.

He was nearly captured and could have been killed, so he and his wife fled Poland illegally, escaping to Western Europe in 1951, but she was caught by the Polish communist police in late 1952 and spent almost four years in prison.

Upon her release in 1956, he was able to arrange for her to travel to Switzerland and then Germany in 1957. After her studies at the university in Switzerland and she completed her medical coursework in Germany, they emigrated to the United States.

With their hard-earned dollars and their generous gifts to the Catholic Church in Poland, which were inspired by their love for the homeland achieve independence.

"When I saw that picture and read the caption," Father Beidelman explained, "I said, 'I think that might be the statue Tomasz and Danuta helped to erect.' He called me, about two weeks later and asked if I saw the picture in the paper.”

"Both statues were created by noted Polish sculptor Wladyslaw Dudek and master molder Stefan Kowalski, also a native of Poland, after Golab worked with them to design the monuments. Father Beidelman said he is pleased to have the Golabs share their story because “they raised a beautiful family—two children (Teresa Heit and Adam Golab)—in a very humble and faithful way, and still allowed what should be most important in our lives—their faith, family and history—all those things that root us and ground us in who we are as human persons, to continue to be the main focus of their lives.”

In return for the blessings in their lives from God and Mary and in gratitude for their pope, Father Beidelman said, they gave these statues of the Holy Father to the Church for everyone to enjoy for many centuries to come.

Their papal statue at Jasna Gora also is featured in books and postcards about the monastery and other highlights of the world-renowned pilgrimage site. †

Holy Spirit parishioners Tomasz Golab and Danuta Cwiklinska-Golab of Indianapolis pose for a photograph by one of the papal statues they gave to the Catholic Church in Poland. The monuments were dedicated in August 1999 and June 2000.
Unexpected award thrills behind-the-scenes worker at Bishop Chatard

By John Shaughnessy

Year after year, Terry Cummings would set up the tables, check the lights, fine-tune the public address system and make sure the floor sparkled. Then he'd stand at the edge of the crowd, watching people applaud and congratulate the latest recipients of the achievement awards from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

After the last round of photographs with the honored alumni, parents, community leaders, staff and faculty members were taken with their family and friends, Cummings would then help clean the room and get it ready for students to use the next day.

After 13 years, the 61-year-old Cummings thought he knew the routine. But the routine will change for the school’s maintenance director this year because Cummings is one of the people that Bishop Chatard officials will honor on Oct. 25 along with the school’s choice for community leader, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

“I’m extremely surprised, especially considering the people I’m being honored with,” Cummings said as he sat at his desk in the boiler room. “It’s something I didn’t expect. I never had an award like this before.”

The honor is well-deserved, according to Holy Cross Brother Joseph Umile, who is in his last year as the president of Bishop Chatard.

“I knew it was going to be my last achievement awards,” Brother Joseph said. “I wanted it to represent everything from the top to the people who are the foundation, from the leadership of the archbishop right through to the people who make the school work. When St. Paul talked about the Church, he makes an analogy to the body. No part of the body is more important than another part, and if they’re not all working together, the body doesn’t work.”

When Brother Joseph decided to honor Cummings, he did it for “the thousands of little things he’s done on his own” at the school to make it better.

“More so, it’s his sense that it’s his school and it’s his responsibility to take care of it,” Brother Joseph said. “He’s been here 15 years. If we had to pay him for the amount of things he’s done, we couldn’t. To him, it’s more than a job.”

In a way, it’s a home for Cummings.

“At least that’s the impression that comes through when he talks about the school.”

“It’s a great place to work,” he said. “The camaraderie of the staff and the students is fantastic. Anytime you ask for assistance, you get it. The kids are great. They keep you young. People don’t believe I’m 61. It’s the kids and all the steps, up and down.”

The job also has its adventures. Like the time Brother Joseph approached Cummings two weeks before the school year started and told him that he needed to build two classrooms in the cafeteria by the first day of school.

Or the time when Brother Joseph ordered a huge banner for the event, a banner that was to be unrolled from the roof of the school for a photo opportunity for the media. Cummings was responsible for unrolling it.

“Brother Joe told me, ‘If it comes down upside down, just keep on walking,’” Cummings said with a laugh. “It worked out. I’m still here. He’s a good man to work for.”

Cummings’ next challenge is to look comfortable in the suit he plans to wear to the liturgy and the awards dinner. He takes some comfort in knowing the spotlight won’t be solely focused on him.

Bill and Liz Hurle will be honored as parents, Bea and Charles “Jug” Eckert will be honored as past parents and Mike Harmon will receive the alumni award. Mike is the assistant athletic director and the baseball coach, and one of those people who are always willing to help,” Cummings said.

The thought of wearing a suit for the awards ceremony flashed through his mind again.

“They won’t know me in a suit,” he said. “I’ll scare the bejebbers out of them. They’ll probably ask me for an ID or a visitor’s pass.”

He took a deep breath and tried to imagine the moment when he will receive his award.

“It’s real humbling. It makes you feel good inside.”

———

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directors Terry Cummings will be one of seven people to receive an achievement award from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

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The Criterion Friday, October 20, 2006
Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin is depicted in this statue of a painting released by the Sisters of the Providence of Saint Mary— the French-born missionary, who established the Indiana order and several schools in the state in the mid-1800s, was canonized on Oct. 15 in Rome.

Indiana's first saint

We are rejoicing this week because last Sunday Pope Benedict XVI canonized Mother Theodore Guerin—or St. Theodora Guerin as she will be known officially to the universal Church. Naturally, the rejoicing is greatest among the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, who will continue to honor her as St. Mother Theodore since she was their foundress. We suspect that many of the people who have long had devotion to her will also continue to think of her as Mother Theodore.

