‘Welcome home’

Priests, laity sing praises of returning to reconciliation

By Sean Gallagher

Like many Catholics today, Father Bill Williams once struggled with the sacrament of reconciliation. Even in his early years as a college seminarian, he remained away from it. Then one night, something happened. He heard a priest give a presentation on confession during a retreat. I got up and walked out on the talk,” said Father Williams. “I went back to my room and I started reading. I kept getting up and started writing down my sins on a piece of paper, but I’d think, ‘This is stupid,’ and I’d go back to reading. “It’s not that I didn’t believe in the sacrament. It was that I believed, at that point in time, that it had been so long and I was too far gone,” he said, “and I was certain that if I went into that confessional the priest was going to tell me I was the worst person on the face of the earth, and there was no way I could ever be a priest and to forget it.”

After “wrestling with the Lord” for a while that night, Father Williams finally went to the priest whose talk he had walked out on and made a sacramental confession. The first thing he said to me, which is what I say to people now that come to me who have been [away] from the sacrament for a long time, was ‘Welcome home.’ ”

Now, as the chaplain at Father Thomas Seccia Memorial High School in Indianapolis, Father Williams offers confession three Fridays a month.

Priests in other schools and parishes also make the sacrament available on a frequent basis. However, they’re finding it sometimes takes a while for people to regularly take advantage of this opportunity.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaeidel, archdiocesan vicar general and pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, said confession started to be offered for half an hour before each Mass in the parish about eight years ago, but that it took a couple of years before many of his parishioners started making use of the sacrament on a regular basis.

Now, he says on average about 75 people go to confession each week. Priests in other schools and parishes in the archdiocese also make the sacrament available on a regular basis.

Above, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaeidel demonstrates giving absolution during the sacrament of reconciliation on March 27 in the Holy Family Chapel at the Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

Influence of others motivates Spirit of Service winners

By John Shaughnessy

Martha and William A. Kuntz watched in awe as a man they both loved continued to help others in the last month of his life. “In September of 1984, my father was whittled down to nothing by cancer,” Kuntz says about his father, William F. Kuntz. “Still, when people came to him, he cheered them up. I remember the final thing he got out of bed for. A neighbor who was in some kind of trouble came to see him. He struggled to get out of bed to help this guy who was down and out. My dad died a few weeks later. That stayed with me.”

The lasting influence of fathers, mothers, grandparents and other role models is a common theme among this year’s Spirit of Service Award winners, a group that will be recognized on April 26 during a dinner that benefits Catholic Charities Indianapolis. For Louise Collet, it was the example of her Irish grandmother and the religious sisters who taught her compassion. For Dr. Raymond Pierce Jr. found his role model in his father who showed courage and intelligence in confronting racism. For Dr. Mercy Obseme, the inspiration came from growing up as the oldest of 10 children in a small, poor village in Nigeria and knowing that her parents believed that education could change lives.

For Gil Viets, it was the example of a “family” of farmers after his father suffered a heart attack. Here are their stories:

Martha and Bill Kuntz

When Bonnie Schott began compiling all the different ways that Bill and Martha Kuntz have touched the lives of others, she soon discovered that her longtime friends told the people they have helped that they wanted to keep their efforts quiet and private. “I heard about a mother who needed help at Christmas,” Schott says. “She said she could make a big difference in the lives of her six children with $300. I called Bill and Martha to ask for the first $100 and they said, ‘We’ll take care of the whole thing.’ I have gone to them several times for help on projects, and they not only say yes immediately, they always give way more than I had hoped for.”

Schott shares other examples of how the couple helped contribute to a computer lab

For Dr. Mercy Obseme, the inspiration came from growing up as the oldest of 10 children in a small, poor village in Nigeria and knowing that her parents believed that education could change lives.

For Gil Viets, it was the example of a “family” of farmers after his father suffered a heart attack.
CONFESSION

basis in their homilies.

“I think we have found that the best approach is to talk about the fact that we’re all sinners and we all need God’s mercy, and God’s waiting for us in this sacrament,” Msgr. Schaedel said. “I think preaching hell and fire and brimstone and so on—you’re not going to get anywhere with that.”

When Father Williams first offered regular confession at Scenica in the fall of 2005, he sat alone in a makeshift confessional next to his office.

“For the first month, I sat in there and nobody came,” he said. “Then finally, one week I had two or three that came. The next week it probably doubled.

“There have been Fridays [now] that I’ve heard confessions from 11 in the morning until 3:30 in the afternoon. I’ve had to write passes for them to go back to class.”

Depending on the level of their other commitments, priests who serve as high school chaplains might try to make time like Father Williams to offer confession on a frequent basis.

Msgr. Schaedel noted that for him and other similar parishes, it’s easier to offer confession on a regular basis because two priests are on its pastoral staff. Therefore, he understands why other parishes that either have only one priest or share a priest with one or more parishes have confessions less often.

Still, Msgr. Schaedel appreciates hearing confession frequently and wishes that other priests could do so, too.

“It makes me realize that no form of life, married or unmarried, is perfect,” he said. “And also, in a general way, it kind of gives me some ideas on what... I should be preaching about.

“What are the everyday struggles and temptations and problems that people are facing? It gives you a much greater appreciation for where people are coming from in their lives.”

God heals through confession, D’Ambrosio tells audience

By Sean Gallagher

The sacrament of reconciliation is an important way that God heals us when we have been wounded by the poison of sin.

This was a central part of the message that Marcellino D’Ambrosio delivered when he spoke on March 14 at Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis as a part of its “Spaghetti and Spirituality” Lenten speaker series.

“The Lord wants to heal us,” said D’Ambrosio, who earned a doctorate in theology at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., while studying under Cardinal Avery Dulles.

“It’s not just a question of being forgiven. When we sin, we hurt ourselves and we hurt others. He needs to get in there and heal the wound and get the venom out. That’s what he wants to do for our good.”

D’Ambrosio said that, just as we go to a doctor when we’re very sick, we should also go to confession when we know that we’ve committed a mortal sin, a sin that involves a serious matter and is done knowingly and freely.

However, he said that confessing only venial sins, while not required by Church law, can be a good practice.

“There’s a difference between the minimum of the law and what’s best for optimal health of the soul,” D’Ambrosio told the 200 people in attendance at the Holy Rosary program.

“Do any of you want to drag your rear ends through life just surviving... or do you want to thrive? So why wouldn’t you want to thrive spiritually?”

D’Ambrosio encouraged his listeners to prepare for reconciliation by prayerfully examining one’s conscience.

