A gift offered, a gift received
Volunteers, patrons reap rewards at Society of St. Vincent de Paul center

By John Shaughnessy

“Till that’s why God sent me on the call,” recalls Asher, now the president of the council. “We’re called to take God’s word to the people and give them hope.”

That simple approach has become the guiding force in the nine months that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has operated the new, innovative Pratt-Quigley Center that serves more than 2,300 families in need each week. Through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers, the Indianapolis center is helping people at “the lowest levels of poverty,” according to Asher.

“We opened the center in January,” Asher says. “One of our goals is to serve the whole city with food. The need is astronomical, and it’s getting worse.”

The center has also illuminated the two sides of hope. Sometimes, hope is a gift that’s offered and sometimes it’s a gift that’s received. And no matter what side of the connection people are on, that sense of hope binds them.

That reality became clear on a recent Tuesday, the center’s busiest day of the week, a day when Richard Robbins arrived outside the center at 4:07 in the morning.

The most rewarding part
At 72, Robbins knows the waiting room makes for him and his wife, Connie. “I’ve been here since seven minutes after four, and I’m number seven in line,” he says. “I’ve been here since seven minutes after four, and I’m number seven in line,” he says. Robbins isn’t complaining. For him, any wait is worth the difference the free food makes for him and his wife, Connie. “A lot of times, we don’t have the money to go to the store,” Robbins says.

Richard and Connie Robbins say that using the food pantry at the Pratt-Quigley Center helps them save money to pay for utilities.

Archdiocese honors pro-life supporters for their work

By Mary Ann Wyand

On Respect Life Sunday, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will honor a Carmel, Ind., man who volun-
teers for a variety of pro-life activities in the archdiocese and Diocese of Lafayette as well as a Columbus teenager who is active in pro-life ministry and youth ministry.

Respect Life Sunday will be observed in dioceses throughout the U.S. on Oct. 7 with Masses and pro-life prayer chains.

Mgr. Joseph P. Schaedel, vicar general, is the celebrant for the archdiocesan Respect Life Sunday Mass at 1 p.m. on Oct. 7 at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. The public is invited.

On behalf of Archbishop Daniel M.

Buchein, the vicar general will present the Archbishop Edward T. O’Mean Respect Life Award to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Steve Hamilton of Carmel for his distin-
guished service to the cause of life.

Mgr. Schaedel also will present the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award to St. Bartholomew parish-

Michael Puddlia

On behalf of Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan at the 54th annual Red Mass in Washington.

And he prayed that belief would inspire jurists and government officials to recognize “the innate dignity and inviolability of every human life.”

In his homily at the Sept. 30 Mass, Archbishop Dolan quoted the nation’s second president, John Adams, who spoke of the “true map of man” as consisting of “the dignity of his nature, and the noble rank he holds among the works of God.”

That is “a map whose paths can only be walked with a reverence for life, a respect for others, a grasp of virtue and a responsible civility,” the archbishop said.

The chief justice and five U.S. Supreme Court justices were among the 1,200 peo-

people in the standing-room-only crowd at St. Matthew Cathedral for the Mass, which seeks God’s blessings and guid-

ance on the administration of justice.

The five Catholics now on the Supreme Court—Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Associate Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony M. Kennedy, Clarence Thomas and Samuel A. Alito Jr. attended the Mass along with Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer, who is Jewish.

The Mass is traditionally held the day before the first Monday in October, when the Supreme Court begins its new session.

Washington Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl, the principal celebrant at the Mass, welcomed “all who have come here today to pray, to pray for our nation and for those who work” in the legal fields. The concelebrants included Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien, who led the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services from 1997 to 2007 and was Milwaukee bishop prays that jurists will respect all human life

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I’m on disability, and she’s on Social Security. This really helps us save to pay utilities, which are so high anymore. We get items we really need—cereal, toilet paper, pretzels, salsa. That should make three meals, depending on how we use it.

Comes looking behind her at the rows of people pushing shopping carts past the boxes and shelves of food. She sees grandmothers with grandchildren, young mothers with babies, an elderly man hobbling along with a cane, and people who are black, white and Hispanic.

“There be a lot of people who would starve if they didn’t have this place,” she says. “A lot of them!”

The number of households and families that come has expanded so fast since we opened that we’ve had to expand our search area for food,” he said. “I spend a lot of time on the phone soliciting bulk purchases of food. On meat, about one dollar a pound is as much as we can pay. And I always try to pay in cash—we get $5.95 for a dollar.”

Withey procures about 75,000 pounds of food a week to distribute to people in need.

“We’re turning this food that most likely would have been thrown away into dollars for families in need,” says Withey, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. “We save them from $150 to $175 a month, which they can then use to pay for prescriptions, heat or lights. The most rewarding part is just seeing the expressions on their faces and hearing them say, ‘Yeah, it’s the feedback that keeps you going.”

A matter of dignity

While hope is at the heart of the Pratt-Quigley Center, so is the offshoot of hope—dignity.

The idea of clients picking out the food they want was a rare approach in 1997 when the Society of St. Vincent de Paul opened its first large-scale food pantry in Indianapolis at 211 E. Spann Ave.

Before then, the typical food pantry gave two bags of already-selected food to people, recalls Don Striegel, the pantry’s volunteer coordinator.

“A study showed that in that type of operation, 40 percent of the food will not be used,” says Striegel, a 42-year-old lawyer and fellow member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “We let them choose.”

That approach was promoted by the late Bill Quigley, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis who is honored by having his name as part of the Pratt-Quigley Center’s name.

The other reason the center’s name salutes the Pratt family, which drastically reduced the selling price of the building to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

“Bill Quigley was dedicated to the needy,” Striegel said. “He knew it would be tough to eliminate people’s need and poverty, but he sought to alleviate them.”

That desire to offer hope and dignity to the poor has expanded the center with the opening of a legal aid center and the Gennesaret Free Clinic.

The medical clinic has an exam room, a pharmacy, a lab and a bank. It’s staffed Tuesday and Saturday mornings by a doctor and nurses. The volunteers help about 20 people a month. The main concerns are lab tests, the flu, fevers, blood pressure and diabetes.