We congratulate the sisters on finally achieving this honor for their foundress. The canonization process took almost a century, even before Bishop Francis Silas Chatard granted permission to begin the process in 1909.

For all of us, it's a great privilege to have someone from this archdiocese officially declared a saint. St. Theodora is Indiana's first canonized saint. She and her sisters have long served the people of this archdiocese from the sisters' motherhouse at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods to the diocese at large. St. Theodora also became only the eighth person who lived and died in the United States to be declared a saint. The other seven American saints are Jesuit Fathers Isaac Jogues and Rene Goupil, martyred in what is now New York state by Mohawk Indians (six others were killed in Canada); Elizabeth Ann Seton, a wife and mother, who after the death of her husband, founded the Daughters of Charity (who operate St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis); Deacon Isaac Jogues, who was born in France but became a Jesuit and was martyred in Canada; John Neumann, the fourth American-born bishop; Mary-of-the-Woods, who will continue to run St. Mary-of-the-Woods College.

But it's not enough for us just to delight in St. Theodore's canonization. The Church doesn't canonize saints for their sake. After all, they are now in heaven enjoying the blissful vision. They couldn't care less about an earthly honor.

The Catholic Church canonizes people not only to honor them but, more importantly, to offer them as role models. Those of us who are still trying to work out our salvation can try to emulate some of the virtues displayed by those who were so close to God that they were recognized for their holiness.

What virtues of St. Theodore might we emulate? First, as a Sister of Providence, would she be true in divine providence. We can recognize that God has a hand in what happens to us: things don't happen just by accident. Not only must we accept what comes to us, but we should continually strive to discern God's will for us.

We can learn perseverance through adversity. St. Theodore, it must be remembered, accomplished all she did despite poor health that required her to eat bland and soft food. She frequently suffered from high fevers. The sisters built their motherhouse in the middle of a forest, sometimes had no food and experienced a fire that wiped out their harvest. But they persevered. Since Mother Theodore's arrival in 1840 with five other sisters, 5,239 women have entered the order.

Today, the congregation numbers about 465 sisters. The academy that Mother Theodore founded nine months after her arrival in 1840 is today the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

Above all, she was a woman of prayer. Everything she and her sisters did began with prayer. Ever since she was declared blessed, St. Theodore has had a feast day—Oct. 3. The Church has saints' feast days to encourage us to ask for their intercession. We believe in the communion of saints.

That means that we believe that a spiritual communion among the saints in heaven, the souls undergoing the process of purification before entering heaven that we call purgatory, and those of us here on earth.

St. Theodore, pray for us.

— John F. Pink

No only five countries have met that internationally agreed upon goal. The United States is not one of them. We give only 0.12 percent of our national income to poverty-focused development aid. That's just a mere 20 cents for every $100 of national income.

Sachs told me the $500 billion that the U.S. spends annually on the military may be propping up another regime that causes our government to continue to spend only one-tenth of that amount addressing the deepest poverty of the poorest of the poor. He added, “Data shows that the poorest regions are more likely to end in conflict. Politicians and rebels manipulate the poor. Great poverty often leads to great instability.”

In his encyclical “On Social Concerns,” Pope John Paul II wrote, “If ‘development’ is the new name for peace, war and military preparations are the major enemy of the integral development of peoples.”

Diverting approximately $60 billion from our annual military budget—the additional annual amount needed to end extreme global poverty—not only would lift 11 billion of the poorest people out of poverty, but it would greatly reduce international conflict, including terrorism.

He asked that we contact the president and our congressional delegation, urging them to honor our past promises to give 0.7 percent of our annual national income to poverty-focused development aid.

In http://www.unmillenniumproject.org we learn more about the international community’s plan to cut extreme poverty in half by 2015.

Sachs kindly asked everyone reading this column to donate $10 to provide a bed net to a malaria-carrying mosquito. Please go to www.unmillenniumpromise.org to make a donation.

Finally, reading Sach’s book, The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, is worth the effort.

(Tony Magliano writes for Catholic News Service.)

Making a Difference/Tony Magliano

Why are so many people poor in a world that has so much? This was among the questions I posed to one of the world’s leading economists.

Jeffrey Sachs, special advisor to U.N. Secretary- General Kofi Annan and former economic consultant to Pope John Paul II, told me that poverty is caused by practical problems that have practical solutions.

First and the poorest of the world’s, some 1.1 billion people, lack the basic necessities of life. These fellow human beings are begging for food. On a continent like Africa a day, are chronically hungry, unable to obtain health care, lack safe drinking water and sanitation, cannot afford education for their children and dwell in poor leaky huts.

They live in what the World Bank defines as “extreme poverty.” And extreme poverty, said Sachs, “is the poverty that kills.” Every year, more than “8 million people die because they are too poor to live.

In sub-Saharan Africa—the world’s poorest region—agriculture farmers depend on rain to water crops. But chronic drought often prevents plants from growing. Because villages lack electric power and roads, they are cut off from local and global markets. And malaria-carrying mosquitoes kill more than 1 million children each year.

But, according to Sachs, well can be dug, rainwater can be captured, insecticide seeds can be planted, diesel generators can be installed, power lines can be brought in, roads can be built and expensive mosquito nets can protect people from malaria during sleep. All are very doable solutions.

But what the 22 rich donor nations of the world need to do is honor past promises to give 0.7 percent of their annual income to poverty-focused development assistance. That comes to just 70 cents of every $100 of national income.

Letters to the Editor

Church teachings must be accurately portrayed

Two recent articles in The Criterion seem to oversimplify the Church’s teaching on social justice.

In his Sept. 15 column, John Valenti writes, “The Church teaches that killing is wrong.”

Without qualifying that statement, he goes on to argue that capital punishment is wrong and all wars are immoral. Yet, the Church, while setting limits on its use, has never condemned capital punishment in principle. Nor has it abandoned its traditional “just-war” theory.