“There is one prayer that God—let me guarantee you—you’ll always answer,” he said. “Just ask him, ‘Lord, what am I doing wrong?’ He’ll answer that prayer.

“And you know who sometimes he uses? If you’re really having a problem, ask your spouse, ‘What am I doing wrong?’”

D’Ambrosio also suggested meditating upon scriptural passages such as 1 Cor 13, Ex 10, Mt 5 or Gal 5 when examining one’s conscience.

“When a person goes to confession, D’Ambrosio said three things need to be present: contrition, confession of sins and Yearbook

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Comprehensive plan to focus on Terre Haute Deanery

Sacred Heart of Jesus School to close in June

Archdiocesan officials lamented the ending of the school’s 83-year-old tradition. “The sense of loss is shared throughout the entire archdiocese,” said G. Joseph Peters, associate executive director of Catholic education for the archdiocese. Peters said serious efforts to keep the school open this long included a school study, reorganization of the school structure, Home Mission grants from the archdiocese and incurring of parish debts.

While the study found no reason to keep Sacred Heart School open beyond this school year, it also suggested that “if a deanery-wide plan for Catholic schooling takes place in the coming months, strong consideration should be given to the Sacred Heart site for some of the preschool and/or primary grades.”

Trying to help Sacred Heart families choose a school next year, St. Patrick School leaders were scheduled to have an information night for Sacred Heart parents and their children on March 28.

Archdiocesan officials said the archdiocese is committed to funding and creating a plan for the Terre Haute Deanery that would use a multi-parish collaboration for the first Catholic education deanery-ministry: adult faith formation, religious education, youth ministry, Catholic schooling and campus ministry.

The integrated approach “allows for a stronger Catholic identity in the deanery with the Church as its center,” Lenz noted.

The study found that “there are too many Deanery parishes for the current number of Catholics.” At the same time, the study noted that “parishioners strongly value their parish community and Deanery planning needs to be respectful of this important reality.”

The planning process will be a unique opportunity for the Catholic community of Terre Haute to come together and plan for their future, Peters said.

“The study uncovered a great sense of hope for the future in the Terre Haute Deanery,” Peters said. “There was great participation in the study. There was a stated willingness to collaborate. I think people were looking at the important reality.”

The planning process will be a unique opportunity for the Catholic community of Terre Haute to come together and plan for their future, Peters said. “I’m encouraged by the study,” said Father Rick Gunther, pastor of St. Patrick Parish and St. Margaret Mary Parish, both in Terre Haute.

“From this will grow a strategic plan for the Terre Haute Deanery for how we will be the Church in the future of the deanery.”

“We can’t keep doing it the way we are doing it for a number of factors: the number of priests, the total staffing and the aging of our buildings. The study will be an important step to do a very healthy and viable presence in the future.”

The study acknowledges that “there are too many Deanery parishes for the current number of Catholics.” At the same time, the study noted that “parishioners strongly value their parish community and Deanery planning needs to be respectful of this important reality.”

The planning process will be a unique opportunity for the Catholic community of Terre Haute to come together and plan for their future, Peters said.

“The study uncovered a great sense of hope for the future in the Terre Haute Deanery,” Peters said. “There was great participation in the study. There was a stated willingness to collaborate. I think people were looking at the bigger picture. We saw hope-filled people with a sense of the greater good.”

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The biggest sin committed against the poor and the hungry is indifference, the preacher of the papal household told Pope Benedict XVI and top Vatican officials.

Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, the leading traditional Friday Lenten reflection on the Vatican on March 22, said Christians are called to help remedy the injustice of poverty, not turn away hoping others will resolve the problem.

“The parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus is being repeated today among us on a global scale,” he said, with wealthy nations representing the rich man living in splendor and the developing world representing Lazarus who longed to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table.

“Just as the rich man’s gate kept Lazarus at bay, ‘We tend to put double-paned windows up between us and the poor’ that shield against and muzzle the severity of the poor’s plight,” Father Raniero said.

We see the poor on the move, writhing, screaming on the other side of our television screens, in the newspaper...but their cries reach us as from afar. They don’t reach the heart,” he said.

But, he said, “the biggest sin against the poor and hungry perhaps is indifference, to pretend not to see...to ignore the immense multitude of people starving, begging, homeless, without health care and above all without hope for a better future.”

The “scandalous abyss” between the haves and the have-nots is “the most pressing and colossal task” that humanity must remedy, the Capuchin priest said.

The Gospels encourage people to react to other people’s suffering with love, compassion and mercy, not indifference, he said. Also, the Gospels do not urge the poor to seek justice on their own, he added.

Seeking, at all costs, to find examples or explicit calls in the Gospels to the poor and hungry to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps is fruitless and anachronistic,” he said, emphasizing that Jesus himself confronted “the ie and sarcasm of the rich” and did not leave that task to the victims of hunger.

The preacher told Vatican officials that wealthier Christians must concretely help their more unfortunate sisters and brothers.

“Among the millions of Christians who will go to Mass next Sunday, there are some—and we are some of them—who have every gift of God at their disposal when they go back home and others who have nothing to feed their own children,” he said.
Believing, celebrating and living the sacrament of charity

The recently published apostolic exhortation "Sacramentum Caritatis" ("The Sacrament of Charity") is a wonderful resource for adult faith formation. By calling our attention to the Eucharist as the source of divine love, it offers a path to holiness for the home, in the workplace and in the community, and celebrates in our all daily affairs—in ourselves, in our families, in our parishes, in our schools, classes, our understanding and practice of this eucharistic mystery. But this is more than a cause for Catholic charity; our Campaign to Reduce Poverty on America is a call to action for each of us.

Catholic social teaching says that evidence of extreme poverty amid plenty is a serious violation of moral values and a threat to the common good of society. Poverty is a moral and social wound that hurts all when it hurts one. As the book of Sirach reminds us: "Remember the time of hunger in the time of plenty, poverty and want in the day of wealth" (Sir 18:25). These times of hunger and poverty are impacting a growing number of people. Between 2000 and the year 2004, the number of people living in poverty in our country increased by 5.4 million. Anita Crawford and her family are among the faces behind this sobering statistic: 

"Listen to what the thorns say, the nails, the wounds, the divine blood. Oh, what a sermon!"

-St. Paul of the Cross

"The crucifix is the key of paradise."

-St. Francis de Sales:

The Catholic world treasures the crucifix. Why? Because the Passion of Christ is the central core of Catholic spirituality. A survey of some of the saints illustrates this. I think it’s important to reflect on these words, especially during Holy Week, when we number the days leading up to Good Friday, the crucifixion. I compiled reflections of great saints from Magnificat and recently shared them with my Men’s Christian Center group at St. Charles Parish in Indianapolis. I wanted to also share some of them with readers of The Criterion because I believe it’s a moving time to reflect on the saints’ adoration of the cross and Christ’s sacrifice during these last few days of Lent.