A legal clinic is also open on Tuesday mornings.

“We deal with a lot of landlord-tenant problems and family law,” Striegel said. “Those are the primary causes of poverty and child support,” says Mary Chandler, 46, who volunteers with Stephanie Crossin, 42, a fellow lawyer and fellow member at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

“An 80-year-old woman came in today who has been living in poverty for 30 years. She was an applicant for Social Security disability and they said, ‘No, don’t apply.’ She asked us to help the poor, to help the needy, to help the poor, to help the needy. That’s why we’re here.”

And the other volunteers are there too to give hope. Still, after 30 years as a volunteer, she says she’s not done.

“Looking back at my life spiritually from doing this,” she says. “That’s why I do it. I feel like I’m getting closer to God because of this.”

(Anyone interested in volunteering or contributing to the Pratt-Quigley Center and the Societies of St. Vincent de Paul can call 317-924-5769.)

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Indian priest says his cure was miracle through Mother Teresa

GUWAHATI, India (CNS)—The sainthood cause of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta could cross its last hurdle if the Vatican approves an allegedly miraculous cure—a priest claimed he experienced on the 10th anniversary of her death.

Salemast Father V. M. Thomas says Mother Teresa’s intercession was responsible for the disappearance of a half-inch kidney stone in his lower ureter, reported the Asian Church news agency.

Thomas had been suffering from severe abdominal pain since Feb. 13. Medical examinations in a Guwahati hospital revealed he had renal colic and calculus, and doctors advised him to take medicine to help dissolve the kidney stones. But recurring pains took him to at least four other hospitals elsewhere.

Surgical preparation began late on Sept. 5, but on the afternoon of Sept. 6, when the final presurgical X-ray was taken, the doctors could not locate the kidney stone. Repeat X-ray also proved negative. The chief surgeon then ordered another ultrasound by the same radiologist who did the Sept. 4 tests, but that also proved negative.

Surbhaj Kharma, the surgeon who treated the priest, said in his case summary that Father Thomas was under his treatment for three months. He was diagnosed as having lower urethral calculus with diabetes and hypertension, the records showed.

The surgeon further noted that on Sept. 5 the priest went to Shishu Bhavan to celebrate Mother Teresa’s feast day. On his return, the priest had a feeling of very strong and sweet peace, Khanna reported.

Repeated investigations prior to the scheduled surgery left the doctors surprised because “the calculus was no longer there in the ureter, and moreover he had not passed out any calculus in urine,” the doctor confirmed. “So the operation was cancelled.”

In the surprised parishioner signed on Sept. 11, he stated: “It indeed seemed like a miracle and unique incident in the history of the church, which could not be dissolved with medicine, just vanished on that particular day.”

The case was referred to standard Vatican procedure, a miracle that occurred following Mother Teresa’s beatification on Oct. 19, 2003, would be required for her to be canonized, or declared a saint. In cases of alleged medical miracles, the Vatican has a commission of medical specialists review the case.†

Pro-life supporters must continue abortion fight, Keyes says

Pounding on the podium like it was a pulpits, author and former statesman Alan Keyes preached an impassioned sermon about the moral crisis in America and called on 1,100 pro-life supporters at the Right to Life of Indianapolis fundraiser on Sept. 18 to continue the fight for abortion and for his “unshakeable” belief in the pro-life movement has given a lot of purpose to our entire family. We always pray about pro-life issues together.”

Keyes served 11 years with the U.S. State Department, working on foreign and domestic policy and on the staff of the National Security Council before he was named President Ronald Reagan’s assistant secretary of state for international organizations. From 1983 to 1985, he served as an ambassador to the United Nations’ economic and social council, where he represented U.S. interests in the U.N. General Assembly. He also served at the U.S. consulate in Bombay, India.

In his keynote address, Keyes warned the audience that “we teeter now, as a people, on the brink of the total collapse of our way of life and freedom.”

He said the war against abortion that America is engaged in is “a war against anyone, whatever their religion, whatever their persuasion, whatever their nationality, whatever their background, who would disregard the claims of innocent human life.”

When terrorists attacked America on Sept. 11, 2001, “it wasn’t the first time that we had seen that line of transgression crossed in every country, in every city, in every county where innocent life is targeted and taken in the womb.”

Keyes said, “We can no more—under our laws, under the war on terrorism, under the Constitution—take the life of the child than we can enslave the person sitting next to us.”

The problem with our nation’s current legal system is that “the law is what the judge says it is,” he said, and that contradicts our constitutional right to “secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and on an equal level for our posterity.”

The petition of Mother Teresa’s God-given right to life and liberty, Keyes said: “If we wish to remain a free people, a decent people, a strong people, then we must be first a godly people for we receive our rights from the hand of God and ... must be a people faithful in our allegiance to his authority and his will. I believe that is the central meaning of the pro-life movement.”

Pro-life supporters at the right to Life of Indianapolis office, St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., with the Respect Life Award for distinguished volunteer service for outstanding support for the cause of life.

Hanagan volunteers countless hours at the Right to Life of Indianapolis office, serves as a pro-life sidewalk counselor outside abortion centers, supports the St. Vincent de Paul Society ministry to the poor and helps care for terminally ill patients at the St. Vincent Hospice.

“Is it any working with John,” explained St. Luke parishioner Joan Byrum, the president of Right to Life of Indianapolis. “He’s so committed to the Lord. That’s why each and every one of us is here tonight. We’re here for the honor and glory of God ... and I cannot thank you enough.”

Drozda, a member of St. Joseph Parish in Kenmore, N.Y., was honored for his service in the pro-life movement.

You Pray for the Missions

GUWAHATI, India (CNS)—The movement. … We are here to revive, to strengthen, to inspire our brothers and sisters who are sacrificing their lives in this world.”

The problem with our nation’s current legal system is that “the law is what the judge says it is,” he said, and that contradicts our constitutional right to “secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and on an equal level for our posterity.”

