Bishop Chatard students foster vocational awareness

By Sean Gallagher

It has been said that the future of the Church lies in the hands of its youths. A growing number of students at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis are acting now to make that future a bright place.

They’re doing it by raising vocational awareness in general, and encouraging their peers and others beyond their school in particular to consider the possibility that God might be calling them to a priestly or religious vocation.

SERV (Students Encouraging Religious Vocations) began about a year ago when Mary Schaffner, Bishop Chatard’s director of campus ministry, suggested the formation of such a group to a handful of students.

Schaffner didn’t have a grand recruiting plan. She simply approached the first 10 students she saw in a school hallway that she thought might be interested.

“Every one of those 10 kids said, ‘I would love to do that,’” Schaffner said. “I don’t think they knew what they were getting themselves into.”

In the relatively short amount of time since the group was formed, it has quickly taken off.

The founding members formed the group’s mission statement and have initiated many activities.

They have spoken about vocations at five Catholic grade schools in the Indianapolis North Deanery and hosted a “Night of Faith and Fun” for junior high students.

SERV sponsors a weekly trivia contest at their school to raise vocational awareness and has arranged for speakers such as the archdiocesan vocations director, Father Eric Johnson, to speak to the Bishop Chatard student body on the topic.

The group has also grown from its initial 10 members to nearly 20 today. It meets twice a month and is currently restricted to juniors and seniors, although underclassmen have expressed interest in joining SERV.

The vitality behind its burgeoning membership and schedule of activities reflects the value that its student founders place on vocational awareness.

“The Church is something so special that I wanted to be … a part of making it as strong as it could be,” said Bishop Chatard senior Danny Shine, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

“I thought this group was a great way to do that. The priesthood and the religious life is so overlooked and discouraged in our society. It’s so important to … us that it’d be something worth fighting over and worth being a part of supporting.”

Danny and other SERV members are also drawn to encouraging vocational awareness because, like many youths, they are energized by a challenge and the see the priesthood and religious life as paths that truly test those who enter into it.

At the same time, they want others to see that God calls all kinds of people to these vocations.

“I think the most important part is that religious vocations, through this group, are being brought into the norm,” Danny said. “They’re extreme. But they’re not something to be feared [Priests and religious] are normal people living extraordinary lives.”

Although they value vocations as a challenge, members of SERV want to be lighthearted in their presentations.

“Since we’re young and energized, we try to make vocations fun,” said Bishop Chatard senior Kristen Metzger, a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.

“We try to think of fun things, like lock-ins or trivia questions,” added SERV member Kristen Metzger.

Pope Benedict XVI says the future of the Church lies in the hands of its youths. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Pope reflects on Eucharist, makes suggestions for Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Catholics must believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, celebrate the liturgy with devotion and live in a way that demonstrates their faith, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“The celebration and worship of the Eucharist enable us to draw near to God’s love and to persevere in that love,” the pope said in his apostolic exhortation, “Sacramentum Carmini” (“The Sacrament of Charity”),

The 131-page document, a papal reflection on the discussions and suggestions made during the 2005 world Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist, was released on March 13 by the Vatican.

When Jesus instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper, he did not simply thank God for the ways he had acted throughout history to save people, the pope said. Rather, Jesus revealed that he himself was the sacrifice that would bring salvation to fulfillment.

“The institution of the Eucharist demonstrates how Jesus’ death, for all its violence and absurdity, became in him a supreme act of love and mankind’s definitive deliverance from evil,” Pope Benedict wrote.

Celebrating the Eucharist, he said, “the Church is able to celebrate and adore the mystery of Christ” who is present in the bread and wine through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In addition to offering a spiritual reflection on the meaning of the Eucharist, the liturgy and eucharistic adoration, Pope Benedict made several concrete suggestions for further study and for celebrating the Mass in the Latin rite:

• While he encouraged wider knowledge and use of the Mass prayers in Latin and of Gregorian chant, he also repeated the synod’s affirmation of the “beneficial influence” of the liturgical changes made by the Second Vatican Council on the life of the Church.

• He encouraged bishops’ conferences, in collaboration with the Vatican, to examine their practices for the order and timing of the sacraments of Christian initiation: baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

• The three sacraments are administered together for infants and adults in many of the Eastern churches and for adults joining the Latin rite, while children in the Latin rite usually are baptized as infants, receive first Communion around the age of 7 and are

See POPE, page 16

Prayer waters the garden of our souls, writes columnist Julie McCarty, page 10.
School’s unique fundraiser to assist children with cancer

By John Shaughnessy

The story about the amazing gift of three Irish-Catholic men who shaved their heads one St. Patrick’s Day will come later.

So will the story of how a Catholic grade school in Indianapolis will become the first school in Indiana to hold an unusual fundraiser for children with cancer on March 22.

Both moments are part of the larger story that Chuck and Briget Chamness share—a story of heartbreak, faith and community that began two years ago at a special first Communion Mass for their twin sons.

It’s a story that still brings tears to Briget’s eyes.

At the time, Joey and Robbie Chamness were supposed to make their first Communion with their second-grade classmates at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis. Yet when Joey was diagnosed with bone cancer in his left leg in February 2005, all the plans of the Chamness family suddenly changed.

Everything focused on efforts to remove the cancer, to keep Joey alive.

Three days before the scheduled first Communion Mass at St. Thomas that April, Joey and his parents had to fly to New York for an operation that would remove the tumor from his leg, a surgery that his parents had been warned might require the loss of Joey’s left knee.

So on that Wednesday morning, a special first Communion was celebrated for Joey and Robbie during the weekly school Mass. The twins received the Communion hosts in a moment that touched many hearts.

As Joey and his parents left for the airport following the first Communion, they also left knowing that a prayer vigil in the church had been organized, a vigil in which members of the school and parish community would take turns praying, covering every minute from that Wednesday until Joey’s surgery was over on Thursday.

“Think of how thankful you would be when they had that prayer vigil,” Chuck Chamness says. “People we didn’t even know were signing up for a half-hour to pray for Joey being cured of the cancer, for the doctors and for his long-term success.”

When they met with Joey’s surgeon before the operation on that Thursday, the Chamnesses told Dr. John Healey, “Be careful, good luck and you have an entire parish in Indianapolis praying for you.”

Healey smiled and said, “I always welcome prayer and divine intervention.”

Before the surgery began, Joey had to remove his two favorite charms from around his neck. One was a charm that had a medal of St. Peregrine, the patron saint of cancer patients. The other displayed a shark’s tooth.

Joey had eyed the shark’s tooth several weeks earlier when his family—which includes his older brother, Charlie, and his older sister, Sally—spent that spring break in southern Florida. After the Chamness family took a boat ride through the Everglades, the boat docked near a tacky tourist shop. In Chuck Chamness hustled his children to the car, ignoring their pleas to linger in the shop until Joey asked his dad if he could get a necklace with a shark’s tooth.