In first Corinthians, St. Paul states, "I resolved that while I was with you I would think of nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified." This is repeated over and over in the saints down through the years. St. Jerome said, "The cross of Christ is the key of paradise." St. Bonaventure: "He will withstand all these sufferings in order to set you aflame with love for him."

-St. Francis de Sales: "The crucifix is the true book of the Christian."

-St. Bede: "First, close your eyes and bar the doors of your senses. Enter wholly into the scene and fix your gaze on the wounded Jesus, and upon him alone. Strive with all your power . . . that you may attain to the knowledge of his divinity through the wounds of his sacred humanity."

-Blessed Joseph Fiammetta: "There is one path to God for every soul. To become holy must follow: meditation on the bitter Passion and death of the Lord Jesus."

-St. Paul: "Listen and learn, let the words of the saints instruct you."

-St. Francis de Sales: "Mount Calvary is the mount of lovers. All love that takes not root in the wounds of the Savior is frivolous and dangerous."
Pieta represents a tender call to faith in the life to come

Many a mother and father, helpless, have a son at his side when he dies an untimely death. Some say it is the greatest sorrow there is, unspeakable reality. I have spoken to many persons who, upon our own experiences of grief as we conclude the week of Christ’s most bitter human passion. This is a good time for us to pray for the faith to see beyond death to new life.

It is a bitter prayer of parents, who ask for the power to face their grief, but it is a prayer and it is rooted in the hope of eternal life. Jesus won that hope for all who care to believe as he died on the cross and was lowered into the arms and bosom of his own mother.

It was true of the death of the Savior as it is true of a death of our own loved ones. The experience for Mary and her companions and for the beloved Apostle John was as it is for us. It is as if life stands still and no matter what grieving for the loved lost one. At that time of intense grief, it is hard to believe that life goes on as usual for everyone else in the world.

In her thoughts at the 13th station, Catherine Doherty wrote: “The sky was red with weeping. The clouds were dark with mourning. Men, women and children came and went. They stood where love hung dead, intent on this and that, scarcely glancing up.”

Of those who were grieving, she wrote: “His own came slowly, half bent, as are men and women who are spent in work or grief. Their movements were slow. They seemed to throw strange shadows on the breathless earth, each mirrored in the reflection of the sky—blood red. Each was partly covered by the black shadows of mourning clouds. They slowly took him off the cross and laid him on a white and spotless sheet. The cross stood there naked, holy.‘ (The Stations of the Cross, Madonna House Publications, 2004, p.37).

Catherine Doherty concluded her reflections at the 14th station: “When it received the Lord of Life lifeless, dead, the tomb became a manger again, the birthplace of life. Its silence sang a requiem of alleluias. … Jesus slept within the cradle of its depths the sleep of the One who conquered death. Alone the tomb became witness to the mystery of victory. For all eternity, it will keep secret the mystery giving humanity but its emptiness, guarded by angels” (ibid, p.39).

With eyes of faith, the grief of any human family can—in time—eventually become a sweet rather than a bitter sorrow.

As we conclude this Holy Week and process toward the Easter mysteries of our Church, the empty tomb guarded by angels gives us the assurance that Jesus was raised from the dead and thus conquered death.

And so it is, no matter one’s human plight, we can sing alleluias because we too, like our loved ones before us, will someday rise from the dead and be welcomed into the arms of the Mother that Jesus gave us from the Cross—and we pray, of our mothers too.

The belief of Pieta, mother and her son, is a tender call to faith in the life that is to come. 

La Pietà representa un llamado compasivo a la fe en la próxima vida

En la pared de afuera de la capilla de mi residencia se encuentra colgada una representación impactante de La Pietà. La pintó el Padre Donald Walpole, un artista benedictino de Saint Meinrad, Indiana. La imagen de María, madre e hijo, generalmente se le da al trono de la Madre de Dios.

El lamento del sufrimiento que se transmite a su madre. Esta imagen de La Pietà, madre e hijo, se representa en la 13ª estación del Vía Crucis.

En una meditación sobre esta situación, cuando bajan a Jesús de la cruz y lo colocan en los brazos de su madre, un sacerdote escribió: “He aquí la sierra del Señor”. Con estas palabras de María el Verbo se encarna en su vientre. En el templo, Simeón profetizó que su maternidad estaría rodeada de sufrimiento.

“Y una espada traspasará aún tu propia maternidad estaría rodeada de sufrimiento. Esto es un momento de dolor intenso, pero carece de fe y poder ver más allá de la muerte hacia una nueva vida.”

En sus reflexiones de la 13ª estación, Catherine Doherty escribió: “El cielo se llenó de nubes de luto. Lentamente lo bajaron de la cruz y lo acostaron sobre una sábana blanca inmaculada. La cruz se erguiría allí desamparada, y en ella se leería: ‘La querida Piedad, madre e hijo, es un tender call to faith in the life to come.’”

La independencia de ánimo que les enseñó Jesús es un tendido a la fe en el futuro.

El lamento de la Piedad representa un llamado compasivo a la fe en la próxima vida.

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein’s prayer list? You may mail it to him at:
Archbishop Buechlein’s Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

¿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
Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Las intenciones vocacionales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo

Los jóvenes: que ellos acepten el átomo del Espíritu Santo, para que puedan discernir su papel en la iglesia, especialmente la llamada de Dios a hacerse sacerdote y entrar en una vida religiosa.

Tradiculado por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis
March 30
St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, social ball, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. Ladies Club, spring luncheon and card party, doors open 10 a.m., lunch 11 a.m., $7 per person. Information: 317-356-9777 or 317-356-0774.


St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. Lenten fish fry, 5-30 to 7:30 p.m., $6.50 adults, $5.75 seniors, $3.50 children under 10. Information: 317-357-8352.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 600 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. Lenten fish fry, 5:30-7 p.m., carryout available. Information: 317-291-7014.


St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4052 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. Council of Knights of Peter Claver #201, Lenten fish fry, 3-8 p.m. Information: 317-566-1572.

St. Martin Parish, 1434 Yardley Road, Gaithersburg, Lenten fish fry, 4:30-7 p.m. Information: 312-623-3408.

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. Rosary, 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m., Way of the Cross, 7 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Stations of the Cross, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-632-9347.


March 31

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, school, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Altar Society, annual spring rummage sale, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454, 317-800-8979.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. Baskets Donors’ Center sponsors National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved, “Ministry of Consolation Training,” session 2, Information: 317-933-6407 or e-mail bdonors@am.com.