The Church does embrace a “consistent ethic of life,” which links conditional evils (capital punishment, war and poverty) with inherent evils (abortion, euthanasia and embryonic stem-cell research).

That is because attention to the quality and duration of life matters. We believe in the sanctity of life.

The Church does not subscribe to the “skeleton garment” theory, which places all these issues on the same moral plane. Catholics are free to disagree on the first three matters, but they are non-negotiable.

In his Oct. 13 editorial, Dan Conway asserts that Catholicism is “pro-immigration,” by which he also means pro-illegal immigration. As he puts it, “Every immigrant, whatever his or her legal status, ought to be welcome.”

It is true that, as Catholics, we are bound to give special consideration to the poor and the homeless whenever we can. This does not mean that the Church commands us to promote lawlessness in the name of compassion.

Though it is our highest priority, the individual’s right to immigrate is not absolute. We must work against society’s right to maintain order and preserve its traditions. This is not “nativism,” but “communio.” It is simple common sense.

Distinctions like these matter at election time when Catholics are expected to vote with an informed conscience.

Stephen L. Bussell, Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of the views of the members of the People of God” (Communio et Progressio, 116).

We reserve the right to reject the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717.

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Page 48 The Criterion Friday, October 20, 2006

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Publisher Greg A. Otolski, Associate Publisher Mike Krokoski, Editor

Associate Publisher

Publisher

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Editor

Editorial

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Mi primer oficio es rezar para ustedes por todo el tiempo de mi ministerio. Esto es mi primer ministerio. Mi primera salida del hogar desde mi cirugía fue cuando Chicago me visitó el almuerzo. Es el primer día que la vida de su hijo se fue más allá de sus manos para el Cura. Deseo que comprendan esta premisa, queridos lectores. A pesar de que a veces no podemos encontrar la fuerza para rezar, no podemos dejar que la adversidad nos impida el agua. Dios quiere que ustedes se mantengan en la esperanza, porque el Padre significa descubrir qué es la bondad de la otra. Es decir, que no tenemos miedo de la otra. Siempre está en el Cura, porque esta bondad es ser un hombre de oración para todos nosotros. Cosque sus necesidades es de intercesión especial, yo diría que la otra. Pueden enviar sus peticiones de unión correcto a: Lista de oración del Arzobispo Daniel Archdiocese of Indianapolis 4100 N. Meridian St. P.O. Box 1410 Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410 Por supuesto, no tienen que estar en mi lista de oración para formar parte de las otras. Todos los días los incluyo a ustedes en mi oración en la presencia de Jesús en el Sagrario. Pueden enviar sus peticiones de unión correcto a: Lista de oración del Arzobispo Daniel Archdiocese of Indianapolis 4100 N. Meridian St. P.O. Box 1410 Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410 Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en octubre Pastores Juveniles: Que ellos siempre puedan transmitir a los jóvenes a considerar dando servicio a la iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes y religiosos.

My first ministry is praying for you ever y day

One day during the recent retreat for the bishops of Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, pese a estar aquejado por su propia crisis, el cardenal Francisco George of Chicago nos acompañó a almorzar. Fue su primera salida del hogar desde su hospitalización a principios de agosto.

Nos dijo que su reciente odisea debida a su seriedad infección y a tres cirugías distintas había afectado profundamente su vida. Enfatizó en el hecho de que lo más que más le había impactado en esta inesperada interrupción en su vida, fue el avasallante despliegue de oraciones pidiendo por él y su recuperación. Repitió varias veces que dicho despliegue de oraciones de intercesión de parte de todo tipo de personas de todas partes ocasionó un impacto profundo en su espíritu. Comentó que esto lo había hecho reflexión más cuidadosamente acerca de las prioridades de su oficio como ministro de la Iglesia. El testimonio del cardenal me hizo pensa sobre la importancia de las oraciones de intercesión en nuestra tradición católica y en mi ministerio como obispo.

La Epístola a los hebreos ofrece una reflexión sobre el sacerdocio eterno de Jesucristo y encuentra gran esperanza en el hecho de que siempre estamos incluidos en su oración eterna ante el Padre. “Porque éste posee un sacerdocio exclusivo porque permanece para la eternidad. De ahí que pueda salvar de forma definitiva a los que por él se llegan a Dios, ya que está siempre vivo para interceder en su favor” (Hb 7:24-25).

Resulta maravilloso pensar que Jesús siempre está rezando por nosotros. Significa que está rezando específicamente por usted y por mí.

Santo Tomás de Aquino dijo que la Providencia Divina se extiende a los detalles. Dios puede hacer eso. Es decir, no formamos parte simplemente de un grupo genérico. Sacerdotes y obispos se ordenan para compartir el sacerdocio de Dios de forma única, y eso significa que nosotros también debemos rezar por nuestra gente.

El difunto Papa Juan Pablo II hace referencia a este respecto en Pastores Gregis. “El Obispo muestra también su amor a la Eucaristía cuando, durante el día, dedica largos ratos de su tiempo a la adoración ante el Sagrario. Entonces, nos unimos a él en la adoración a la Eucaristía cuando, durante el día, dedica largos ratos de su tiempo a la adoración ante el Sagrario. Entonces, nos unimos a él en adoración ante el Sagrario.” (St. Peter Sartain a su congregación. (Le comenté a su gente: “Aprender a rezar significa ‘conocer al Padre’. Si quieres conocer al Padre, es de intercesión, es una profunda expresión de esperanza en Dios. Aunque nosotros creamos en Dios, no debemos olvidar que no es solo material y físicamente—paresa indicar que así es. El nunca te rechaza.”

Rezar en el nombre de Jesús, en oración de intercesión, es una profunda expresión de esperanza en Dios. Aunque nosotros creamos en Dios, no debemos olvidar que no es solo material y físicamente—paresa indicar que así es. El nunca te rechaza.”