“Told him why he wanted it,” Joey’s father recalls. “He told me when he loses his leg, he’ll be able to tell everyone that a shark took it off.”

Joey’s father let him get the shark’s tooth.

It was one of the memories that Chuck and Briget recalled as they wanted through the hours of surgery.

They thought of how Joey’s chemotherapy made his hair start to fall out in late February. 05. On that day a boy friend came to their house to shave the remaining hair from Joey’s head, Briget asked if he could get a shaggy look too. The team went to school “bald” together the next day.

By the end of the week, most of the boys in the second grade shaved their heads. So did several boys in the seventh grade, the grade that serves as older “faith partners” to the second-grade students.

Thus, Joey’s parents also thought about how their faith had changed since Joey’s diagnosis.

“I deepened my faith,” Briget says. “I wondered how people who don’t have faith could get through this. I felt my faith was a comfort. They say when you use something, it gets better every day. My faith got stronger. We knew however it turned out, we were going to be able to handle it. In one sense, we were all alone in the hospital. But we felt the support and prayers of this whole group.”

Chuck and Briget also had the support of several friends from across the country who unexpectedly arrived at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York to be with them in the waiting room.

Joey’s parents had accepted the likely possibility that Joey would lose his left knee during the surgery. What mattered most to them was removing the threat to Joey’s life. Yet when Healey approached them after the surgery, his news stunned them.

“The best news we got that day was he was able to remove the tumor,” Chuck recalls.

Healey also gave them the rest of the news: Joey’s knee didn’t have to be amputated. During the surgery, Healey removed three inches of Joey’s femur.

Then he replaced that section of the bone with a cadaver bone, which he connected with screws and brackets so the leg could bear weight while the bone healed.

“Joey was thrilled to keep his leg,” Briget recalls.

The success of the operation and the spontaneous nature of Joey’s leg delay allowed quickly to the St. Thomas community.

“I remember the prayer vigil as being a totally amazing experience,” says Karen Gardner, one of the vigil’s organizers and the physical education teacher at St. Thomas.

People really felt their prayers were answered when Joey didn’t lose his leg.”

Nearly two years later, Joey’s cancer is still in remission. The 10-year-old boy is able to walk and ride his bike. He’s also part of an effort to help children who have cancer.

During Joey’s early struggle with cancer, Chuck Chamness read an article in an insurance trade publication writing about three insurance executives from New York who came up with an unusual way to mark St. Patrick’s Day in 1999.

“They decided to shave their heads and do it with a cause in mind,” says Chuck, who also works in the insurance industry. “Their idea was to do it on St. Patrick’s Day, raise $17,000 on March 17, and give that money to children’s cancer research. Instead, they raised $100,000. They knew they were onto something.”

So those Irish-Catholic—and Tim Kenny, John Bender and Erda McDonnell—started the St. Baldrick’s Foundation in 2000 to raise funds for childhood cancer research because they had known children with cancer while they were growing up.

The organization raises money by getting people to shave their heads—a sign of solidarity with children who have lost their hair because of cancer—and obtain donations from family and friends.

In 2006, the year when Chuck and Joey Chamness were “poster boys” for the St. Baldrick’s Foundation, more than 11,000 people shaved their heads and more than $8 million was raised.

On March 22, St. Thomas Aquinas School will become the first school in Indiana to hold a schoolwide St. Baldrick’s head-shaving event. About 30 people have already signed up to get their heads shaved, including students, Karen Gardner, at least one parent and even Joey Flynn.

“We all know what Joey has been through,” Flynn says. “I think the entire community would do anything so that some day in the future we won’t have other little kids going through the same thing.”

Gardner remembers what it was like two years ago when he had to get his head shaved during his chemotherapy treatments. He remembers how much it meant to him when Robbie and others showed their support of him by getting their heads shaved.

“I was nice because I wasn’t the only bald person in my class,” he says.

He will shave his head again this year, this time as a sign of support for others, like the support he and his family received.

“Few people feel the love of a parish concentrated on them like we did when Joey was sick,” his father says. “You just don’t know how powerful that can be until it happens to you.”

(For more information about the St. Baldrick’s Foundation and St. Thomas event, call 888-899-BALD or check the Web site at www.StBaldricks.org.)
McQuade: Dialogue can change minds, hearts to respect life

By Mary Ann Wyand

Scripture offers advice on how to communicate the Gospel of Life to people influenced by the culture of death. Deirdre McQuade told pro-life supporters attending the third annual Catholic Pro-Life Dinner on March 3 in Indianapolis.

Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well can help pro-life supporters talk to abortion-minded people, she said, and even change their minds and hearts to respect life.

“Abortion doesn’t help women,” she said, but often “they know somebody who has had an abortion and they feel they can’t talk to themselves pro-life because that would mean ‘I reject her.’”

McQuade, who is the U.S. bishops’ primary spokesperson on abortion and related life issues, said an estimated 47 million unborn babies have been killed in abortion since 1973, but actually “we have no idea just how much blood has been spilled because of abortion in this country, and that’s just the United States.”

The Scripture passage from the Gospel of John (Jn 4:1-42) helps us trust that God is at work in and through us, she said, and that the least not this side of heaven.

“God somehow enters into the brokenness and nastiness of our lives and suffuses it with his Spirit when we’re open to it,” McQuade said. “We, like Jesus, are called to engage others for the culture of life. … This is the work of evangelization. This is what we can do to create the thirst in people. … [Then] say, ‘Jesus Christ is the only answer to that thirst, and making life-affirming choices and serving your neighbor are the ways we live that out in gratitude to God’s goodness to us.’”

Pro-life supporters also heard a testimonial from Kirstie Mack of Gary, Ind., who had an abortion several years ago then chose life during a crisis pregnancy last year and received help from the Gabriel Project.

During the dinner, a diocesan priest and six lay volunteers in central and southern Indiana received Pro Vita Awards for distinguished service to the cause of life.

The award recipients were Father Shaun Whittington, chaplain and religion teacher at Father Michael Shaefer Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison; Christ the King parishioner Elizabeth Sowinski of Indianapolis; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Kathleen Sadler of Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette parishioners; St. Pius X parishioners Tom and Jackie Quarte of Indianapolis; St. John the Apostle parishioner Pat Cur of Bloomington; and St. Thomas More parishioner Bernadette Roy of Mooresville.

Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, said after the dinner that she appreciated McQuade’s comments about ways to talk with people who support the culture of death in society.