St. Francis Xavier Parish, Hwy. 31 and Hwy. 100, Henryville. Biannual buffet, craft booth, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Information: 812-294-4598.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 Horseshoe Road, Indianapolis. Way of the Cross, Mgr. Joseph P. Schaefer, presider, with Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Honor Guard, 2 p.m. Information: 317-546-9899.

American Legion Plaza, North Street between Meridian and Pennsylvania streets, Indianapolis. Indianapolis Chapter of the Knights of Columbus, Outdoor Way of the Cross, noon. Information: 317-645-6701.


St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany. Outdoor Via Crucis, 7 p.m. Information: 317-494-3264.

April 7

Retreats and Programs
March 30-31
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Can You Drink This Cup”? Father Keith Hosey, presenter, $125 per person or $235 per married couple. Information: 812-545-7681 or kordes@thedome.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, convent, Oldenburg. “Time for a Prayer Infusion,” Franciscan Sister Mary Jane Hensell, presenter. Information: 317-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburg.com.

April 3-8

March 31
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Called to Be a Saint: A Day of Reflection for Candi- dates and Catechumens,” Kathy Davis-Shank, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., $50 includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7751 or e-mail binn@archindy.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, convent, Oldenburg. “Symbols from Within-Sources of Wisdom,” Franciscan Sister Ann Vonder Meulen, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $55 per person. Information: 812-933-6407 or e-mail bdonors@am.com.


April 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Walk the Outdoor Stations of the Cross,” led by Father Keith Hosey. Information: 317-545-7681 or e-mail binn@archindy.org.

April 5-8
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Holy Week Triduum Silent Retreat, Benedictine Sister Rachel Best, presenter, Thurs. 4 p.m.-Sun. 10 a.m. Information: 317-788-7751 or e-mail binn@archindy.org.

April 13-14
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Pre CANa Conference” for engaged couples, 4.5-6 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681, 317-236-1596 or 382-983-3656, ext. 1596.

April 19
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, convent, Olden- burg. “The Spiritual Signs of Life,” Franciscan Father Carl Huwer, presenter. Information: 317-933-6407 or e-mail center@oldenburg.com.

April 20-21
Ursuline Motherhouse, Angela Merici Center for Spirituality, 5115 Livingston Road, Louisville. “Women Empowering Women” retreat. Information: 502-896-3943 or e-mail: fherbert@ursuline.org.


April 21
Kordes Retreat Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdin- and, Ind. “Praying the Labyrinth,” Benedictine Sister Linda Bitzer, presenter. Information: 812-367-2777, 800-880-2777 or kordes@thedom.org.

April 25
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Administrative Professional Day,” “The ABC’s of Joy,” Lynne Brennan, presenter, 10:45 a.m.-2 p.m., $30 includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7751 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

April 26
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Ecumenical Conference for Caregivers, “The Re-Enchant- ment of Life through the Miracle of Forgiveness,” 8:15 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-788-7751 or e-mail benedictinn@yahoo.com.

Spring Break at the Woods
Kate Kuske meets Madison, one of 50 alpacas owned by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Kate, a student at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., did volunteer work for the Sisters of Providence during March for 5-9 alternative spring break experience coordinated by Providence Volunteer Ministry.

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Laura Scott, Owner

www كافة وفقًا للكتب والسيرة، لا يوجد أي معلومات غير صحيحة. يمكن أن تكون هذه الصفحة جزءًا من قاموس أو كتاب عن مدينة في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، حيث تظهر بعض المعلومات عن الأحداث أو الأماكن الراهنة. يمكن استخدام هذه المعلومات كاستشارة أو عنوان لقراءة المزيد. تأكد دائمًا من مصدر المعلومة ومراجعة المعلومات قبل استخدامها كنقطة اتصال أو مصدر للبيانات.
Pope Benedict XVI praised the Catholic lay movement Communio and Liberation for witness to Christian life.

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI praised the Catholic lay movement Communio and Liberation for seeking to pay witness to the beauty of being Christian in an age of skepticism.

He recalled how the late Pope John Paul II commended the movement to present the Christian faith as a source of “new values” that could guide every aspect of one’s life in a manner that was both “captivating and in harmony with modern-day culture.”

Before a crowd of more than 80,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Benedict paid tribute on March 24 to a movement that “would pay witness to a movement that “would pay witness to the beauty of being Christian in an age in which the opinion that Christianity might be burdensome or oppressive was widespread.”

The pope emphasized the need for movements to be united with and at the service of the Church.

“If movements are truly gifts of the Holy Spirit, they must naturally be part of the ecclesial community” and be at its service, engaged in “patient dialogue” with the local priests and bishops, he said.

Pope Benedict encouraged Communio and Liberation members to continue fostering a faith that is “deep, personalized, and firmly rooted in the living body of Christ, the Church, which guarantees the contemporary nature of Jesus among us.”

The international movement, founded in 1925, now has around 100,000 members. It currently is present in more than 70 countries and has a way “to live the Christian faith deeply and concretely,” the pope said.

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“If the Lord gives us new gifts we should be grateful, even if at times they are unsettling,” he said.

The gathering and the pope’s comments commemorated the 75th anniversary of pontifical recognition of the movement’s Fraternity of Communio and Liberation. The fraternity is an association of pontifical right, or Vatican-based legal status, and concretely, “the pope said.

Pope Benedict said “this courageous priest” grew up in poverty and yearned for the beautiful, but what he sought was the true, infinite beauty found in Christ.

The pope also reflected on the importance of lay movements for the whole Church.

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Dr. Raymond Pierce Jr. about his commitment to the Church, the community and the improvement of people's lives and he connected his contributions to a moment in the 1950s when his father used his courage and intelligence to make a difference for minorities.

“My father was a small town pharmacist with three children in Monroe, La., and it was a pre-civil rights time when black people couldn’t attend the segregated schools of the time, so my father went behind the black community so we could get books out of the main library. He did everything he could for his community,” Pierce follows closely in his father’s footsteps. The retired orthopedic surgeon was one of the original board members of the Multicultural Ministry Commission of the archdiocese. He’s involved in efforts to fight sickle cell anemia, a condition that predominately strikes the black community. He’s a board member of the Wasshur Foundation, a nonprofit in Indianapolis, aiming to improving the healthcare of the poor. He also works to recruit minority students to orthopedic medicine.

“I am honored and humbled by this award,” says Pierce, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. “I don’t do any of these things. I’m just trying to pass along the example of hard work, dedication and giving that I was shown. You can make a contribution by whatever you decide to contribute.”