Durante el retiro lei una columna que escribió mi amigo el Obispo J. Peter Sartain a su congregación. (Le comenté que planeaba tomar prestados algunos fragmentos de lo que dijo). Hago mis palabras como sacerdote y Obispo, es mi vocación y privilegio rezar a diario por ustedes. De hecho, es una expresión de amor por ustedes. Bajo esta premisa, quisiera extenderles una invitación. Si hay alguna intención por la cual desean que yo reza, séme envíe una breve nota por correo.
Vietnamese painting

The well-known oil painting of St. Theodora Guerin that was copied for a large banner for her beatification on Oct. 25, 1998, earned international recognition. The painting is a depiction of the saint as a young girl, surrounded by angels. It was donated to the St. Meinrad School of Theology, St. Bede Community, and was used in the formation of the Sisters of Providence. The art work was then returned to the artist, who donated it to the school in 1999. The banner was later replaced with a larger version that was used during the saint’s beatification ceremony on Oct. 25, 1998.

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Vietnamese painting

The well-known oil painting of St. Theodora Guerin that was copied for a large banner for her beatification on Oct. 25, 1998, earned international recognition. The painting is a depiction of the saint as a young girl, surrounded by angels. It was donated to the St. Meinrad School of Theology, St. Bede Community, and was used in the formation of the Sisters of Providence. The art work was then returned to the artist, who donated it to the school in 1999. The banner was later replaced with a larger version that was used during the saint’s beatification ceremony on Oct. 25, 1998.
Edward Fillenwarth Jr. At age 17, Edward Fillenwarth Jr. began running with his grown children as one more way of staying connected to them. Eight years and 15 marathons later, Fillenwarth still leads his life in new directions. For most of his career, the father of seven worked as a lawyer representing working people. “I’ve been influenced tremendously by the encyclicals on social justice,” Fillenwarth said. “There are about five or six that talk about social justice and about treating people fairly and justly—even to the extent of saying that everyone who works for a living not only has a right to support their family, but has a right to a reasonable amount for savings. So you have dignity as a human being.” That emphasis on human dignity has led to a new focus for the grandfather of 17, who is a graduate of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School in Indianapolis, Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis and the University of Notre Dame. He is now a national board member of Witness for Peace, a Washington-based organization whose mission is to support peace, justice and sustainable economies in the Americas. “[My wife] Val and I have developed a deep concern for the ever-increasing number of poor and disadvantaged people in this country and throughout the world,” said Fillenwarth, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis. “This gives me an opportunity to carry the goals I’ve had all my life into another area as a volunteer.” The Sisters of St. Francis who taught me at Seccina and Little Flower were a big influence in my life. They taught me the principles of honesty, dignity and integrity.”

Father Joseph Kern After 50 years as a priest, Father Joseph Kern knows the great influence that teachers can have on children and children can have on teachers. Father Kern remembers the influence that his parents and teachers at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis had on him as he began thinking about becoming a priest. I was a server there, starting at the end of the fourth grade, and it became very interesting in the Mass,” said Father Kern, a retired priest who continues as the dean of the Terre Haute Deany. “Family, church and school were all important in my decision. Catholic schools can be very influential in giving an atmosphere for a vocation to develop.”

Father Kern’s concern for children eventually shaped his approach as a priest to all people. As a young priest, he earned a master’s degree in special education, putting it to use as a chaplain at a state hospital, where he often worked with mentally handicapped children from 1965 through 1972. “Some were mentally ill. A lot were physically disabled, too,” he recalled. “Some were disfigured or deformed in some way. They were developmentally slow, but they could have beautiful personalities. One thing I learned from that was to look past the exterior to the interior with everybody.”

That philosophy has guided him ever since. “Try to see the person as a child of God, a human being. Wherever I’ve been, I look at people as the people they are. The experience at that hospital was a good experience that helped me as a priest. Being a priest has been a very joyful and rewarding life for me.”

Robert Koetter Jr. Robert Koetter Jr. is known as a “guardian angel” in the southern part of the archdiocese—someone who quietly and humbly takes care of things that need to be done, all in the service of God. “Everyone knows him as a business man, but he also has a very strong sense of faith and family,” said Ray Day, the director of development for Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville. “He includes Providence in his family.”

As president of Koetter Construction Inc., he recently helped to build and support a new performing arts center and athletic facilities at Providence. “It’s part of the way that he and his four brothers use their family-owned business to make a difference to Catholic education. “The last thing I wanted to do was go out and ask people for money,” Koetter recalled about the capital campaign. “Now after doing it and seeing the joy and appreciation of the students, faculty and staff, it’s very rewarding.”

Still, Koetter points out that his recognition on Nov. 8 is not just for him. “This award represents not only my work, but the work of the entire family.”

Koetter often speaks of the importance of Catholic education in his life, reflecting on his time as a student at St. Mary-of-the-Knoops School in Floyd County and Providence High School. “The biggest thing I like about Catholic education is that it teaches the same values and principles my parents taught me in my life,” Koetter said. “He is a very spiritual person,” Day said. “He is such a believer in the Catholic aspect of life as a teenager and how it molded him as a teenager. He comments frequently about the difference that time at Providence made in his life. He’s a gentle giant in a lot of ways, a giant who is always trying to help others.”

Alicia DeCoudreaux The letter from the young woman gave Alicia DeCoudreaux a sense of satisfaction as she read it. The note thanked DeCoudreaux for the scholarship she made possible for minority women—a scholarship that helped the young woman attend the same law school where DeCoudreaux earned her law degree.

As someone who attended Catholic schools from kindergarten to law school, Kate O’Beirne of National Review magazine is a natural keynote speaker for the 11th annual celebration of Catholic education in the archdiocese.