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2:00 p.m. Economic and social council, where he represented U.S. interests in the U.N. General Assembly. He also served at the U.S. consulate in Bombay, India.

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We must stand firm against enemies that try to destroy our liberty, he said, and those who would destroy innocent life. “But it is hard to stand firm, hard to be confident, hard to be sure, hard to announce the clear, simple moral logic of what you do when the evil that you fight is but the shadow of the evil that you do,” Keyes said.

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A major unintended consequence of the war in Iraq is the demise of Christians there. More than 4 million Iraqis have been displaced from their homes, either fleeing the country or moving to areas controlled by the Kurds. More than a third of them are Christians, most of them Chaldean Catholics. Those who pushed so hard for us to invade Iraq had no idea that the extinction of Christians in Iraq would be one of the results.

Pope John Paul II was one who foresaw that. He said on March 16, 2003, “In the face of the tremendous consequences that an international military operation would have for the population of Iraq and the balance of the entire Middle East, already sorely tried, as well as for the extremities that could ensue, I say to all: There is still time to negotiate; there is still room for peace; it is never too late to come to an understanding and to continue discussions. If governments on both sides didn’t listen.

In 1990, according to the United Nations, 5 percent of Iraq’s 19 million people, or 950,000 people, identified themselves as Christians. Today, according to estimates from the United Nations and the Holy See, no more than 300,000 remain.

The Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) supports Eastern Churches throughout the Middle East. Since most of the Chaldean Catholic refugees have gone to Syria and Jordan, the CNEWA is doing what it can to provide them with emergency food, temporary housing, medical care and schooling.

The Middle East is home to many religions that have historically lived together in peace. But now the mess in Iraq has opened the door to extremists with sectarian ideas and Christians have been one of their prime targets. While Muslim Sunnis extremism is fighting Shia militia men, both are persecuting the Christians because they see Iraq Christians as collaborators with what they consider the Christian West.

CNEWA publishes the bimonthly magazine One. It is written by Garmon, an attorney who advises the Chaldean Federation of America, told the magazine. “There is a movement to annihilate Iraq’s Christians, and it’s working. Churches are being bombed. Our people are being harassed.

They're forced to convert to Islam so they can feed their families.”

Chaldean Father Ragheed Aziz Ganni was pastor of a parish in Mosul. After celebrating the Eucharist on Sunday, June 3, he left the church accompanied by three subdecons. Suddenly their car was overtaken. Militants sprayed the car with bullets, killing the priest and the subdecons.

“Iraqi Christians have no protection,” Garmon said. “Iraq’s Muslim Arabs and Kurds, Shiites or Sunnis, have tribal protection. If one person in the family is killed, family members avenge that killing. Muslim insurgents in Iraq know this. The bottom line is that we’re going to become extinct.”

Jordan and Syria, which previously had welcomed the refugees, have tightened up their policies, especially after Iraqi terrorists bombed three hotels in Amman in 2005. Jordan now rejects all males between 17 and 35 so three-fourths of Iraqi refugees there are women and children. When their money runs out, they often are drawn into prostitution. Syria requires visas and refuses to give refugees permits to work legally.

The United States has severely limited Iraqi immigrants because of security reasons. It’s impossible for an Iraqi to come into the United States without waiting a year or two for the necessary security check. According to the State Department, only 68 Iraqis were admitted into the country between October 2006 and March 2007, and only 900 since the invasion in 2003. Many Iraqi Christians seeking asylum in the United States with little success once worked as translators for the U.S. military or for firms contracted by the U.S. government to rebuild Iraq.

Many Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria are finding ways to send families to Europe, Australia or New Zealand. This year, up to 40,000 people are expected to join their families in Sweden.

What is to be done for Iraq’s refugees? Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, the Holy See’s permanent observer to the United Nations in Geneva, has said, “It is urgent for the international community to take up its responsibility and share in the task of protection and assistance.”

—John F. Finn

Demise of Iraq’s Christians

attacks on human life and marriage are prevalent in secular society

The decline in sexual mores among lay Roman Catholics began with the vociferous and bitter backlash engendered by the publication of Pope Paul VI’s encyclical “Humanae Vitae” in 1968. This decline has been abetted by the reluctance of many to point out the evils of contraception and the anti-life practices, such as abortion, which follow from its use.

Professor Robert P. George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University, eloquently expressed the problem in an article published on the weblog of First Things on Aug. 6, 2007. In his blog entry, he stressed that “fatalism: the teaching on contraception was at stake. The whole of Catholic teaching on the nature of the human person, of the one-flesh communion of spouses in marriage, and the meaning of human embodiment in relation to questions of personal identity, conduct and relationships, monogamy, and marital fidelity and indissolubility was on the line.”

The present American landscape filled with agitation for same-sex marriage, widespread use of the Internet to access pornographic material and other signs of the loosening of time-honored sexual restraints provide ample proof that the traditional way of looking at marriage and human sexuality has been severely undermined.

Inevitably, a cheapening of the Catholic understanding of human life from conception to death has occurred.

Some Catholic politicians from both major parties have endorsed pro-choice positions in regard to abortion for several decades. Their pro-choice—really pro-death—position leads these politicians to state that, while they don’t countenance abortion themselves, they cannot impose their beliefs on others. In other words, they desire to fulfill their obligations as Roman Catholics to try and convert their opponents to the simple proof that the traditional way of looking at marriage and human sexuality has been severely undermined.

Be Our Guest/Dr. Hans Geisler

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La misma Eucaristía venerada por Santa Teodora y el Obispo Bruté sustenta nuestra fe

En octubre, un mes importante para la Iglesia Católica en Indiana.

El 28 de octubre de 1834, el Servo de Dios, Obispo Simón Bruté, fue ordenado como obispo fundador de la Diócesis de Vincennes, que posteriormente se convertiría en la Arquidiócesis de Indiana.