Louise Collet

The legacies of her Irish grandmother have stayed with Louise Collet through more than four decades of volunteering to help children, the poor, the sick, the elderly, and patients with Alzheimer’s disease. “My grandmother always said, ‘You always need to do,’” says Louise, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis. “I had a grandmother who lived in Ireland who said, ‘If you have some spare moments, you need to do good for mankind.’”

She was appointed by her training as a nurse at the St. Vincent School of Nursing in Indianapolis from 1958 to 1961. She could have the opportunity on Saturdays to go to the sisters to deliver food and clothing and visit patients in other hospitals. She went on to work at A Caring Place, a Catholic Charities Indianapolis program that provides adult day care services. Although she retired from A Caring Place after working five years there as a nurse, she still retained her position by helping lead a weekly Bible study, serving as a chaperone on trips and filling in when the current staff nurse is sick or on vacation.

“She’s one of the most caring, compassionate persons I’ve ever met,” says Pierce, a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis, and current site manager of A Caring Place. “One of our participants was very demanding. Under Louise’s loving care, that person did a turnaround. That person doesn’t have a family, and Louise has become like family to her. She has such a heart for others.”

Dr. Mercy Obeme

Dr. Mercy Obeme thought it could be her last visit to her homeland and the village where she grew up. But to everyone’s surprise, her life was touched with satisfaction.

She had become a doctor in America, serving as the medical director for St. Francis Hospice and St. Francis Neighborhood Health Center in Indianapolis. She was married and the mother of three children. She had brought her parents and most of her nine siblings to the United States to live and get an education. Yet, in 2001, when she stopped by a Nigerian clinic where one of her former medical professors worked, her life changed forever.

She saw a man rush into the clinic, carrying his wife who was deathly sick. She heard the husband say that he had tried the day trying to get medical supplies for his wife, but he didn’t have enough money. She tried to help the woman but it was too late.

“The man starts screaming and cursing at God,” Obeme recalls. “I say to myself, ‘I wish I could have helped him pick her up and he’s crying. A 5-year-old boy is by her. He’s holding on to the clothes of his coat and he’s saying, “Mom, I’m telling you all day, I’m dying of hunger.”

Obeme gave the man money to buy his wife’s food and feed his son.

“He goes and kneels down and thanks God for the money,” says Obeme, a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis. “I thought it was a great thing. It was reaching out. It was reaching out. It was going about the business of God.”

Gil Viets

The memory has never left Gil Viets, taking him back to the time he was a boy helping his father on the family farm in Brattle, Kan.

“My parents cared about people,” Viets says. “They were deeply involved in any kind of small farming community. When I was 11 or 12, I was driving the tractor and my dad was throwing bales of hay. When I was 13, I don’t think I had a heart attack. When I got up the next morning, I looked outside and the whole area around the house was filled with other farmers who had come from all over the country just to help the family. By the end of the day, our work was done. We had never seen people work so hard in a 24-hour period.”

Viets will receive the community Service Award for his contributions to the archdiocese.

To the Indianapolis Globe-Times, the only way to overcome is to act like part of a community and become part of the answer for what people need.

Dr. Dr. Obeme believes

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“One of the indicators physicians use to determine the progression of Parkinson’s disease, he said, is the deterioration of a patient’s handwriting. “Two years before Benedict XVI will celebrate his 20th anniversary of his pontificate, Benedict XXVII XVI will celebrate in St. Peter’s Basilica in the evening.

He said the French investigation into the nun’s healing was conducted “with maximum seriousness ... and a bit of the French quality, which was quite useful for this kind of procedure.”

The proposal to recognize that the nun was healed spontaneously and completely of Parkinson’s disease — the same disease that afflicted Pope John Paul II — was strengthened by the critical approach the French took, he said.

In addition to investigating the nun, her superiors and his physicians, he said, the French diocese also had her undergo a psychiatric evaluation and had a graphologist examine samples of things she had written by hand immediately before and after the alleged healing on June 2, 2005.

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All suffering brings loss—the loss of a loved one, a friend, a home, we love, a way we had embraced, the future we had planned. The capacity to move about freely, to laugh and to play. Loss leaves us feeling robbed. It casts as us victims of someone else’s violence—even, we sometimes feel, of God.

We are not mere victims, though, no matter what we lose. We may not have chosen to suffer, but we can choose how we cope with loss. Not immediately, perhaps. Not until we have caught our breath, licked our wounds, wept out our hurt and raged at our fate.

But eventually we can, must and do make choices. Suffering can enlarge us or diminish us. Choosing how to deal with loss is a key. First, we must face the empty, hollow spaces left by our loss. At first, we may run from them, pretend they are not there, fill them up with frenetic activity, cram them with new furniture, stuff them with food and drink, do anything to put off the dreaded moment when we have to go in, sit down and listen to the sound of emptiness bouncing off the walls.

But like mountain caves carved out by time, water and wind, these hollow spaces offer their own kind of peace. It is not true that time heals all wounds, but it is true that time stops the worst of the bleeding.

Tears contribute to the healing. A healthy human outlet, tears can soften the sharp edges that reopen the hurt. Tears can put out the angry fire that loss kindles, wash away the confusion that clouds the mind, and with all your mind, and your strength, and with all your heart, with all your heart, with all your might, love the Lord, your God, with all your mind, and your strength, and with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself” (Lk 10:27). Nowhere is it written, “Except, of course, when you are suffering.”

When, through the alchemy of God’s grace working through our own choices, we find our most bitter suffering turned into honey to feed the multitudes, we are freed from one of the worst of our losses—the loss of a sense of purpose.

Suffering transformed into love fulfills the central purpose of human life as God intends it. We have only to look at Jesus on the cross to see it. This transformation was promised: “If my people will listen, if [they] would walk in my paths, I would ... satisfy them with honey from the rock” (Ps 81:14, 17). (Benedictine Sister Genevieve Glen is a member of the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colo.)

Discussion Point

Grief brings us closer to God

This Week’s Question

Do you think you have grown as a result of suffering? How?

“When my family or friends have gone through bereavement, I seek solace within my prayer life and by reaching out to them. That reaching out ... makes us understand that grieving is for the living. People of faith are optimists, which helps us not to be bitter.” (Kelly Weathers, Lebanon, Tenn.)

“I went through a divorce about seven or eight years ago while I was expecting a baby and had a 2-year-old. I had to become Supermom ... I had been independent, but I grew by leaps and bounds, and the Church played a role in helping me with faith and support.” (Rose Piso, Hermagoras, Pa.)