The event—Celebrating Catholic School Values: Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards dinner—will begin at 6 p.m. on Nov. 8 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. In the past 10 years, the annual dinner has raised more than $3.1 million to support need-based education scholarships for economically disadvantaged students.

As Washington editor of National Review, O’Beirne directs the magazine’s political coverage and focuses her writing on Congress and domestic policy. A frequent panelist on NBC’s Meet the Press, she has also experienced Catholic education as a parent and as a member of school boards.

Tables for eight people can be purchased at four different sponsorship levels: $15,000 for a platinum partner, $10,000 for a gold partner, $5,000 for a silver partner and $1,750 for a bronze partner. All sponsorship levels provide event recognition.

For more information about this event or to make reservations, call 317-236-1425 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1425.

Kate O’Beirne

Awards dinner raises tuition assistance for archdiocesan families in need of help

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WASHINGTON (CNS)—Grace Akallo’s voice was barely audible above the soft outdoor breeze as she described being forced to kill after being kidnapped as a teenager into a Ugandan guerrilla army.

“I was used and abused” for seven months by the Lord’s Resistance Army, she said at an outdoor news conference on Oct. 10 at Washington’s Russell Park on Capitol Hill.

In a calm, steady voice belying the gruesomeness of the events she described, Akallo told how she was given weapons training and used for sex by the guerrilla group based in northern Uganda.

“Ten years ago last night, I was abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army,” she said.

Akallo was one of 139 girls kidnapped on Oct. 9, 1996, from her dormitory at St. Mary’s boarding school in Aboke, Uganda, by the LRA, as the guerrilla group is known. She was 15 years old then and was given as a concubine to a senior guerrilla commander.

Akallo said she was forced to commit atrocities against civilians and some of her fellow captives. After seven months, she escaped during a firefight between Ugandan troops and the guerrillas.

More than 25,000 children have been kidnapped by the Lord’s Resistance Army during 20 years of fighting in northern Uganda, she said.

“I was once one of the children who are still enslaved by the LRA,” said Akallo. “I have a responsibility to speak out for the children who are still in the hell that I escaped.”

The news conference was part of a two-day lobbying effort organized by religious, peace, humanitarian, civic and public policy groups to get the U.S. government to take a more active role in supporting peace talks.

Among the organizers of the Washington lobbying effort was the Africa Faith and Justice Network, a coalition of Catholic religious orders with missions in Africa.

The Lord’s Resistance Army and the Ugandan government signed a cease-fire in August, but there has been little follow-up to get a peace treaty.

During the 20 years of fighting in northern Uganda, 200,000 people have been killed and more than 1.7 million people have been displaced, with many forced to live in makeshift camps. The war also has spilled into southern Sudan and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In October 2005, the International Criminal Court at The Hague, Netherlands, issued arrest warrants for LRA leader Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders.

Charges included the mutilation of civilians, forced abduction and the sexual abuse of minors.

Akallo and other speakers at the news conference said that U.S. support was crucial to getting a peace deal signed.

The United States is dealing with the symptoms of the war by providing humanitarian aid to northern Uganda, “but is not dealing with the problem of ending the war,” said Betty Bigombe, former chief negotiator for the Ugandan government in talks with the guerrillas.

Currently, government officials in southern Sudan are taking the lead to spur peace talks, but Sudan lacks the resources to monitor a peace agreement, said Bigombe.

Rep. Christopher Smith, R-N.J., said Congress and the Bush administration support the peace process, but the administration has not said so publicly. Smith pledged to be more active in getting the administration to break its silence and become more visible in promoting peace talks.

He noted that Akallo testified before the House in April and called her “the face of the liberated child soldier.”

Akallo, 25, currently is a student at Gordon College, a nondenominational Christian school in Wenham, Mass.

The prevalence of child kidnapping has given rise to a group of Ugandan children called the “night commuters” because they leave their rural homes at night to march to safer urban places to avoid being kidnapped.

According to background information provided by organizers of the news conference, in 2005 about 35,000 children left their homes each night.
Faith Alive!

There is no religious freedom for some Christians

By Br. David Carroll, F.S.C.

In coverage of world events, there is precious little information about Christian minorities living in a sea of Islam, Judaism or Hinduism.

Yet, the lands where these non-Christian religions are in the majority once were the locations of early Christian communities.

Today, the struggles between and among cultures often are based on misperceptions.

While the Christianity of the West and of the crusades is cited by fundamentalists of one stripe or another as the source of the tension between the Christian West and Muslim East, the truth is that Christianity is an Eastern religion. Jesus Christ never left the regions of modern Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan or Lebanon.

Early Christians actively proclaimed the good news in their region of the East. Some Christian Churches of India trace their roots to Thomas the Apostle. Christians of the East predated Islam by some 700 years.

In a strange way, these remnant communities are on the leading edge of interreligious dialogue with the majority religions, a process that must take place on four levels:

- Dialogue of the heart—or of charity—enables us to share God’s creation as partners.
- Dialogue of daily life calls us to promote human values that we share, with God as our guarantor.
- Dialogue of speech invites us to speak of the Lord and put aside our distractions with power, wealth and all that is not essential to God and humankind.
- Dialogue of silence asks us to listen so that God may speak with us, touch our hearts and inspire us to act as the Lord’s servants.

Many Churches are committed strongly to the dialogue of charity.

Schools, churches, hospitals and other human services in countries throughout the world are part of the Catholic Church’s infrastructure, and their services are open to the larger community.

While we speak of Baghdad’s Catholic hospitals or Jordan’s Catholic clinics, the majority of people served by these charitable ministries are not Christian.

These works of charity by local Churches lead to an engagement of the various faith communities in the dialogue of daily life, wherein shared values are promoted in daily commerce and by being a good neighbor and assisting people in need.