En verdad el obispo no se sentía a la altura de la tarea que le había sido confiada. La Iglesia Católica en Indiana había sido bendecida con estos dos misioneros pioneros y ambos pioneros de la incipiente Iglesia Católica en Indiana tuvieron una profunda y ardiente devoción a los misioneros pioneros de la Iglesia Católica en Indiana.


En efecto, la Divina Providencia bendijo a estos dos misioneros, santos, valientes y generosos, hicieron que este don fuera posible en nuestra parte del mundo. Y como señal de agradecimiento, nos damos cuenta de que ahora nos corresponde a nosotros transmitir la fe de la Santa Eucaristía a aquellos que vienen después de nosotros.

Ese es el don que la Santa Eucaristía nos da y es el don que debemos desechar. Es el don de la fe del momento en que decidimos bendecirlos a moribundos, bendecir límites impuestos por una mala salud, bendecir los instintos humanos, bendecir la vida en su conjunto. Porque en el mundo donde se realiza la misa, no sólo hay un ser que está muriendo, sino también hay un ser que está viviendo. Donde se realiza la misa, hay vida, hay esperanza, hay amor.

Esa muerte que necesito bendecirla, que necesito sentirla, que necesito verla, que necesito escucharla. Esa muerte que necesito sentir, que necesito ver, que necesito escuchar, que necesito sentir.

Es el mismo don que nos da la Santa Eucaristía y es el don que nos da la vida. Es el don que nos da la vida, es el don que nos da la fe, es el don que nos da la esperanza, es el don que nos da el amor.

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Events Calendar

October 5

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Lunenburg Dei meeting. Mass, 6:30 a.m.; breakfast and program at Pilots Hall. “Catholic View of Stem Cell Research,” Dr. Hans Geuder, presenter, 9:10 a.m.; 315 guests. Information: 317-919-5316 or leslie@shoeshield.net. St. Louis de Montfort School, 11421 Hague Road, Fishers, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese). Annual Walk-a-Thon to promote wellness and raise funds for Catholic education, sponsored by Bishop Chatard, Cathedral and Mother Theodore Guerin high schools, 12:30-2 p.m. Information: 317-842-1125.

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning (NFP), 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-665-5514.

October 6


St. Francis Hospital and Health Centers, 1600 Albatry St., Beech Grove. “Walk to Remember,” families honor children lost through miscarriage, stillbirth and newborn death, 11 a.m. Information: 317-782-7992 or www.sfnorthindy.org.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. First ever spaghetti dinner, 4-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-353-9248 or teresa.shoeshield.net.

Seton Catholic High School, 231 S. 5th St., Richmond. Parent/Teacher Guild and the Richmond Catholic Community. Oktoberfest, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Information: 765-935-3894.

St. Gertrude Church, 760 Shawnee Ran Road, Cincinnati, Ohio. Catholic Women’s Conference, “In Honor of Our Lady of the Rosary,” 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. 50 people. Information: 513-583-5294 or www.squirrelgirls.com.

October 7

Michaela Farm, O.S.B., Franciscan Scavenger Hunt, 1-5 p.m. Information: 317-933-0661 or e-mail michaelafarm@wabash.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Greenwood Visiting Service, Bubblsburgher flu and pneumonia shot program, 9-11 a.m. Information: 317-722-8299, ext. 116, or e-mail stmary@vnsi.org.

Holy Family Parish, 3027 Pearl St., Oldenburg. Fall Festival, 9 a.m-3 p.m., chicken and roast beef dinners, bounce games, booths, games. Information: 812-934-3013.

St. Paul the Apostle Parish, 202 E. Washington St., Greencastle. Life Chain, 2-3:30 p.m. Information: 765-653-7789 or 11/19@msnighthhb.com.


MKVS and Divine Mercy Center, Nashville, located on 925 South and 82 miles south of Versailles. Confession, 1 p.m., followed by holy hour, Mass, 2 p.m., groups of 10 pray the new Mary Jan, 1 p.m., Father Elihu Biuwinkeln, celebrant. Information: 812-689-1551.

October 9


St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Church, St. Mary Hall, 1117 Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Indiana, prayer meeting, 7:15 p.m. Information: 317-372-5902 or www.michiganstindiana.org.

October 10


St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Knights of Columbus Hall, 2 p.m., Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. 2 p.m., followed by holy hour, Mass, 2 p.m., groups of 10 pray the new Mary Jan, 1 p.m., Father Elihu Biuwinkeln, celebrant. Information: 812-689-1551.

October 11


October 12

Pronto Banquet and Conference Center, 2625 E. National Ave., Indianapolis. St. Francis Spirit of Women program, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Information: 317-865-5865.

October 13

St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 36th St., Indianapolis. Rosary Rally, noon-2 p.m. Information: 317-826-1387.

Monument Circle, north steps. Rosary Rally, noon-2 p.m. Information: 317-845-5347 or 317-826-8574.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. Oktoberfest, Sacred Heart. Kennedy high school alumni class reunion, Mass, 5 p.m., fellowship, entertainment, 1-8 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

St. Roch Parish, Family Center, 3623 Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors, meeting, 1-9 p.m. Information: 317-784-1102.

St. Barnabas Parish, 8300 Robie Road, Indianapolis. Health Fair, 1-5 p.m., flu shots and cholesterol screening available. Information: 317-784-7104.

Rathskeiler Restaurant, 401 E. Michigan St., Indianapolis.

October 14

St. Mary Academy 60-year class reunion, noon. Information: 317-786-5479.

October 13-14

Michaela Farm, Oldenburg. Franciscan Scavenger Hunt, 1-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-0661 or e-mail michaelafarm@wabash.org.

October 14

St. Anthony Parish, 379 N. Warren Ave., Indianapolis. Teacher party, 1 p.m., 83 per person.

October 15

St. Mary of the Rock Church, 1740 S. Mary’s Road, Batesville. Turkey Festival, boiled foods, games, food, 10 a.m. Information: 812-694-4165.

October 15


October 15

St. Mark the Evangelist Church, 535 S. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. Divorce and Beyond Program, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 7-9:30 p.m., $30 per person includes materials. Information: 317-592-1992 or 317-826-1387.