“What struck me about her thoughts was the emphasis that Jesus always met people exactly where they were and tried to take them beyond that in terms of doing God’s will,” Sister Diane said. “In order to accomplish that, he always initiated a dialogue and was always open to the other person, and that openness is where the truth can slip in.”

“I think in our dealings with people who are so-called pro-choice,” she said, “what we have to do is meet them where they’re at and try to take them beyond that, utilizing a dialogue, finding common ground where possible, but always leaving that openness so that God’s truth can enter into that person’s heart, mind and soul. We don’t want to be so abrasive that we close off any possibility or hinder God having an impact on that person.”

The third annual fundraiser was sponsored by the Office for Pro-Life Ministry, the Gabriel Project of Indiana and Catholics United for the Faith.

“The Office for Pro-Life Ministry and the Gabriel Project collaborate, and all the good that is accomplished is made possible by a network of volunteers,” Sister Diane said. “The pro-life office has many programs … and this dinner helps bring in the necessary funds to continue to work effectively in pro-life ministry.”

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A plant seeds of faith. through our example, is the best way to charity through sports—and to have about evangelization,” noted Josh Waltz, about winning. First and foremost, it’s part are to be commended even more for players and all players who have taken about what’s wrong with America today could fill this page. The ever-expanding secular society we live in, punts tell us, has led to people accepting abortion on demand as a matter of course. It has resulted in prayer being taken out of public schools, and has led to heated debates about Christmas and how we as a society can celebrate—or not celebrate—this joyous season in our town squares and public schools.

We, as a society, have also embraced reality TV programs but continue to ignore the realities that are on our doorstep: continued poverty, high crime rates and a country whose moral compass seems to be spiraling out of control by the day. While experts of all kinds don’t mind turning turns showcasing all that’s wrong with America—and some even take great delight in piling on to a certain extent—we should not ignore the life lessons that people of faith are teaching us, lessons that are worth emulating.

A simple soccer tournament has given a group of men a platform to showcase their athletic ability—and faith—to millions of people around the world. The 16-team Clercias Cup, a soccer tournament for priests and seminarians being held through June in Rome, has planted a seed for sportsmanship that too often goes unnoticed in today’s “win it or lose it” mindset that engulfs many young people and their communities.

While the Pontifical North American College should be funded for its early 2-0 record in the soccer tournament that too often goes unnoticed in today’s “win it all, no matter what it takes” mindset that engulfs many young people and their coaches.

While Bishop Chatard senior Eleanor McReynolds, left, looks on, Bishop Chatard senior Kristen Metzger, right, speaks at the school on March 8 about her enthusiasm in promoting vocational awareness as a part of her membership in the school’s organization SERV (“Students Encouraging Religious Vocations”).

Evangelizing at all ages in life

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Letters to the Editor

We must address abortion, the scourge of our nation

Well, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade came and passed again with hardly a word from the pulpit. All Americans must know that Roe v. Wade has taken more lives during the last 34 years (47 million unborn babies) than all the wars in the history of our great country.

If we are to continue as a great country, our young people will have to lead us out of darkness, but we won’t have young people to grow up and lead us as we continue allowing abortion. Adoption offers an alternative that is both loving and life-giving. Contraception and abortion are rotten fruits of the same tree. Unless this is addressed from our pulpits, abortion will remain the scourge of this nation.

May God have mercy on us, lathy and clergy alike, for our spiritual sloth.

Al Scheller, Elizabethtown
W hat do clothes matter to a human body which is about to be crucified? Jesus is stripped of his garments—children of God are not permitted to work without being hampered.”


Von Balthasar reflects that since the time in the Garden of Eden, as fallen humanity we have been covering ourselves with all sorts of clothing: from fig leaves and animal skins to the latest fashion of today.

He reflects: “On Calvary everything is cast away: the new Adam stands before the Father as he is, having freely taken upon himself the sins and shame of the old Adam… On the cross man fully manifests himself, and God restores to him his lost dignity—his most precious gift to mankind.” (Ibid.)

There is a divine irony here. In his utterly degraded state from the cross, Jesus would restore us from sinfulness to the original dignity of humanity; once more, we can reclaim the image of God within us—this time at the dawn of creation. Once more, God is a God with us within us—the original gift at the dawn of creation. More fruitful than the first, Mary, together with the Father, gives to humanity the body of Christ, who under the most atoning suffering, has himself freely to all.” (Ibid. p. 44-45).

I am reminded of a statement of Pope Benedict XVI in his book God is Near Us. He speaks of what we mean when we declare our faith in God as a living God: “But what does it mean when we call this God a living God? It means that this God is not a conclusion we have reached by thinking.” (Ignatius Press, 2003, p. 11).

Our belief in a living God is a personal response of deep love for having been delivered from the fate of being separated from the one whose love cannot be surpassed.

The Holy Father reflected on God’s gracious gift to us through the incarnation of his son. He wrote about the new birth which was on high that was needed by humanity, a rebirth from water and the Spirit in baptism. He said: “To become a Christian means to be brought in to share in this new beginning. Becoming a Christian is more than turning to new ideas, to a new morality, to a new community. The transformation that happens here has all the dramatic quality of a real birth, of a new creation” (Ibid. p. 23).

And so we speak of our rebirth in baptism. On Easter Sunday, we will reaffirm our belief in the living God who restored us to life through the degrading death of his son on the cross. Jesus endured the stripping and torture of the cross so that we might receive back our freedom as sons and daughters of God. Our freedom is restored by the redemptive Christ, but to be honest it is often lost because of our personal sin. The great news is that even our personal sin has been vanquished through the gift of God’s mercy which Jesus gave us after his death and resurrection. A worthy act of gratitude on our part would be to strip ourselves of the burden of the personal sins we may carry. We can experience God’s divine mercy won by Jesus.

It is as near as our parish churches in the sacrament of penance and reconciliation.

Despojándonos de los pecados personales por medio de la reconciliación

¿Qué importancia tiene la ropa para nosotros en el momento en que será crucificado? Jesús es despojado de su atuendo para permitir a los soldados trabajar desnudos en este momento (Ibid.).

De esta manera Hans-Urs von Balthasar comienza su reflexión sobre la 10ª estación del Vía Crucis: (El Vía Cruzis, St. Paul Publications, 1990, p. 44).

Von Balthasar reflexiona que, desde los tiempos en el Jardín del Edén, como humanidad que cayó en la desgracia, hemos estado cubriendo nuestros cuerpos con ropa de todas las épocas hasta las últimas modas de hoy en día.

Reflexiona: “En el Calvario todo es nuafrague el nuevo Adán se presenta delante del Padre tal como es, habiendo asumido libremente los pecados y la vergüenza del viejo Adán… En la cruz el hombre se manifiesta a plenitud y Dios le devuelve su dignidad perdida—el más precioso regalo de la humanidad.” (Ibid.).