Often, Christians share the majority’s dress and customs. Christians among the Kurds dress as Kurds, who are Sunni Muslims. Indian Christians dress the same as Hindus. Ethiopian Christian and Muslim women wear the same headdress. Christians share in daily life, especially in urban areas.

In rural areas, one sees Christian villages, Muslim villages or Hindu villages, but commerce in them often integrates into a sharing of daily life by the people.

However, harsh global realities impact local Christian minorities in many countries. Fundamentalism—whether by Muslims, Hindus or others—endangers small Christian communities. Activities of extremists do result in the killing of Christians.

Hindu fundamentalism in India, associated with the BJP political party, confronts Christians, occasionally killing them. These killings often are lost from public view and publicity in the context of the larger Hindu-Muslim struggle in India.

Tragically, misinformation about the Christian West impacting Hindu culture and tradition avoids the reality that Christians have been in India for 2,000 years and are part of the traditional culture.

The number of Christians has increased in Israel due to Christian immigration from Eastern Europe and India. However, Arab Christians are leaving for greater opportunities in the West.

Their Arab cousins in Palestine are also leaving because of the political, social and economic instabilities of the region. All this is happening in the land where Jesus walked.

Another situation based on misinformation has occurred in Iraq. The war in Iraq has unleashed religious extremism that has affected Iraq’s Christians dramatically.

For their safety, Christians have fled from Iraq to live in Jordan or Syria. They are not alone as Westerners in the region despite the fact that they have been living in the region for 2,000 years.

Christians also are often subjected to discrimination in the workplace in largely Muslim countries. Although often qualified academically for jobs in governmental functions, such as health care or education, their Christian status precludes their employment or advancement within a structure controlled by the larger Muslim constituencies using sharia (Islamic law).

Christians may worship as they choose, but their access to gainful employment often is limited severely. Christians who can will come to the West in search of a better life.

Then there is the situation in Saudi Arabia, where several hundred thousand Christians serve as domestics and laborers.

No churches can be built in Saudi Arabia, a Muslim holy land.

Christian religious services must be conducted underground. Even chaplains ministering to the U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia cannot be classified as priests, ministers or rabbis. Officially, they are “moral officers.”

For Christians, there is no religious freedom in Saudi Arabia.

Where Christians in the East are minorities, a great deal varies in how they integrate with the larger society, ranging from open acceptance to limited acceptance under Islamic law, to discrimination in employment and services, to outright persecution and finally to no religious freedom at all.

Compounding these problems are the region’s various political instabilities. All have impacted the region’s Christians.

(Last year, I worked on a project involving the churches in Iraq’s Nineveh region. Our team interviewed a variety of religious spokesmen and scholars.)

(Christian Brother David Carroll is a Jesuit priest working on missions in the Middle East of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Middle Atlantic Muslim-Catholic Dialogue.)

Discussion Point

This Week’s Question

Do you know someone who has been made to suffer specifically for being a Christian?

“I know someone who suffered. He was steadfast and true, never backing down from his beliefs. . . . His name is Jesus.” (Caroline McNulty, Marietta, Ohio)

“I worked in a health food store, where I was the only Christian employee for a long time. Then a lady who is a Christian came to work. One day on her break, she asked me to help her pick out some supplements. When the store manager saw us, he got angry and accused us of talking religion on company time and said it wasn’t allowed. . . . I try to look at it as God showing me how it feels to be persecuted for your faith.” (Lois Diorio, Brattleboro, Vt.)

“There was a woman in the deep South who was home-schooling [her children] and always felt out of place when she got together with other parents in the network. Finally, she realized it wasn’t her, but the fact that she was the only Catholic in the group and that she had a different approach to a lot of subjects because of her faith that made her less welcome in the group.” (Laurie Wright, Mahomet, Ill.)

Lend Us Your Voice

How often does your family dine together as a whole? What special effort does this require?

To respond for possible publication in an upcoming edition, send your response to cnewspaper@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Eink

Prayer: An Association with God or Saint?
(Second in a series)

The classic definition of prayer is “the raising of the mind and heart to God in adoration, thanks-giving, intercession and petition.”

Part of that definition comes from St. John Damascene, who called prayer “the food of the soul.” We pray in order to connect our minds and hearts to God.

That, I think, is what most people think of as prayer, especially the part about connecting. I have to say, though, that I have always thought of prayer simply as a dialogue with God or with saints. We can talk about anything, and our conversation can take the forms of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, and petition.

God calls each of us to prayer. In fact, he always takes the initiative, as we did with Moses by speaking from the burning bush. What we do is respond to God’s initiative.

We divide prayers into vocal prayer, meditation and contemplation. Most of the prayers of the Church are vocal prayers, and I’m willing to bet that most people pray vocal prayers more often than they meditate.

We learn vocal prayer first, if we’re lucky, from our mothers and fathers when we are first learning to speak. “God bless Dad, God bless Mommy,” the prayer to our guardian angel, and so on.

Vocal prayer, of course, is the form of prayer that people group together, as a group, with their congregation or elsewhere. We use vocal prayer during liturgical celebrations, and Jesus himself taught his Apostles a vocal prayer, Our Father. The biggest problem with vocal prayer is that we do too easily become distracted while saying prayers so we may have learned by rote. Our minds can be miles away while we continue to pray the prayers we have learned by heart. This doesn’t happen only with the traditional ready-made prayers, such as the Our Father, Hail Mary and other prayers we say frequently, but even with prayers we have made up that express our deepest emotions.

I confess that this happens to me even while I’m praying after receiving Communion. Sometimes I find myself saying personal things I want to say to Jesus in this most intimate situation, in all my own words, and I’ve said them so often that they have become formulaic.