“I have a mentally impaired son who is now an adult. I was involved in the Church and had often discussed the presence of suffering in the world ... When my son was born, I saw it personally. I learned that I can’t find answers by intellectualizing. Now I trust more in God ...,” (Suzanne Cornelius, St. Clair Shores, Mich.)

Suffering is not part of God’s plan

By Jim M. Schellman

Few of us go looking for suffering. It finds us nonetheless in the form of our own suffering and in the suffering of others.

Even creation shares in the experience of suffering—the rending, tearing and destruction the natural world is capable of causing during storms and earthquakes. This is not how it was meant to be. The image of that first garden at the beginning of Scripture is an image of God, humanity and creation in harmony and at peace.

The Scripture story reveals that in the freedom of human choice we forfeited that garden peace and thought we could do better than our Creator. In the mystery of this choice, we and all that God created lost that garden peace and harmony.

Now we suffer, and along with us creation suffers as well.

Our struggle against suffering that can be relieved is a faith-filled witness that suffering is not part of God’s original plan. God intends harmony and wholeness.

When we come up against suffering that cannot be avoided or relieved, we come to the very heart of the mystery of the terribly broken world that we helped to create. As children of God privileged to see the vision of God’s design for the world, we come through such suffering to the depths of the mystery of Christ.

God in Christ entered our world’s most intimate and broken places. And through his willing embrace of the cross and death, Christ has placed God forever on the side of those who suffer.

We have a special place and vocation in suffering that we cannot avoid, and this is the vocation of making up “in my own body what is lacking in the suffering of Christ” (Col 1:24). He who knew no sin invites us who know all about sin to be an intimate part of the solution to all the world’s suffering.

Jim M. Schellman is executive director of The North American Forum on the Catechumenate.)
Prayer: Finding balance in our lives

(Twenty-third and last in a series)

I recall attending Mass in a parish not my own while visiting one of our children for a few days.

One priest said Mass the first day, and a different priest was the celebrant the second day. The first priest, during his homily, told the people that he had never had the patience to sit still long enough to meditate, so that even when he could be doing something he considered more important.

The second priest gave his homily on prayer (the Gospel reading was Christ teaching the Apostles the Our Father), and he spoke about how important meditation and contemplation were to him. He even had all of us sit quietly in contemplation for a couple minutes at the end of his homily.

That first priest, obviously a restless and energetic activist, certainly prayed; he led us in prayer during that Mass. He’s just the “A” type who has to be doing something all the time. I’m not so sure he has a chance to pray. I think even he doesn’t quite as just as God to the priest who practices contemplation.

We all know many people like that, people who have to be doing something all the time? I’m willing to bet they are in the majority among Catholic priests, and perhaps among all those we are supposed to assume that those who arrive just in time for Mass (or even a couple minutes late) don’t like to “waste” a minute, and are the type who don’t have the gift of mental prayer.

That might be an unfair assumption, of course. Perhaps my friend is simply capable of meditating at home, but I wonder.

I believe that prayer is important and I wouldn’t have written this series of columns about it. But Jesus didn’t tell us that we would be judged by how well we prayed. He told us to pray to God, no matter how well we performed the corporal works of mercy—feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, etc.

I don’t recall Jesus explicitly telling us that only those who pray a great deal will enter heaven. I do recall him saying explicitly, in the 25th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, that those who do not perform corporal works of mercy “will go off to eternal punishment”.

But I thought I was going to again hear back to the consoling letters of St. Paul that told us, that as part of the Mystical Body, we are all expected to do the same thing. We are not all called to serve the hungry at soup kitchens. Perhaps feeding our families or providing warm clothing for our children is sufficient to get us off the hook.

The real answer is that there should be balance in our lives. We must keep our eyes on heaven. That’s where we hope to spend an eternity of happiness, praising and glorifying God. While we are still here on earth, let us practice doing that through our prayers. (Fink’s book, Letters to St. Francis de Sales: Mostly on Prayer, is a greatly expanded version of this series. It’s available from Alba House. Call 800-343-ALBA.)

We’re heading down the home stretch to Easter. This Sunday, Palm Sunday, is the day Jesus began his Passion, his inevitable suffering. And “freely accepted” grace. That is the God we are not, and can never be.

We, of course, are meant to lead you and your children through these and other things, to show them that a life of prayer is filled with sweetness and joys.

Our “thorns in life test” can be so mysteriously refer to at the wedding at Cana.

Perhaps she would have nodded when the crowd cried, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel” (Jn 12:13).

But if Mary could have seen her son, I suspect any image she might have felt would have quickly faded. Parents can be very attentive to small things in their children’s lives, but the realities beyond human understanding, the tone of their voice, body language, even the way they breathe.

I suspect that if she saw Jesus coming into Jerusalem that day, she would have seen in these small things a shadow of sadness overhead and heard the people’s praises.

Of course, Jesus would have known the face of despair of some of the parents whose hearts were soon to be pierced.

Perhaps she would have nodded again when the crowds cried out, “Fiat etiam etiam!”

Mostly on Prayer, a series on heaven. That’s where we hope to spend an eternity of happiness, praising and glorifying God. While we are still here on earth, let us practice doing that through our prayers.

At Mass on the first Sunday of Lent, I marveled at the great clouds of thorns accosting long purple banners on the altar, in the sanctuary at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.

This pricked my consciousness and my conscience, too, during quiet moments. I thought of the metaphorical thorns that surround so many of them minor. At the end of Mass, Father Tony Volz, pastor, warned the worshippers about the thorns that had close to them.

Returning home, my gentleman-bonding, Paul, left me by the side door so I could get in and out of the car in a close to time coat then he heard a strange sound.

This took place in a kitchen window of my Paul on the ground with his left lower leg folded under his thigh. He had fallen on a patch of black ice. He could not get up so I strapped him in a cloth basket and called 911.

When emergency medical technicians arrived, they knew this was serious, especially for a man who had a loud popping noise in his knee when he went down.

When the EMTs arrived, three neighbors came to offer help. Later that day, I did call a neighbor to fetch us from the Vincent School after our emergency rose.

The next day, an orthopedic surgeon diagnosed acute quadriceps tendon rupture. Even though Paul had surgery. His injuries were worse than expected so he is still recovering.

This, of course, was not the first emergency that we’ve dealt with in our lives. However, it was the most ironic. Our son Paul had just returned home from a long time period at Clifty Falls State Park near Madison for our annual winter hike and somehow stepped on some ice and slammed his knee more than 25 years ago. So, this was a Lenten theme for us.