Existe una fruta divina en todo esto. En este estado totalmente deteriorado en la cruz, Jesús nos rescata del pecado y nos devuelve la dignidad original de nuestra humanidad: una vez más podemos recobrar la imagen de Dios en nosotros, el obsequio original en el apogeo de la creación. Una vez más, Dios no deposita en nosotros, y no un Dios distante y ensimismado.

Von Balthasar reflexiona: “En cada una de las celebraciones Eucarísticas a lo largo de los siglos él le entrega a la humanidad su cuerpo simple. ‘El cuerpo de Cristo’, dice el sacerdote cuando imparte la Comunión—‘que quita los pecados del mundo’; el cuerpo que lleva sus pecados y las heridas infligidas en él.” (Ibid. p. 44). Parcializa como si el despojamiento de la ropa fuera un símbolo preliminar de Jesús que ha aceptado los pecados de la humanidad por todos los tiempos, para poder recuperar nuestra dignidad humana.

“El Padre ve cómo el viejo Adán—quien todos representan—hacía regenerar en Jesús, el nuevo Adán. Mary, también, la sorrowful mother, seeing his Son stripped of his garments, recalls the time when she carried him in her womb and gave birth to him. What she experiences now may be likened to a second birth, nonetheless more fruitful than the first. Mary, together with the Father, gives to humanity the body of Christ, who under the most atoning suffering, has himself freely to all.” (Ibid. p. 44-45).

I am reminded of a statement of Pope Benedict XVI in his book God is Near Us. He speaks of what we mean when we declare our faith in God as a living God: “But what does it mean when we call this God a living God? It means that this God is not a conclusion we have reached by thinking.” (Ignatius Press, 2003, p. 11).

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¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a: 
Lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Título de la oración: "El Cristo Redentor nos devuelve la libertad"
March 16
Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 72nd St., Indianapolis. Catholic Business Exchange, Mass, 6:30 a.m., buffet breakfast and presentation. Information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.com

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 5670 W. 92nd Ave, Indianapolis. Lenten fish fry, 4:30-7:30 p.m., $5/person. Information: 317-339-3379

March 17
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 5354 N. 30th St., Indianapolis. Helpers of God’s Precious Infants Pro-Life Mass, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1590 or 800-382-9386, ext. 1596

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. St. Patrick’s Day Mass, 12:10 p.m.

March 18
MKVS and DM Center, Rev Ville (located on 925 South, 8 miles east of 421 South, 12 miles south of Versailles). Covenant Sunday, March 18, 10 a.m. Information: 812-897-4135 or 317-272-8289.

March 19
Catholic Committee on Scouting, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. “God Filling Our Heart and Mind: Prayer and Holy Reading,” St. Meinrad.

March 20
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. “Drug Awareness Night,” par ents and teens. 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-253-4077

March 21

St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. St. Augustine Guild, “Day of Recollection,” Father Rick Ginther, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $10/person. Information: 317-849-7809 or 317-257-3059.

March 22
St. Anthony Parish, 379 N. Wau m Ave., Indianapolis. Lenten fish fry, 6-7 p.m., $5/person. Information: 317-636-4828

Fiscal management conference is May 2 in Beech Grove

The archdiocese’s annual conference on fiscal management and discipleship will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on May 2 at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove. The conference is designed to meet the training and information needs of parish administrators, finance council members, stewardship council members, business managers, bookkeepers and volunteers handling bookkeeping or stewardship functions. It will focus on fiscal management, stewardship, accounting techniques and human resource issues.

Registration is $30/person or $25/person before April 1. For more information or to register, log on to www.archindy.org/findy or call 317-236-1423 or 800-882-9836, ext. 1423.
Parishes schedule annual Lenten penance services

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

Due to space constraints, penance services scheduled later during Lent may be omitted from the list in this week’s newspaper. However, the entire schedule is posted on The Criterion Online at www.CriterionOnline.com.

Batesville Deanery
March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, Etnochsburg
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg

Bloomington Deanery
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville

Connerville Deanery
March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget, Liberty

Indianapolis North Deanery
March 18, 3 p.m. deanery service at St. Pius X
March 19, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Pius X

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Bambas
March 20, 7 p.m. for Good Shepherd and St. Roch at St. Roch
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Ann
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
April 2, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
March 27, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
March 29, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels

New Albany Deanery
March 18, 4:30 p.m. for Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, and St. Mary, New Albany
March 20, 7 p.m. for St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville,
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Clark County
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Bernard, Frenchtown
March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
March 29, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
April 1, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

Seymour Deanery
March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, North Vernon
March 20, 7:30 p.m. at St. Anne,

Jennings County
March 21, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace, Madison
March 20, 7:30 p.m. at St. Anne, Jennings County
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Jennings County

Tell City Deanery
March 18, 3 p.m. deanery service at St. Paul,
Tell City
March 21, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad

Terre Haute Deanery
March 22, 7 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville
March 22, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Patrick, Terre Haute
March 29, 1:30 p.m. deanery service at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
March 29, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Benedict, Terre Haute

Lenten activities available online
Be sure to visit The Criterion’s Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent. The page consists of links to daily readings, a Lenten column by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features.
Bill to boost savings accounts for poor gaining momentum

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A bill to boost savings accounts for the poor is moving through the Indiana General Assembly and gaining momentum toward final passage.

House Bill 1075, which deals with individual development accounts (IDAs), passed the Indiana House by a 98-0 vote on Jan. 30, and also unanimously passed the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee on March 6. The bill is authored by Rep. John Day (D-Indianapolis) and co-authored by Rep. Mike Murphy (R-Indianapolis).

Rep. Day said during his 31 years in the Indiana General Assembly his agenda has always been twofold: “to promote dignity, and to widen the circle of opportunity for those who are left out.” He said his agenda is based on the moral framework of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter “Economic Justice for All.”

In addition to the IDA bill, Rep. Day has authored two other bills this year to help low-income families—House Bill 1027, which would increase Indiana’s minimum wage, and House Bill 1074, which would increase the earned income tax credit for working families.

Rep. Day got his idea for the individual development accounts bill more than a decade ago after meeting Michael Sherraden, author of Assets & the Poor: The New American Welfare Policy, at an Eastside Community Investments meeting in Indianapolis.

“The premise of Sherraden’s book is poor families have nothing to pass on to their children—no house, no family business,” Rep. Day said.

“The book asserts that if poor families are ever going to get out of poverty, they need to be able to build assets so they can have a stake in their community,” Rep. Day said, “and also so they will have assets to pass on to children like a home or a family business. That’s the theme of the book, and the theme of the IDAs.”

Following a successful two-year pilot program run by Eastside Community Investments using individual development accounts, Rep. Day thought, “Why not try this on the state level?”