October 17

St. Francis School, 609 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Mid-week series, “How Hope Can Help Our Imaginations and Relationships,” Franciscan Sister Olga Wittkendt, presenter, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $35 per session. Information: 812-933-6491 or jvaneer@ oldenburg.org.

An immigration rally begins outside St. Mary Church in Indianapolis on April 10, 2006.

St. Mary Parish needs historic photographs

James J. Divita, a retired history professor of Marcelline College in Indianapolis, is writing a history of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, which will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its founding next year.

Divita is in need of the following kinds of historic photographs and other historic material related to the life of the parish:

• photographs that pre-date 1920 when individual cameras were uncommon,
• family pictures of early parishioners, names or newspaper advertisements of business owned by parishioners,
• school pictures from both the grade school and academy,
• classroom pictures,
• report cards of your ancestors,
• individual cameras were uncommon,
• report cards of your ancestors,
• photographs taken at parish activities,
• photographs of parish clubs,
• parish sports teams, 
• obituaries and funeral information of parishioners,
• photographs with sisters who taught at the parish.

Readers of The Criterion that have any of these kinds of materials are asked to call Divita at 317-293-4607.

The status of Our Lady of Fatima is carried through a crowd of pilgrims on May 13 at the shrine built in her honor in central Portugal. Two rose rallies will be held in Indianapolis on Oct. 13 to mark the 90th anniversary of the “Miracle of the Sun” that took place at Fatima.

In remembrance of the event, two rosary rallies will take place in Indianapolis on Wednesday. Two rosary rallies were held in Indianapolis in October 13 will be the 90th anniversary of the “Miracle of the Sun” that took place at Fatima in Portugal. It was reported that on that day tens of thousands of people saw the sun spinning in the sky over Fatima. The light that shone forth was multicolored. Finally, the sun seemed to the crowd to careen toward the ground as if it had a志愿.
Hundreds turn out to support ‘40 Days for Life’ prayer rally

By Mary Ann Wyand

Forty days of prayer and fasting to end abortion began on Sept. 26 in 89 cities in 33 states.

The first national “40 Days for Life” ecumenical prayer campaign mobilizes pro-life supporters to pray outside abortion centers as well as at perpetual adoration chapels, churches and in their homes every day through Nov. 4 to save unborn babies whose lives are at risk.

In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Catholic are asked to pray in their parishes and for the conversion of minds and hearts of abortion-minded women and men as well as their families.

The archdiocesan pro-life campaign specifically targets the largest Planned Parenthood abortion center in the state, located at 8590 Georgetown Road in Indianapolis, with peaceful prayer vigils there for 40 days.

During a campaign prayer rally on Sept. 23 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged, chapel in Indianapolis, Father Shaun Whittington challenged pro-life supporters to pray warriors every day whether they are praying and fasting in the front line outside an abortion center, with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament or in the privacy of their own homes.

Father Whittington was the associate pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis two years ago when Planned Parenthood of Indiana began work on a new abortion center on Georgetown Road, which is within the parish boundaries.

“Knowing what Planned Parenthood does—the lies they perpetuate, the evil they cause and the lives they destroy—I could not sit idly by while this building was built,” Father Whittington said, because “souls would be put at risk.”

He organized a prayer vigil at the construction site on Saturdays, and about 40 people joined him to pray on that first morning in December 2005 even though it was 10 degrees and snow covered the ground.

“Some ways perhaps, our early launch of prayers before the clinic even opened was a failure because it opened,” Father Whittington said, “but I’ve heard from pro-life sidewalk counselors that against incredible odds—a fortress of a building, a parking lot enclosed by a chain-link fence and no sidewalk to meet the women before they go in—there are more saves of babies from that clinic than they ever expected.”

Father Whittington now serves as an administrator of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Magdalen Parish in New Marion. He is also chaplain at Father Michael Shunk Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison. He drove from southern Indiana to Indianapolis to speak at the prayer service because he “wouldn’t want to be anywhere else,” and wanted to thank several hundred pro-life supporters at the rally for loving and helping at-risk mothers and babies.

“You’re here because you believe in the great dignity that God has given to every single human life,” Father Whittington said. “Human life begins when it is conceived in the mind of God.”

Women don’t decide to have an abortion because they are exercising their choice, he said. “I believe women get abortions because they feel as though they have no choice.”

Abortion destroys the life of the child as well as motherhood, fatherhood and society, he said, but pro-life responses address the evil of abortion and the loneliness of women with love and support for the child, the mother and the father.

“I am so happy that you are willing to take a stand,” he said, “and to proclaim that life is a gift from God.”

After the rally, dozens of pro-life supporters prayed the rosary for an end to abortion while walking two miles along West 86th Street in 90-degree heat for a prayer vigil in front of the Planned Parenthood center.

(For more information about “40 Days for Life,” call 317-213-4778, log on to www.40DaysforLifeIndy.com or send an e-mail to info@40DaysforLifeIndy.net).™

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish to host Marian conference

By Sean Gallagher

On Oct. 13, Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood will host a conference dedicated to helping people understand what the Church teaches about the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The “Behold Your Mother” Marian conference is sponsored by the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, an international religious order founded in 1990.

Members of the community staff the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in Monroe County.

Franciscan Father Elias Mary Mills ministers there and is helping organize the conference that will focus on how Mary, as the mother of Christ, participates in a unique way in his role as redeemer.

He said that his order has held conferences about Mary in the past in England and Fatima, Portugal, but that they have been more academic in nature.

“This is the first time that we’ve done anything in a more popular vein,” he said, “to try and reach the general public to [help] them understand the co-redemption … because there seems to be a lot of misunderstanding or just plain ignorance about what the co-redemption means and what it’s all about.

Father Elias said that the title of Mary as “co-redemptrix” emphasizes her closeness to Christ.

“It really explains what she is,” he said. “She’s with the redeemer. She’s suffering with her son, offering him and suffering with him on Calvary for our redemption.”