Life takes many twists and turns, some painful—my topic for meditation at Mass on the Sunday that Paul fell on the ice. I also thought of various topics that tortured Jesus before and during his Crucifixion. His Passion and death was God’s plan for our salvation.

Our “thorns in life test” can be integral to our salvation, too. Test our mettle and our faith. Christ certainly had hell—torture of character, spirit, courage and ardor that fortified him.

Having mettle against whatever challenges come along allows us to do our best in any circumstance. Christ’s example strengthens us. Paul had surgery. He’s still the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual thorns of life that challenge us. Jesus did this for us. Surely we can do likewise for him by coping well with our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual thorns.

Meditate and pray about what we are enduring for him. Even though this is late in the Lenten series, it’s time to still our home, entice our thorns and be well-prepared for Easter.

Remember: The thorns in life often come with roses.

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

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Reflections on Mary for Palm Sunday

What might have been the ponderings of Mary’s heart when her son seemed to enter Jerusalem in triumph?

Since she was at the foot of the cross just recently, she had witnessed the power she may have witnessed the crowd giving her son a royal welcome.

Perhaps she thought she was seeing the fulfillment of prophecies she had heard decades before: “…the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Lk 1:32-33).

In recalling these glorious words, would Mary have smiled? What mother would not wish to see such heights?

Perhaps she would have nodded when the crowds cried, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel” (Jn 12:13).

But if Mary could have seen her son, I suspect any image she might have felt would have quickly faded. Parents can be very attentive to small things in their children’s lives, but the realities beyond human understanding, the tone of their voice, body language, even the way they breathe.

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(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular column for The Criterion.)
Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, April 1, 2007

• Luke 19:28-40 (Blessing of Palms)
• Isaiah 50:4-7
• Philippians 2:6-11
• Luke 22:14-23:36

The Church this weekend leads us to the climax of Lent—the observance of Holy Week—by offering the impressive liturgy of Palm Sunday. Recalling the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem—which was, for Luke, the outer apex of the entire ministry of the Lord since in Jerusalem the Crucifixion and Resurrection would occur—if these readings bring us to the heart of the Church’s teaching regarding salvation. Jesus is Lord and Savior.

When the palms are blessed and the solemn procession—ideally of all members of the congregation—forms at the start of the liturgy, the Church offers us a reading from Luke. This reading recalls the plans for the arrival of Jesus as well as the arrival itself. An element of inevitability, of Providence, surrounds the event.

Jesus tells the Pharisees who object to it all that even if the disciples were silent, the very stones would shout the good news of salvation in Christ. For the first reading in the Liturgy of the Word, the Church gives us the third section from the third chapter of the Book of Isaiah. Scholars debate the identity of this servant. Was he a prophet? Was he the author? Or was he a collective symbol for the people of Israel? In any case, Christians have always seen in these songs the image of the innocent, constantly loyal servant of God. The message is that God loves us with a perfect, uncompromising, unending love.

We are flawed by our own sin. We need God. Thankfully, he will not be deterred in giving us salvation if we simply love in return. ☩

My Journey to God

I Am Your Own

God, shine Your light upon me, Hold me safe within Your power, Comfort me in times of need, Wash me in Your innocence, Clothe me in Your love, Lead me when I’m lost, Broaden the path I walk.

Within stillness, soothe my soul, Soften my heart to hear Your call, Your voice drifts upon the wind, Filling me with guidance from Your breath, Within the breeze, Your love floats free, Your presence embraced in each daily rise, Your blessed Spirit mingles with my soul.

From this moment forward ... I Am Your own.

By Angela Patrice Hruban

(Angela Patrice Hruban of Morgantown is a member of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.)

Daily Readings

Monday, April 2
Isaiah 42:1-7
Psalm 27:1-3, 13-14
John 12:1-11

Tuesday, April 3
Isaiah 49:1-6
Psalm 71:1-4a, 5-6ab, 15, 17
John 13:21-33, 36-38


Monday, April 2
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 69:8-10, 21bc22, 31, 33-34
Matthew 26:14-25

Thursday, April 5
Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42
Saturday, April 7
Holy Saturday
Holy Saturday Night: The Easter Vigil

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Stations or Way of the Cross dates back to the Middle Ages

Q Where did the Stations of the Cross come from? Do they go back to the time of Christ? (Texas)
A No, they originated many centuries after Jesus lived and died. The Stations or Way of the Cross is one of many devotions that arose during the late Middle Ages, generally in the 1200s or 1300s. Politically, culturally and religiously, there were chaotic and painfully recent for the majority of ordinary people. Practicing and passing on their faith was enormously difficult, and a variety of new devotional practices developed to help people live and learn what it meant to be a Christian.

Franciscans of Assisi and St. Dominik and their followers were among those who helped popularize such expressions of faith as the Christmas creche (St. Francis) and the rosary (Dominicans).

The stations served both as a prayer and a sort of catechesis about the sufferings and death of our Lord. Franciscan priests, brothers and sisters who already held responsibility for the holy places in Jerusalem for Latin-rite Catholics did much to spread the devotion. At one time, the stations included seven falls under the cross. Another form included 43 separate stations. The 14 stations observed now became formally stabilized by Pope Clement XII about 300 years ago. For some years, most publications of the stations have included a 15th station or meditation calling to mind Christ’s victory over death in the Resurrection.

About 40 years after the death of Jesus, Roman armies leveled the city of Jerusalem, making the precise location of, the stations remain one of the richest ways in our tradition to reflect on our Lord’s suffering and death. The stations have always included incidents which are found in Christian tradition, but are not mentioned in the Gospels.

The fourth station, for example, commemorates Jesus meeting his mother. Luke’s Gospel notes that Jesus stopped along the way to speak to “many women who mourned and lamented,” but Luke doesn’t say Mary was among them.

John’s Gospel places Mary at the foot of the cross, not on the road to Calvary. The story of Veronica wiping the face of Jesus is also not in the Gospels.

The Criterion  Friday, March 30, 2007
State marriage amendment stalled in Indiana House

Bridget Curtis Ayer

A bill to amend Indiana’s constitution to protect the definition of marriage stalled in the House on March 18 during a hearing before the House Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee because of concerns raised by a few influential Indiana employers.

Human resources representatives from WellPoint and Cummins planted seeds of doubt in the minds of House lawmakers about advancing the marriage amendment bill to second reading in the House because of claims by the companies’ recruitment opportunities and benefit packages. Dow AgroSciences raised similar concerns in a letter to Rep. B. Patrick Bauer (D-South Bend), the House’s speaker.

Senate Joint Resolution 7, the marriage amendment which passed the Senate 39-10, would amend Indiana’s Constitution to define that a marriage consists only of the union of one man and one woman. In effect, the marriage amendment would ban same-sex marriages in Indiana.