In 1997, Rep. Day authored a bill to create a four-year pilot program statewide which was enacted the same year. In 2001, he authored a bill to make IDAs permanent. It became law.

House Bill 1075 increases the state-matched annual funds from $900 to $1,200. It creates a new category for spending the IDAs to include home improvements, and it increases the total number of IDAs which can be created each year from 800 to 1,000.

Rep. Day said the bill also creates “an accelerated savers feature” which rewards people who are able to save double the $400 annual savings goal. For example, individuals who save $800 in one year are given $2,400 in matching funds by the state that year.

“If there is an individual who works two jobs, and is industrious at saving, it will allow the individual to reach their dream of going to college, buying a home or starting a business quicker with this accelerated feature,” Rep. Day said.

“Our country has a long history of helping people get started, including the Homestead Act in the post Civil War era, to the GI bill, to modern times by helping homeowners deduct mortgage interest from their taxes,” Rep. Day said.

“But poor people can’t take advantage of the deduction of interest from their mortgage if they are not homeowners,” he said. “So the individual development accounts were created 10 years ago to help the poor save money to build assets.”

Rep. Day added, “House Bill 1075 will strengthen the foundation of a successful program that widens the circle of opportunity for modest and low-income families by allowing them to build assets for their future, and the future of their children.”

— Rep. John Day

Twenty-five other states offer IDAs for low-income individuals or families. Indiana was one of the first states in the nation to enact IDA legislation. The Indiana Catholic Conference was instrumental in getting the original IDA program passed 10 years ago.

Sen. Luke Kenley (R-Noblesville) is the Senate sponsor. House Bill 1075 is now eligible for second reading on the Senate floor.

(Adapted from a March 6 story by Brigid Curtis Ayer for The Criterion.) †
get people talking and excited about vocations.”

Kristen said she hopes the challenge of priory and religious vocations, combined with the group’s fun-filled approach to them, will help others view them as real options.

“They just wanted to make the priesthood and the religious life sound as exciting as being married because they’re all vocations,” Kristen said.

The students’ enthusiasm for vocational awareness has, in part, been encouraged by the good examples they’ve been given.

“I think we have really great priests and youth ministers and teachers right now that . . . know that there is so much in youth, and that we’re the future and we have so much to contribute,” said SERV member Eleanor McReynolds, a senior at Bishop Chatard and a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis.

“So having adults encouraging youths to find that in themselves has led people to look more at the religious life, their morals and their values.”

Father Johnson, who before becoming archdiocesan vocations director was Bishop Chatard’s chaplain, thinks SERV is one more instrument to foster a culture of vocations throughout the entire faithful in the archdiocese.

“It keeps the question in front of the community’s eyes,” he said. “Vocational discernment and encouraging priory and religious vocations in the Church is not something that belongs to me or to a particular subgroup, but it is something that really involves the entire community of faith . . . There is joy and there is life and there is goodness there.”

“I think we’re trying to plant a seed in everyone’s heads by asking them questions and getting them talking about it and trying to get them excited about it,” said Kristen. “I think that’s where it will start. Then, hopefully, it will just go on from there.”

Wherever that goes, SERV members are excited about the Church’s future.

“We’ve seen so many people that are so passionate about their faith and so passionate about the Church,” said Danny. “You can’t help but be excited for what’s to come, because it’s going to be good.”

(To learn more about SERV, log on to www.bishopchatard.org and click on “campus ministry.”)
At certain points in our lives, God leads us into new ways of praying. Perhaps we feel a hunger to spend more time meditating on the mysteries of the rosary than praying the Hail Marys. We may discover the only prayer we know is “Give me!” and decide to dig deeper into reading the Gospels. Our time of eucharistic adoration, formerly filled with litanies, becomes mostly a time of loving prayer. St. Teresa of Avila, often regretted not spending more time with the rosary than praying the mysteries. She consulted many spiritual directors and “learned men” (as she called them). Most of all, she prayed. She put her mind and heart into becoming completely one with “Her Majesty” (one of her names for God).

Teresa often found it difficult to find the right words to explain what she knew to be true about prayer. Because of this, she used simple comparisons. Teresa sometimes commented that her own analogies made her smile because of their inability to fully communicate the idea, but she hoped her readers would understand. One of her famous analogies is found in her spiritual autobiography, in which she compares four ways of watering a garden to four phases of one’s prayer life. Teresa compares the soul of a person who is ready to get serious about praying to a garden bed that has been stripped of its weeds by God, who then plants good seeds (of virtue). The soul is ready to begin prayer “for real.” The garden (the soul) must be watered by hand, drawing it from an aqueduct or a “water-wheel” tool of Teresa’s time to crank the water by hand, drawing it from an aqueduct system. The gardener, that is, the person who prays, gradually finds prayer a more peaceful occupation. Teresa speaks here of the “prayer of quiet.”

A third type of prayer is like a garden that is watered by an irrigation system or a stream channelled off a river. One opens a gate, and the water floods the garden of the soul with very little effort. Because of the flooding, the water seaks deeper and remains longer. The flowers, Teresa says, are blossoming.

Finally, Teresa speaks of a fourth type of prayer: the rain that falls from heaven upon the garden of the soul. The person may experience a deep union with God at special times of the Lord’s choosing. One may find oneself “in the garden” (as Teresa used the imagery) and the water floods the garden of the soul. You can order these items off the menu at Murphy’s every day!!

For a truly blessed Lent this year, allow your heart to open to God in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal ways of praying that draw you closer to the Divine One who loves you immensely, thereby also leading you into deeper love of others and all of God’s creation. For love—genuine Christ-like love—is the real goal of prayer.

By Julie McCarty

Special to The Criterion


Lenten reflection
Prayer: Watering the garden of our souls

(Ed. note: This is the third in a three-part Lenten series reflecting on the spiritual practices of fasting, almsgiving and prayer.)

By Julie McCarty

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Special to The Criterion

God’s love gives us life in every way possible

By Sr. Genevieve Glen, O.S.B.

“...It is characteristic of the greatest love to give itself as food,” said St. Albert the Great (1206-80). He was speaking of the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Jesus himself said, “As I have loved you, so also you should love one another” (Jn 13:34).

If Jesus gives us his love as food, so must we try to do this for one another. Think for a minute about what good, nourishing food does for us. It keeps us alive, as fully alive as we can be. That means it helps us not only to breathe in and out, but also to think, feel, reach out to the world around us with curiosity and concern, exercise our creativity, seek truth and beauty, and even reach for the stars.

In other words, food makes it possible for us to do all those things that characterize human beings at their best. It helps to keep us healthy, gives us strength and makes us grow. A good diet is necessary for the human well-being that God intended us to have.