As far as I know, we can do without distraction is to acquire a kind of prayer, and we are aware of anything that interferes with the elimination of distractions—I think that they’re simply part of our human condition, but we can force them out of our minds as soon as we’re aware of them.

Although we must make every effort to concentrate on our prayers, I can’t imagine that God is really offended when we allow distractions to get in the way.

We are, after all, making an effort to pray. Our intention is to talk with God, and God knows that we humans are easily distracted.

Just in case we were in need of them, I have to say, though, that I have always thought of prayer simply as a conversation with God or with saints. I have never thought of it as a dialogue with secular press as well as the author of five books. (See www.angels1887.com). This book is filled to the brim with information, but is easy to read and especially easy to follow. If I were a knowledgable about Catholic high school or university teacher, I would use it as a textbook because of the comprehensive way that it is organized.

Material in the appendixes is especially helpful: glossary, sources for further reading, Internet resources, basic historical timeline (including key Marian dates), Marian feasts (more than 25) and an index.

As the author states in a note to readers, “Very innovative for the time and one of the significant religious books of the year.”

Today, Saint Mary of-the-Woods offers more than 90 programs which started in 1973.

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Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Will the real ‘Words to Live By’ please stand up?

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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2006

- Isaiah 53:10-11
- Hebrews 4:14-16
- Mark 10:35-45

The first reading for this weekend is from the Book of Isaiah, precisely from its third and last part. On several occasions, Isaiah describes, or refers to, a loyal and devoted servant of God who endures outrageous things and severe misfortunes. Yet this servant never gives up. He does not rebel against these unhappy events as they come to him. Furthermore, through, and from, these sufferings, great preludes in his own faithfulness, and the glory of God shines through all that happens.

While these verses were written many years before Christ, pious Christians always have seen in them a prefiguration of their gentle Savior, the innocent lamb of God, without sin and perfect, good and perfect, but the victim of viciousness and of the indifference of so many people. As its second readings, the Letter to the Hebrews, typically throughout Hebrews, the reading is strong in its Old Testament imagery, especially in the symbolism of the ancient rituals of the Jewish temple. In 70 A.D., the Romans destroyed the temple as a reprisal after the Jews unsuccessfully attempted to revolt against Rome. The priests were killed or scattered. The old rituals came to an end. They have not yet been restored.

However, for the first two-thirds of the first century A.D., these ceremonies—in which priests, a high priest, sacrifices and victims of sacrifices—were figured in the rites of the temple—in which priests, a high priest, sacrifices and victims of sacrifices—were performed. These readings call us to face all these realities. We live in a material world. As disciples, we look to the Spirit. We live in a world in which sin is strong, and sinners are many. It is a world with little love and justice, so we must swim upstream.

It will be difficult, and can only be accomplished with God’s help. But if we ask for it, God’s help will come. We can, and will, succeed in our purpose to be with God in the great new kingdom of peace and life.†

Reflection

The Lord came into the world as the Redeemer. His mission was to redeem or rescue, humanity from its own plight, a plight created by willful sin and voluntary rejection of God. Sin had disordered and weakened human nature. In many cases, sin reigned supreme in the world. To follow Christ with sincerity means to give all of self in the sacrifice.

He unfurls the mast. No ocean too vast—
No shoreline too far,
No shelter too sparse,
Nor prospects too grim—
No ocean too vast—
No shoreline too far,
No shelter too sparse,
Nor prospects too grim—

Tribute to St. Theodora

(Dorothy M. Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. She wrote this poem in honor of the canonization of St. Theodora Guérin by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15 at St. Peter’s Square in Rome. This photograph shows a close-up view of a likeness of Blessed Mother Theodore created by Indiana artist Teresa Clark. The 6-foot clay statue of the French-born, 19th-century foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods was commissioned by the congregation.)†

My Journey to God

Tribute to St. Theodora

No shoreline too far, No ocean too vast—
When God plants the seed He unfurls the mast.

No shelter too sparse, Nor prospects too grim—
Oward moves forward When guided by Him.

Toil tempered by prayer, Joy blended with tears—
Fruit from the seedling Has nurtured the years.

Awesome you frail, How far-th’thing the seeds—
We are the grateful Who feast on your deeds.

By Dorothy M. Colgan

Q In a recent column, you stepped way outside the teaching of the Church by denying the existence of hell. How can you say there is no hell when the Catechism of the Catholic Church and all Catholic theologians say otherwise? You will certainly be punished by God for misleading people and being the cause of their damnation. (Ohio)

A This was one of several letters that I received after that column, calling me everything from a heretic to an agent of the devil. If they prove nothing else, they taught, we cannot know.

Hell is possible. Without God’s grace, anyone still journeying on this earth could make horribly destructive, sinful decisions. But how God handles it all is hidden in his divine providence. We are grandly presumptuous if we think we know all the answers. As one of the great spiritual writers said, when speaking of the silence of God, “If we know the general plan of his providence, we do not know its particulars.”

What are we to do? What the pope and the practice of the Church tell us. In love for God and charity toward all his children, we pray for the salvation of everyone.

In many ways, in its liturgy and teachings, the Church implores God to bring our brothers and sisters “and all the departed,” all those who have died, “into the light of your presence” (Eucharistic Prayer II). It is an attitude that we might all try to imitate.

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped and self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 5515, Peoria, IL 61612.

Fr. John Dietzen

Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen, Box 5515, Peoria, IL 61612. Answers will be given in the column, if possible—in the light of faith and reason. Such rejection and alienation would be in itself irreversible and eternal, as far as we can know.

Hell is a condition of voluntary rejection of God. It is an attitude that we might all try to imitate.