The purpose of the amendment is to protect the nature of marriage by preventing an Indiana court from redefining marriage as anything other than a union between one man and one woman.

Senate Joint Resolution 7 has two parts. Part “a” defines marriage as a union between only one man and one woman. Part “b” is the section of the resolution which has raised concerns and debate.

Subsection “b” of the resolution states, “This Constitution or any other Indiana law may not be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents of marriage be conferred upon couples or groups.”

Concerns and confusion about how part “b” may be interpreted has caused at least 10 senators to vote against the measure, and several members of the House Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee are now at odds with the bill as it is written.

The concerns with part “b” range from a possibility of harming the way domestic violence situations are handled to possible problems of limiting benefits employers want to provide family members of their employees. The latest concern raised by employers is it will harm their recruitment opportunities by making Indiana appear to be non-inclusive or even discriminatory toward homosexuals.

In a 2003 document published by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Considerations regarding proposals to give legal recognition to unions between homosexual persons,” the document concluded, “The Church teaches that respect for homosexual persons cannot lead in any way to approval of homosexual behavior or to legal recognition of homosexual unions. The common good requires that laws recognize, promote and protect marriage as the basis of the family, the primary unit of society.

Therefore, neither Church nor state can alter the basic meaning and structure of marriage.’” — Glenn Tebbe

Bishop Skylstad continued. “Please do not forget the ‘least of these’ dimensions; they reflect our values as a people,” Bishop Skylstad. “Our faith calls us to measure economic policies; they are also moral considerations; they are also moral priorities.”

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Budget priorities for the federal government should help families escape hunger and homelessness, find decent housing and employment and have access to quality education and medical care, the president of the U.S. bishops’ conference told members of Congress.

In letters sent to senators and representatives on March 16, Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., asked that priority be given to relief, development and health care, especially in Africa and the District of Columbia, have created some form of legal union to same-sex couples and offer varying rights and responsibilities typically granted to traditional married couples.

Seven states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Jersey, California, Maine and Hawaii, and the District of Columbia, have created some form of legal union to same-sex couples and offer varying rights and responsibilities typically granted to traditional married couples.

Rep. Scott Pelath (D-Michigan City), co-sponsor of the bill and chair of the House Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee, has not decided if he will amend the resolution or call Senate Joint Resolution 7 for a vote.

Senate Joint Resolution 7 must pass in the House in the same form as it passed in the Senate for the amendment to be eligible for a vote by Indiana residents in the 2008 election. If passed by a majority of voters, the amendment would become part of the Indiana Constitution.

(Washington Post) †

Through April 28

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The Village Dove
Charity Sister Thomas More Rybarsyk was vice principal at Cathedral High School

Sister Charity Thomas More Rybarsyk, a former vice principal at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, was named one of tenure from 1984-99, Cathedral High School in Battle Creek, Mich., from 1974-77. Cathedral High School in South Holland, Ill., from 1952-54. She also taught at St. Raphael School in Chillicothe, Ohio, from 1950-52. She was also teaching at St. Joseph Central High School in Springfield, Ohio, from 1947-48. St. Michael School in Findlay, Ohio, from 1946-50. St. Mel School in Cleveland from 1950-52. and Holy Name School in Cleveland from 1952-54. She also taught at St. Joseph High School in Royal Oak, Mich., from 1954-57.

With a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in Sociology and a master’s degree in Guidance and Education, Sister Thomas More chose to become the class-room to become a high school counselor at Cathedral Central High School in Springfield, Ohio, from 1957-58. She also served one year at St. Raphael School in Chillicothe, Ohio, from 1950-52. and Holy Name School in Cleveland from 1952-54. She also taught at St. Joseph High School in Royal Oak, Mich., from 1954-57.

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Artist says her mural for homeless center will ‘feed the soul’

NEW ORLEANS (CNS)—It would be difficult to imagine any other theme besides water gracing the walls of the Harry Tompson Center at St. Joseph Refuge in New Orleans. A mural series depicting the flow of water, from flood to salvation, will soon grace the planned multiservice center for homeless people. If construction proceeds as planned, the center will open in late June.

“It is so gracious, so soulful to exceed just necessities and feed the soul,” said Margot Datz, the artist who is creating the six-panel mural. “Because these people don’t see a lot of beauty. They don’t have access to it.”

The first panel depicts Noah and the ark, with a passage from Genesis written on a ribbon scroll that stretches the length of the work. “And the water prevailed exceedingly upon the earth.”

The second panel depicts Jonah and the whale and the third, which is nearly complete, depicts the parting of the Red Sea. The other three panels will show Christ walking on the water, the sacrament of baptism, and the Lord’s Prayer, with Christ standing beside still waters.

“I’m giving as I can to this project, really putting my heart and soul into this,” she said. “Engaging with the homeless is a way of thanking whoever helped my mother” while she was homeless. Initially meant for the inside of the church, with Datz one of several artists contributing pieces for devotional spaces, the project changed dramatically after Katrina inundated the neighborhood and destroyed the church’s electrical and cooling systems, as well as its elevator. “I realized we had to put that work on hold,” said Vincentian Father Perry Henry, the parish’s pastor. As plans for the Tompson Center came together, Datz’s original sculpture and mural idea morphed into the water-themed mural after she heard firsthand the stories of Katrina survivors.

“To me that is the very beginning, water an important part,” said Father Perry. “Here I see this whole art project as a tribute to the tremendous faith of the people who went through Katrina.”

Datz explains the progression of the panels, from inundation, to finding a way through the rough seas, to voluntary immersion through baptism and finally to restoration beside the still waters. It is a journey she feels both the homeless and the tired residents of New Orleans can understand, and it represents their hope for them. “I’m madly in love with this city, bruises and all,” said Datz. On what was her third post-Katrina visit, she said she continues to be amazed both by the scope of the damage and the spirit of the recovery, particularly by the volunteers leading it. “It certainly has impacted my psyche. It’s important for New Orleans to realize how much the nation cares,” she said.

“The center will offer laundry and shower facilities, medical, housing and employment services, referrals for other social services, telephone psychograms and legal aid,” she said. “It is a collaborative effort among the Vincentians, who staff the parish, the Presentation Sisters, Unity for the Homeless and the New Orleans province of the Society of Jesus. Funding for the art project came from the Vincentians and from other grants.”

Parishes schedule final Lenten penance services

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of penance services scheduled later during Lent may be omitted from this list in the next week’s newspaper. However, the entire schedule is posted online at www.CriterionOnline.com.

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