Christian charity always has found all sorts of ways to feed the hungry so that even the poorest might benefit from Jesus’ mission: “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (Jn 10:10).

Now think about what poor nutrition does—not for us, mind you, but to us. Whether poverty or affluence deprives us of a balanced diet, we are diminished. Our energy is depleted. Our minds grow dull. Our bodies grow sluggish as our bodies grow tired. We become an open door to disease.

The circle of our interest can dwindle to the size of a plate of food—either food that we love so long for but cannot afford or food that we crave and consume without limit. In every way, we are impoverished.

Healthy love, like a healthy diet, bears fruit in healthy human beings. God’s love gives us life in every way possible.

Our love for one another is more modest, but it rewards both givers and receivers with a fullness of life otherwise out of reach. Remember the person who pushed and pulled you through school until you discovered that you loved learning?

Remember a time you loved someone enough to let that person walk away into his or her own future, leaving you behind.

Healthy love gives us strength. It makes us grow beyond the place we started. Unhealthy love saps us and shrinks us. Possessive love consumes another person in order to feed the one who “loves.” It deprives us of the strength and freedom to “become.”

Demanding love sucks us dry: “If you loved me, you would...” Hypercritical love shrinks our confidence to nothing: “You always mess it up!”

Sometimes what is called love is merely self-love in disguise, and sometimes the mask is very thin! You will notice that not much has been said about feelings. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) said that to love is to feel warmly toward someone every minute of every day.

Feelings fuel and are fueled by love, but building decisions on feelings is like building on sand. Love that relies entirely on feelings will blow away in the next storm. The feelings must mature into commitment, choice and action if love is to stand firm.

Warm feelings might draw us to a person—spouse, parent, child, sibling, friend or neighbor—but only commitment will keep us there when the warmth has cooled under the pressure of illness, work, financial stress, anger or hurt. Noble feelings might get us to choose the cross, but they rarely survive the pain of the nails.

Action is the ultimate measure of love. What will I do or refrain from doing for the sake of those I love without begrudging the cost to myself?

Jesus shows us the only true answer: “On the night he was handed over, [he] took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me’” (1 Cor 11:23-24).

(Benedictine Sister Genevieve Glen is a member of the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colo.)

Choice is essence of real love

By Andrew and Terri Lyke

Falling in love is so automatic that it seems even gravity participates in the choice of each other for life. Then life happens, and the experience of love becomes something that we do, not just something that happened to us.

That’s where married people inevitably find themselves. Choice is the essence of real love. We choose our beloved and turn away all other possibilities. This love is more than how we feel. It is despite how we feel.

In this deeper stage of love, spouses live their vocation and become who they need to be for their marriage’s sake. Love shapes them and transforms them.

Passionist Father Donald Senior, a biblical scholar at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, said, “The heart of sin is the loss of memory.” We sometimes forget our promise. We forget the other’s dreams and remember only our own. This is why married couples need a loving community to help them remember when they forget and to call them back to their true selves when they have forgotten who they are and whose they are.

Marriage as a vocation is a daring promise to commit to an unknown future. Spouses can’t do it without faith. Marriage remains intact with the exercise of patience, forgiveness, reconciliation and fresh starts.

As we submit ourselves to the marriage and become shaped by its needs and demands, we die to ourselves and rise to our new selves to better lead our families and be light to our communities.

(Andrew and Terri Lyke are marriage educators and marriage coaches from the Chicago Archdiocese. He is coordinator of marriage ministry in the Chicago Archdiocese’s Family Ministries Office.)

Discussion Point

Love is evident in service

This Week’s Question

What is love NOT?

“Love is not expecting something in return. When you do something, you do it because the person needs your help and you’re available.” (Amelia Sledz, St. Clair Shores, Mich.)

“When a person witnesses an injustice in their community and does not respond in any way—that is NOT love.” (Barb Olson, Detroit Lakes, Minn.)

“A controlling/possessive person in a romantic relationship is not loving. The person will say he’s so in love that he must have the other person all to himself when, in reality, a healthy love relationship focuses upon wanting what is best for the other person.” (Carol Shkerich, Cleveland, Ohio)

“Love is not distrustful, it is not unkind or impatient. ... Love is not just for the young. It is not just for the beautiful. ... Love is NOT to be missed.” (Loretta Gesa, Pocatello, Idaho)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: In your view, what form of injustice too often is overlooked?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to gerene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
Praying to discern God’s will for us now

(From a 3-week series)

In his Introduction to the Divine Life, St. Francis de Sales wrote: “True devotion consists in a constant, regular and active will to do whatever we know is pleasing to God.”

If that is true devotion consists of, it is also true that our constant prayer should be to be able to discern what is pleasing to God.

What is pleasing to God is to do his will—“They will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” It’s our vocation in life.

But if the heart of our initiation practice is that we do something beautiful for God, then we must learn from experience that the limitations of strength and energy can spur us to overextend ourselves. We learn, adjust and give what we can. Still, when we try to discern what more we should be. Even when disagreeing, that still brings us closer to God.

As the Lebanese-American poet and artist Khalil Gibran wrote, “A disagree- ment might be the shortest cut between two hearts.”

Continue Lent with blessings and peace, dear readers! Let us fortify our souls so that the remaining 40 days of the season and our time thereafter can be more holy and wholly fulfilling. We learn from our mistakes, problems and pain. Still, when on the right spiritual track, we acknowledge what was, enjoy that is and anticipate whatever more shall be. Even when disagreeing, that still brings us closer.

There are many symbols associated with the Irish as a people. However, “St. Patrick must be proud. The shamrock and the Irish heritage that it represents in our American culture.” The headline of the newspaper article that announced of shamrock’s origins is blameworthy.

Well, the shamrock story may be a bit of blarney, but it is also true. What I mean by this is that the story I once read in a history book was almost full of immigrants and first generation born in the country. Irish, German, Italian, French, English, Spanish, Catholics, Jews and Protestants inhabited most of Manhattan Island.

The city was known as the melting pot of the world. Things were hard for the working man, but it was a time when people helped each other and everyone seemed happy. They had a feeling of being in their new country and in the future.”

Mary’s stories are humorous and endearing. She knows from her New York policeman on the boats in the harbor

Shamrocks and the authentic Irish experience

The shamrock is a cherished Irish symbol and part of St. Patrick’s Day celebration.

At the beginning of the year, many of our good intentions are replaced by the way life goes by, making us realize that some of them are merely dreams or wishful thinking. Lent is completely different. It prepares us for what’s ahead—the giving of ourselves to others and the remembrance and re-living of what Jesus, his Son, gave to us.

The bottom line is: We know that, despite our hopes or plans, we really must deal with the circumstances that face us each day, whether good or bad, doing the best we can under whatever the circumstances. Lent fortifies our efforts as we approach each day.