(Dorothy M. Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. She wrote this poem in honor of the canonization of St. Theodora Guérin by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15 at St. Peter’s Square in Rome. This photograph shows a close-up view of a likeness of Blessed Mother Theodore created by Indiana artist Teresa Clark. The 6-foot clay statue of the French-born, 19th-century foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods was commissioned by the congregation.)†

Friday, Oct. 27

Ephesians 4:1-6

Psalm 24:1-6

Luke 12:54-59

Saturday, Oct. 28

Simon and Jude, Apostles Ephesians 2:19-22

Psalm 2:9-11

Luke 6:12-16

Sunday, Oct. 29

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Psalm 126:1-6

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52

Daily Readings

Monday, Oct. 23

John of Capistrano, priest Ephesians 2:1-10

Psalm 100:2-5

Luke 12:13-21

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Anthony Mary Claret, bishop Ephesians 2:12-22

Psalm 85:9-14

Luke 12:35-38

Wednesday, Oct. 25

Ephesians 3:2-12

(Responsa) Isaiah 12:2-6


Thursday, Oct. 26

Ephesians 3:14-21

Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 11-12, 18-19

Luke 12:49-53

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen
Nearly 200 young people in the archdiocese recently set aside a weekend to literally follow Jesus.

The fourth archdiocesan “Consumed” retreat, hosted by the archdiocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, was held from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in Bloomington. The retreat’s theme, “Emancipation through Consecration,” brought the students and their chaperones together for a weekend devoted to prayer and focus on the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

The group listened to talks that centered on breaking the chains of those things which attach them to the world and, as a result, becoming a slave of Jesus Christ.

Participants were also given the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation over the course of the weekend.

At the heart of the retreat was Mass, followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament as youths took part in several eucharistic processions.

“We, as Catholics, believe that Jesus is most truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, so a relationship and a recognition of his presence in this sacrament is essential to our youth,” said Father Jonathan Meyer, archdiocesan director of youth and young adult ministry and associate pastor of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.

It is Father Meyer’s hope that, through the “Consumed” retreat, young people will come away with hearts radically in love with the Eucharist.

“I hope for a heart willing to recognize Christ in the Eucharist and in one another,” he said, “a heart open to the will of God.” †
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School safety issues affect public, Catholic schools alike

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Recent deadly school shootings in particular and in the wake of the 20 years that have occurred in the one-room Amish schoolhouse in Pennsylvania, shattered an illusion that our schools are immune from violent attacks.

The incidents, two of them involving intruders, sparked an Oct. 10 summit convened by the White House. The Conference on School Safety took place after the latest school shooting victims had been buried, but while the issue was still top news with the Oct. 9 arrest of a 13-year-old student for firing an assault weapon in a Missouri middle school.

Summit participants, who included educators, police officials and White House officials and students, discussed ways to combat school violence, but they were leery about offering any sweeping solutions.

Speakers emphasized the need to have crisis plans in place and to practice them, to take bullying and threats seriously and to have open communications with school parents.

The daylong event in Chevy Chase, Md., highlighted local prevention programs and called attention to online resources available for schools, but did not introduce any new policies or program funding and was criticized by some for failing to mention the role of guns in school shootings.

Washington Archbishop Donald Wuerl, who attended the summit, said he was “identifying the best practices” in place for violence prevention. Catholic school officials need to be part of this discussion, he said, because their schools are just as vulnerable to external attacks as any other school.

Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, a Sister of Charity and an education professor at Spalding University in Louisville, Ky., said she was invited to a similar discussion several years ago with then-U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley. Talking about school violence was at least a starting point, she said, particularly since these incidents don’t show signs of abating.

In fact, Sister Mary Angela has been talking about school safety for the past 20 years. The nun, who is a lawyer and legal consultant to many Catholic schools and dioceses, has written several books and articles on school safety and frequently lectures on the topic across the country.

“For the first 10 years, no one took me seriously,” she told Catholic News Service in an Oct. 12 telephone interview recounting her pleas with Catholic school administrators to prepare for worst-case scenarios.

But that changed in the past decade, particularly after the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., and a shooting five years ago at a Catholic school in the Diocese of Scranton, Pa.

Today, she said, most dioceses mandate that their schools have crisis-management plans in place detailing what they would do in the case of an intruder or in an emergency evacuation.

Jocelyn Lofaro, a spokeswoman for Archdiocese of Indianapolis, said all schools are required to file a crisis-management plan each year with the archdiocese listing evacuation sites, families’ contact information, crisis team members and school floor plans.

“Schools take this very seriously,” she said, adding that the plans have been in place for at least four years. This fall, one school put its emergency plan to the test in an evacuation for a threat that turned out not to be credible. Because the plan was in place, she said, “the evacuation went smoothly.”

In the New York Archdiocese, crisis plans are not limited just to Catholic schools, but also to religious education programs.

But having plans is not enough, said Sister Mary Angela, who stressed that the plans must be practiced, just as fire drills, so that faculty members and students will be less likely to panic if an actual crisis were to occur.

She also noted that at the very least schools should lock their main access doors, require visitors to sign in and install outdoor surveillance cameras.

Sister Dale McDonald, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and director of public policy and educational research for the National Catholic Educational Association, said Catholic school administrators must also establish connections with local public school administrators and local fire and police departments to ensure open communication during emergencies.

Cursio likewise stressed the need for Catholic school administrators to work with their public school counterparts. And along that line, he cannot understand why nonpublic schools have been excluded from some of the emergency assistance the federal government provides to public schools. For example, since last year the government has been supplying emergency radios to public schools across the country as a means to alert school personnel of national or local emergencies or hazardous weather conditions.

The radios were developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and their $5 million price tag is funded by the federal departments of Commerce, Education and Homeland Security.

As Cursio sees it, private schools are just as susceptible to local and national emergencies, and should not be shut out from tools that might enhance school safety simply because they are not government-funded.

In a crisis situation, he said, “it’s all about communities pulling together.”

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