Speakers who will discuss the Church’s teachings on Mary are Scott Hahn, noted Marian expert Mark Miravalle, Redemptorist Father Pablo Staab, Franciscan Father Peter Damian Felhether and Raymond Staub.

Catholic singer and songwriter Dana Scallon will emcee the event.

The conference will take place on the 90th anniversary of the “Miracle of the Sun” at Fatima, Portugal. The tens of thousands present that day reportedly saw the sun spinning in the sky and giving off multicolored light. Later, the sun seemed to careen toward the Earth in a zigzag pattern.

According to the three young children in Fatima who in the months prior to the event had experienced apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it was Mary herself who had predicted that the miracle would happen on that day.

Conference participants can begin arriving at the parish at 8 a.m.

The first presentation will start at 9 a.m.

Mass will begin at 11:15 a.m.

St. Louis Archbishop Raymond L. Burke will be the primary celebrant and homilist at the liturgy.

The rosary will also be prayed at various times during the day.

The conference will conclude around 9 p.m.

“We’ve packed as much as we could into one day,” Father Elias said.

Lunch and supper will be offered at the parish for conference participants.

They can also choose to eat at nearby restaurants.

Registration prior to the day of the conference is $10. Walk-in registration will be $25.

For those unable to attend the conference, it can be viewed live via the Internet at www.airmaria.com.

Ultimately Father Elias said, learning more about Mary and how she participates in her son’s role as redeemer will bring people closer to Christ.

“Our Lady doesn’t take us away from Christ,” Father Elias said. “The more that we understand the mystery of our Lady, the more that we’ll understand Christ himself.”

(For more information about the conference or to register for it, call 812-825-4742, send an e-mail to friarude@figuadalupe.com or log on to www.airmaria.com and click on the conference icon.)™

September 6-November 17

This fall, the University of Louisville welcomes more than 100 sculptures by Frederick Hart, who is best known for The Three Soldiers, a bronze at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and his work on the National Cathedral, both in Washington, D.C.

To learn more, visit louisville.edu/frederickhart.

CELEBRATING A GREAT AMERICAN SCULPTOR

Frederick Hart: Giving Form to Spirit

SEPTEMBER 6–NOVEMBER 17

The University of Louisville is an equal opportunity institution.
Sometimes just surviving is a miracle...

When it rains heavily and water rises inside her tiny, cramped shack in northern Haiti, Yvonne Jean prays, "God, give me strength and courage." She bails water with a bucket, tossing it outside even as the water level inside keeps rising. Sometimes she spends all day bailing out water. Worst are the times at night when she fears for her baby Fadner, 5 months, little Sulfi, 2, and Jovnel, 9.

"The last time the water was in here, it was at night," Yvonne said. "I put the children on the bed. I stood next to the bed watching the children as the water came in up to my knees. I was afraid. I was watching to make sure the water wouldn't come in any higher. I stood next to the bed all night, watching the children."

The poor don't have safe, sturdy homes to keep out the rain and the wind. All they have is their trust in God. Survival is a daily struggle.

Rosemarie Lucien, 29, has no home or bed. All she has is a pink sheet on a concrete floor in northern Haiti. A widow, she and her four small children sleep in a spare room loaned to them by a friend. Frequently the children get sick from the poor living conditions. There is one prayer that is constantly on Rosemarie's lips.

"I pray, 'God, send someone to deliver me and my children.' I ask God to give me someplace to live with my children," she said.

When her husband died, Rosemarie was devastated. "I was afraid because I didn't know how I would take care of my children. I don't have anywhere to live with them. Now there is nothing. Whatever problems I have, I have to deal with myself because I have no one to count on," she said.

Her greatest fear is for her youngest, who is just 3 months old. "Sometimes just surviving is a miracle," Rosemarie said. "Nothing is certain."

Dedicated priest works hard to help the poor

One priest who is making a difference in the lives of the poor in northern Haiti is Father Augustin Duken. Through Food For The Poor, Fr. Duken is building new, safer homes for the residents of slums that flood during heavy rainstorms. The sturdy, concrete
structures are built on higher ground and give weary mothers peace of mind.

One such resident is Martha Louise, who holds baby Gillian, on her knee as she sits on the porch of her new house built by Food For The Poor. Her garden is filled with fruit and vegetables that help feed the family.

“I’m very happy with my new house. I could never afford a house. I prayed and said, ‘Thank you, God,’ the first night we slept here. The old house always got flooded,” she said.

The work Father Duken does with Food For The Poor is gratefully appreciated by his bishop. “He’s doing a very, very good job,” said Bishop Hubert Constant of Cap-Haitien. “The help we receive from Food For The Poor is tremendous. It’s making a big difference.”

Food For The Poor is an international ministry that works in Haiti and other countries to build houses and provide other lifesaving aid to those in need. But we rely on the compassion and generosity of people like you to make this possible.

“Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Founded in 1982, Food For The Poor works to end the suffering of the poor in the Caribbean and Latin America. In addition to building homes, we provide food for the starving, supply medicine and medical equipment to the sick and elderly, support orphanages and education for children, dig water wells for parched villagers, and much more.

We partner with local churches, clergy, missionaries and other ministries to serve our poorest brothers and sisters efficiently and effectively. Our mission is to connect the church of the First World with the church of the Third World in a way that benefits both. We invite and encourage you to partner with us in this mission.

You can help answer the prayers of desperate mothers through your donation to Food For The Poor. Your gift for housing can build a miracle for a destitute family in urgent need of basic shelter. For only $2,600, you can build a house that will give children the security every child deserves. A one-time gift of $2,600 (or a pledge of $174 a month for 15 months) will forever change the lives of those in desperate need. Additional information can be found in the brochure located in this publication.

Please, help share Christ’s love with desperately poor families in need of safe homes. By helping Food For The Poor build houses for those who struggle to survive, you help create a miracle in someone’s life. Please send your gift today.
The Villas of Guérin Woods to offer unique assisted living options

By Patricia Happel Cornwell
Special to The Criterion

GEORGETOWN—Mary Mangeot was one of several persons who spoke to the crowd on a hot September afternoon at groundbreaking ceremonies for The Villas of Guérin Woods. The $2 million project will create two homes, one dedicated to assisted living and one to comprehensive nursing care, on the 28-acre Georgetown campus of Guérin Inc.