That probably seems mundane, but it is true. As writers, speakers, priests, nuns, teachers, philosophers, artists, saints, sinners and simple experience has taught for centuries. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is unknown and today is the only reality we have. We should use each day in the best way possible in as many positive ways as possible.

This does not mean discriminating of ourselves more than we can physically, mentally or emotionally handle. I have learned from experience that the limitations of strength and energy can spur us to overextend ourselves. We learn, adjust and give what we can.

Lent is a time to nourish ourselves more spiritually. Consequently, not only do our spirits benefit, but our minds and hearts do as well. Our penance, prayers and meditation, and our charitable and volunteer focus can be better because of Lent.

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

What was ... what is ... what even more shall be

For the first time, I was more retrospective than ever when 2007 arrived.

Now, with nearly a quarter of the year spent, I find myself being more introspective, following the Lenten example. The reason is Lent, of course.

For me, the year’s beginning, I thought of the mistakes of the past year as well as contemplating what I’d like to accomplish the rest of the year. We have nearly finished the 2006 calendar. Now, with nearly a quarter of the year spent, I find myself being more introspective, following the Lenten example. The reason is Lent, of course.

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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 18, 2007

- Joshua 5:9a, 10-12
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

This weekend, the Church observes Lucture Sunday, the name derived from the first word, in Latin, of the Entrance Antiphon. The word “lucture” means “rejoice.” The Church rejoices not that Lent is approaching its close, but that salvation finalized in the resurrection of Jesus is near.

To underscore this theme, priests may wear rose vestments. Rose is violet with a tinge of red. It reminds us of the first rays of the sun as they sweep across the horizon after a dark night. Christ, the light of the world, is coming.

The Book of Joshua, the first reading, looks far back into the history of God’s people. At the point of this story, they are almost finished with the long and threatening trek across the Sinai Peninsula. They have faced hunger, even starvation. After all, the Sinai Desert is bleak and unforgiving in its sterility and deadliness.

Into this situation, however, came God with the gift of manna from the sky. The manna sustained the people. They did not starve. They survived. However, as they approached the Promised Land, God imposed the supply of manna stopped. They had no more need of it. The Promised Land provided them with unending plenty. For centuries in pious Jewish eyes, he waited on pigs, the lowest of low animals, in pious Jewish eyes. Nevertheless, the father forgave all and gave a wonderful inheritance to the wayward son.

Paul’s urgency also underscores his insistence that nothing else matters but life with God. Following Jesus makes a person a “new creation” and the things of Earth including death, no longer matter.

For its final reading this weekend, the Church gives us, from Luke’s Gospel, the beautiful and reassuring parable of the Prodigal.

Much of the parable is self-evident, even to us in the 21st century. Certainly quite clear is the uncompromised, constant love of the father, who is a symbol of God. However, some powerful messages may be lost until we consider the context. For example, the Prodigal was not the older son. As such, he was not his father’s heir. The father owed him little if anything. This, of course, highlights the son’s desertion of his father. Jews at the time of Jesus prized loyalty to parents, expressed in loving care and attention. Next, the Prodigal entered into relationships with prostitutes. This was aberrant for Jews. It scorned the sanctity of marriage and the family. It meant that the pure stock of God’s people might be defiled by the birth of children to pagan women in such relationships. Finally, the Prodigal stooped so low that he waited on pigs, the lowest of low animals, in pious Jewish eyes.

Nevertheless, the father forgave all and gave a wonderful inheritance to the wayward son.

Reflection

The Church is excited and joyful. Salvation is near. Lovingly, it calls us to salvation, to be with God in, and through, Jesus.

However, to be with God, to enter the Promised Land, we must complete a journey of purification and unending plenty, we all must be new creations in Christ. This is the hard part.

We must turn from sin and selfishness. Even to think of turning away from sin, or to God, may seem at times a tall order. We may be angry. We may have our doubts. We may be greatly ashamed. It is of no matter God loves us and awaits us with the greatest mercy and forgiveness regardless.

Rejoice therefore! God waits for us with open arms! Lent still has a few more weeks. There is time.

**Daily Readings**

**Monday, March 19**

- Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary
- 2 Samuel 7:4-6a, 12-14a, 16
- Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29
- Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22
- Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a

**Tuesday, March 20**

- Ezekiel 47:1-19, 21
- Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
- John 5:1-16

**Wednesday, March 21**

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

**Thursday, March 22**

- Exodus 32:7-14
- Psalm 106:19-23
- John 5:31-47

**Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen**

**Friday, March 23**

- Toribio de Mogrovejo, bishop
- Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22
- Psalm 34:17-21, 23
- John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

**Saturday, March 24**

- Jeremiah 11:18-20
- Psalm 7:2-3, 9b-12
- John 7:40-53

**Sunday, March 25**

- Fifth Sunday of Lent
- Isaiah 43:16-21
- Psalm 126:1-6
- Philippians 3:8-14
- John 8:1-11

**Official Catholic teaching doesn’t mention limbo**

Q: In my 1963 National Catholic Almanac, a glossary of terms defines “limbo” as a place and state of rest and natural happiness for infants who die without baptism. Can you comment? Is this really the Church’s teaching? (New York)

A: Though much was formerly written about limbo (Latin for “fringe” or “border”) even in Catholic catechisms, official Catholic teaching, in fact, had very little to say about it.

For centuries, it was assumed that God took care of unbaptized children in his own way, a way unknown to us. Later, for historical reasons we cannot go into here, a statement by an 18th-century European Church synod was translated into the idea of a limbo for unbaptized children.

During the past 50 years, the Church has hugely enhanced its way of viewing the salvation of children who die without baptism.

One seldom hears the word “limbo” anymore. For example, it isn’t mentioned in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which touches on everything seriously connected with the Catholic faith.

The reason seems to be that limbo implies some sort of two-tiered final destination for human beings. One is eternal life with God. The other is a “natural” happiness apart from God (limbo) where people “go” who, for no fault of their own, do not reach the top level.

We believe, rather, that there is only one final destiny for all humanity, eternal life with the God who created us. We may attain that goal or reject it by our own fault, but there is no half happiness somewhere in between (catechism #1718-#1719).

God has told us much about his plan for salvation, and he expects us to believe and follow what he says. But there is also much he has not told us.

As Pope John Paul II wrote in his book Crossing the Threshold of Hope, God is unendingly at work in the sacraments “as well as in other ways that are known to him alone” (page 134).

The catechism says much the same: “God has bound salvation to the sacrament of baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments” (#1257).

Q: Can there be two female godparents for a baptism? Also, we have a 12-year-old relative who would like to be godfather. Is that possible? (New Jersey)

A: According to the Church’s regulations for the baptism of a child or an adult, there may be one male or one female sponsor, or one of each. The regulations do not allow for two men or two women (Canon #873).

Among the requirements for a godparent is that he or she be a Catholic who has been confirmed, has received the Eucharist, is living a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and is at least 16 years old, unless an exception is made for a special reason (Canon #874).

It is clear from both canon law and the rite of baptism that only one godparent is actually required.

When only one Catholic sponsor is assigned, a baptized non-Catholic may stand in place of the second sponsor. This person is not a godparent in the strict sense of the word. He or she is referred to as a “Christian witness” to the baptism.

Something similar could be possible in the case of a younger potential “sponsor.” Also, some Catholic cultures customarily desire a larger number of godparents. In this case, the parents would designate two as the sponsors of record in the parish baptism register. The others would serve as honorary sponsors. In any case, all details for the baptism liturgy need to be worked out with the priest or deacon who will officiate at the baptism.

**Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column**

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

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

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**My Journey to God**

**Master Builder**

St. Joseph, Builder of Peace, fashion in us strong sanctuaries of faith and hope.

Guardian, who can lift the burden of our tangled striving, cut through the conflicts that block our growth.

Set us free for the way of simplicity in a spirit of grateful trust.

Teach us your serenity, that we may move through joy and sorrow together with tranquility of heart.

Build tall and strong our lives of faith, crafted firmly in love, made beautiful in peace.

By Sr. Mary Grace Melcher, O.C.D.

(The Disenrolled Carmelite nuns of the Monastery of St. Joseph in Terre Haute wrote this poem for their nine-day novena to St. Joseph held from March 11-19. A stained-glass window depicts St. Joseph in the chapel at Our Lady of Consolation Church in Merrillville, Ind. St. Joseph is the patron saint of carpenters and laborers as well as the patron saint of many countries. His feast day is celebrated on March 19.)

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Benedicte Sister Bernice Kavanagh served at hermitage as administrator of St. Paul Hermitage and as a minister to military families at a U.S. Army base in Fort Rucker, Ala.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Arizona and North Dakota, and taught religious education to military families at a U.S. Army base in Fort Rucker, Ala.

During her retirement years, Sister Bernice provided support services at the monastery and served in the sisterhood’s prayer for lily. She also served as the president of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 47875 E. 7th St., Indianapolis, IN 47875.

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- **A bachelor’s degree in accounting, finance or a related field is required, and a master’s degree is preferred. The position requires leadership skills, written and verbal communications ability, and significant experience in financial reporting and analysis.**

- **If you meet these qualifications and are interested in supporting Catholic education in urban schools, please send a cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:**

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  - Archdiocese of Indianapolis
  - P.O. Box 1410
  - Indianapolis, IN 46206

  - E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org
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**Pope**

continued from page 1

confirmed several years later.

"It needs to be seen which practice better enables the faithful to put the sacrament of the Eucharist at the center as the goal of the whole process of initiation," the pope said.

In expressing his concern for the number of Catholics unable to receive Communion because of irregular marital situations, Pope Benedict confirmed Church teaching that those who have been divorced and civilly remarried without obtaining an annulment are not to receive Communion.

However, the pope encouraged bishops to ensure they have fully trained and staffed marriage tribunals to deal with annulment requests in an expeditious manner.

* Pope Benedict said the sign of peace at Mass "has great value," especially in demonstrating the Church's responsibility to pray for peace and unity in a world too often troubled by division, violence and hatred. While Catholics at Mass should exchange a sign of peace with those near them, he also called for "greater restraint" to ensure the moment does not become one of irreparable distraction.

The pope said, "I have asked the competent curial offices to study the possibility of moving the sign of peace to another place [in the Mass], such as before the presentation of the gifts at the altar. To do so would also serve as a significant reminder of the Lord's insistence that we be reconciled with others before presenting our gifts to God.

* The pope also said the Church should consider providing new texts for the rite of dismissal at the end of Mass so that Catholics would understand better the connection between what they have just celebrated and the fact that they are sent out in a mission to bring God's love and truth to the world.

* Pope Benedict said in order to help Catholics "believe, celebrate and live ever more fully the mystery of the Eucharist," several Vatican offices are preparing a compendium of texts, prayers and explanations of the Church teaching on the Eucharist and of the eucharistic prayers used at Mass.

* He called for a general improvement in the quality of homilies and said bishops have a particular responsibility to ensure that the liturgies they celebrate provide an example for the whole diocese of a liturgy celebrated with dignity, beauty and fidelity to the approved rites.

* The pope asked Catholics to pay more attention to how their postures and gestures at Mass communicate their faith in the Eucharist, particularly by "kneeling during the central moments of the eucharistic prayer."

* "Amid the legitimate diversity of signs used in the context of different cultures, everyone should be able to experience and express the awareness that at each celebration we stand before the infinite majesty of God, who comes to us in the lowliness of the sacramental signs."

* As for Church architecture, Pope Benedict encouraged parishes to ensure their facilities are fully accessible to people with disabilities and that the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament is "readily visible to everyone entering the church."

In churches which do not have a Blessed Sacrament chapel and where the tabernacle is still in place, it is appropriate to continue to use this structure for the reservation and adoration of the Eucharist," he said.

In new churches, it is good to position the Blessed Sacrament chapel close to the sanctuary, where this is not possible, it is preferable to locate the tabernacle in the sanctuary, in a sufficiently elevated place," he said.

However, the pope said, the "final judgment on these matters belongs to the diocesan bishop."

In the letter, Pope Benedict also formally reaffirmed the obligation of celibacy for priests in the Latin rite and the fact that, in most cases, Catholics and other Christians should not share the Eucharist, which is a sign of full unity in faith.

He reminded Catholics of the obligation to be in a "state of grace," free from serious sin, before receiving Communion, and of the fact that by receiving Communion they are publicly proclaiming their unity with the teaching of the Church.

"Respect for human life, its defense from conception to natural death, the family built upon marriage between a man and a woman, the freedom to educate one's children and the promotion of the common good in all its forms ... are not negotiable," he said.

Politicians and lawmakers must introduce and support laws inspired by those values, the pope said.

Pope Benedict said, "bishops are bound to reaffirm constantly these values as part of their responsibility to the flock entrusted to them."

But the pope did not mention his position on whether or not bishops should declare publicly that they would withhold Communion from a politician who does not accept Church teaching.

* At the Vatican press conference presenting the document, Italian Cardinal Angelo Scola of Venice was asked what the papal position was.

* "He does not want to say that which he does not say," the cardinal said.

The pope reminded bishops that they must call all Catholics, particularly politicians, to coherence of faith and action, "but he cannot subordinate himself to pastoral prudence of the bishop," the cardinal said.