The 84-year-old resident of Lanesville called the development “a dream come true.” She has already chosen her room in the assisted living villa from the blueprints.

During the Sept. 18 groundbreaking ceremony, Mangeot pointed her cane at the concrete foundation behind her and said, “I can show you exactly where my room is going to be. I made up my mind to be first on the list.”

She is the first of 29 senior residents from Floyd County and the neighboring region on the waiting list for the villas. Each 7,100-square-foot, state-licensed home will accommodate only 10 “elders” and have eight permanent staff members. The atmosphere will be more intimate than that of large elder-care institutions, project planners said. Residents will furnish and decorate their own bedrooms and private baths, but share a family-style kitchen, dining and living room areas.

Providence Sister Barbara Ann Zeller, president of Guérin Inc., said the goal of the villas is to “create a family-style environment, not an institution.” She pointed to the family-style kitchen, and said, “I can show you exactly where my room is going to be. I made up my mind to be first on the list.”

The unique project a potential model for future elder housing projects for the state. Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman said, “seniors are the fastest growing segment of the population.” She said the state is seeking “housing options for Hoosiers to maintain independence in their later years.”

Skillman has oversight of the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, which is providing most of the funding for the two homes. Other major funding comes from the Paul W. Ogle Foundation. Guérin Inc., a not-for-profit corporation, was established in 1999 to construct facilities for Providence House for Children at Georgetown.

The Guérin Inc. property on State Road 64 was originally 12.5 acres, but when Georgetown resident Scyble Payne, 84, of Lanesville proudly tells a crowd at groundbreaking ceremonies for The Villas at Guérin Woods that she is “first on the list” for a room in one of two 10-resident homes for elders under construction in Georgetown. Numerous dignitaries share groundbreaking duties for The Villas at Guérin Woods on Sept. 18. From left are Stephen Smith, director of the Division on Aging of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration; New Albany Mayor James Garner; Georgetown resident Scyble Payne; Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman; and Providence Sister Barbara Ann Zeller, president of Guérin Inc.

Guérin Woods is a 28-acre property that serves as a home for abused and neglected children, six apartments for participants in the Family Reunification and Preservation Program, 22 two-bedroom apartments for older persons with limited incomes, a 4,000-square-foot senior center open to all senior citizens in Floyd County and the surrounding area, an office building and an administrative residence. The campus and villas are named for St. Theodora Guérin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The villas are expected to be ready for occupancy in May 2008.

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Pray for the day when every person's life is loved and protected

By the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant leaped in my womb. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled!’” (Lk 1:41-45).

We know the story. The Archangel Gabriel has announced to the Virgin Mary God’s invitation to become the mother of the Messiah. As further evidence that nothing is impossible for God, Mary’s elderly cousin, Elizabeth, thought to be barren, was also expecting a child, John the Baptist.

Both Elizabeth’s pregnancy and Mary’s—despite their unusual circumstances—are cause for rejoicing. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the unborn child Jesus announces his presence to John, his unborn cousin, John leaps for joy, proclaiming to his mother, in effect, “Behold! The Lamb of God!”

Elizabeth, too, is then filled with the Holy Spirit and recognizes Mary as the blessed tabernacle of our Lord and Savior. Through the evangelical witness and sacrificial love of Mary, Jesus and John, the work of salvation has begun.

The Old and New Testaments are filled with such passages extolling the infant in the womb. And how does this happen to these unborn—unborn who were nestled under their mothers’ bellies, too? We were exclaiming, “Behold! The Lamb of God!”

As the Archangel Gabriel continues, “And that is the truth. And we are being urged to stop seeing human life as ‘no bigger than the period at the end of this sentence.”

Catholics must help bring about a culture of life

By Cardinal Justin Rigali

Since 1972, the Catholic bishops in the United States have set aside the first Sunday in October as Respect Life Sunday. On Oct. 7, Catholics will again pray for—and renew their resolve to bring about—a culture of life and an end to the culture of death, which destroys human life from conception to natural death and all stages of the dependent human life.


Mary, newly pregnant with the Lord Jesus, is visiting her elderly cousin, Elizabeth, whose boy has not been born. The moment Mary’s greeting reaches Elizabeth’s ears and John the Baptist, the holy child within Elizabeth’s womb cries out, “Behold! The Lamb of God!”

There was no confusion as to what and who were nestled under their mothers’ hearts. Yet 2,000 years later, many well-educated people do not know—or claim to not know—the truth about human life before birth.

In April, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the federal ban on partial-birth abortion in an opinion that explicitly recognizes the humanity of unborn children and the grief that women experience after abortion.

Yet the killing of unborn children at any stage of pregnancy remains legal, provided that the lethal act is performed while the child is mostly inside his or her mother’s body.

June, President Bush vetoed a bill to fund stem cell research requiring the destruction of human embryos, and directed his administration to investigate alternative means of developing plumpotent stem cells “by ethically responsible techniques.”

Using the results of some supporters of embryonic stem-cell research continue to dismiss concerns about destroying human embryos because they say “we do not know the period at the end of this sentence.”

We will not see the day when all human life is respected and defended unless we address a deeper problem.

As Pope Benedict XVI has said, “If truth does not exist for man, then neither can he ultimately distinguish between good and evil. And then the great and wonderful discoveries of science become double-edged: They can open up significant possibilities for good, for the benefit of mankind, but also, as we see only too clearly, they can pose a terrible threat involving the destruction of man and the world. We need truth” (Homily at Marianzell, Austria, on Sept. 8, 2007).

Days after Pope Benedict’s homily, the New Jersey Supreme Court claimed to have no way of knowing the truth about “when human life begins.”

Dismissing a lawsuit against an abortion clinic which concealed the truth about abortion from women, the Court claimed there is “clearly no consensus” on whether, as matter of “biological fact,” the unborn child is a human being. The Court cited “moral, theological, [and] ideological” disagreement to ignore biological fact.

We need truth.

Some ethicists suggest that patients who apparently lack conscious awareness—although otherwise healthy and not imminently dying—can be dehydrated and starved to death because their lives are not fully human but “vegetative.”

This ignores the insight expressed in 2004 by Pope John Paul II and recently reaffirmed by the Holy See under Pope Benedict XVI that “the intrinsic value and personal dignity of every human being do not change, no matter what the concrete circumstances of his or her life. A man, even if seriously ill or disabled in the exercise of his highest functions, is and always will be a man, and he will never become a ‘vegetable’ or an ‘animal’.”

We need truth.

On this Respect Life Sunday, we ask Catholics and all people of good will to witness to the truth about the incomparable dignity and right to life of every human being. This is no sectarian creed. The “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (Preamble, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

And that is the truth.

(Cardinal Justin Rigali, archbishop of Philadelphia, is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities.)†
Abortion destroys life and violates human rights

By Fr. Thomas D. Williams, LLC.

When I read the 2004 Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, one pleasant surprise was the text’s specific treatment and forthright condemnation of abortion in the context of human rights. The disconcerting fact is that, more commonly, the topic of abortion is seen as falling outside the discourse of Catholic social teaching. As a matter of social justice.

In Catholic social thought. In his 1995 encyclical Evangelium Vitae, he addressed the issue at great length, Catholic social teaching. In his 1995 encyclical Evangelium Vitae, he addressed the issue at great length.

Pope John Paul saw that abortion is an emblematic and alarming in the past four decades. Therefore, the first mention of abortion in a social encyclical appears only in 1971 in Pope Paul VI’s Octogesima Adveniens.

It was Pope John Paul II who effectively turned the tide, forcefully introducing abortion into the realm of Catholic social teaching. In his 1995 encyclical Evangelium Vitae, he addressed the issue at great length, placing it in the context of social justice. Pope John Paul saw that abortion is an emblematic and singular socio-ethical problem deserving central attention in Catholic social thought.

Six characteristics illustrate the uniqueness of abortion as a matter of social justice:

- Abortion deals specifically with the destruction of innocent life. This differentiates discussion of abortion from other related topics.
- This is why then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in June 2004 wrote: “There may be a legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty, but not however with regard to abortion and euthanasia.”

Though all life is precious, moral theology has always differentiated the destruction of “innocent life” as particularly heinous, and always and everywhere worthy of condemnation.

- Another factor distinguishing abortion as a social phenomenon is the sheer magnitude of the problem. An estimated 46 million abortions are performed worldwide each year, a figure that alone makes abortion a social problem of staggering proportions.

The volume of abortions underscores the social nature of the problem, and makes abortion one of the most serious social justice issues of all time.

- A third factor separating abortion from other justice issues is its legal status. Unlike other instances of massive killing of human life, like terrorism or serial killing, which stand clearly outside the law in advanced nations, abortion enjoys legal sanction.

Pope John Paul wrote of the novelty of such “scientifically and systematically programmed threats” (Evangelium Vitae, #17).

- A fourth distinguishing aspect of abortion is its arbitrary division of human life and those unworthy. Abortion deals not with the random killing of unrelated individuals, but with the circumscription of an entire class of human beings—the unborn—as non-persons, excluded from the basic rights and protections accorded to all other human beings. If human dignity depends on other than simple membership in the human race—be it intelligence, athletic ability, social status, race, age or health—we immediately find ourselves having to distinguish between persons who count and those who don’t.

- Abortion even distinguishes itself from related questions about the so-called “right to privacy,” such as race or gender and assisted suicide, by the absence of any possibility of informed consent.

The status of the unborn as voiceless and most vulnerable adds a further dimension to discussions of the morality and gravity of abortion. Here the bioethical category of “autonomy” cannot be applied since unborn children have no way of speaking for themselves.

- Finally, abortion differs from other major social ills because of its relative invisibility. Abortion takes place behind closed doors and is hushed in public. As in the case of slavery, ending the social injustice of abortion relies mainly on the courage and willingness of persons and institutions not directly involved in abortion to speak out.

Catholic social thought offers two distinctive elements to the abortion debate.

First, a clear separation between moral theology and public discourse. Catholic social teaching often employs a natural-law vocabulary directed to all persons of good will, and frames its arguments using accessible concepts and constructions that can be brought to bear on moral discourse in a non-confessional environment.

Second, perhaps more importantly in the world, the Church in its social teaching has developed a series of principles to address the complex moral questions in the abortion issue. As new situations have arisen from the rapidly changing socio-political landscape, the Church has shown admirable elasticity in accommodating new states of affairs while ever defending the essential dignity of the person and the family.

Just as a mother or father declares a disproportionate amount of time and energy to a child who is sick, without for that reason loving their other children any less, Christians are called to focus their efforts preferentially toward the most needy and defenseless among us.

Applying this principle to contemporary society, the social injustice that most cries out to Christian conscience, for the reasons we saw earlier, is the deliberate and massive attack on the most vulnerable members of society, the unborn.

In its venerable tradition of standing up for society’s most defenseless members, the Catholic Church is uniquely qualified to lead the protean battle over the abortion issue. This, as Pope John Paul so clearly taught, is the number one priority for Catholic social thought today, which must inevitably be expressed not only as social thought, but also as social action.

(Leonard of Christ Father Thomas D. Williams is dean of theology and professor of Catholic social doctrine at Regina Apostolorum University in Rome and the author of Spiritual Progress: Becoming the Christian You Want to Be, published by Hachette, New York, in 2007.)
By Bill and Monica Dodds

If you’re a caregiver, we thank you for what you do. It may have occurred to you that caring for loved ones—your parents, spouse or children—who need special assistance is an important pro-life ministry. Your compassion, dedication and hard work are testaments to the value of human life.

There is a spiritual component to the vocation of caregiving, but there are also the gritty details. We’ve learned that, while every situation is unique, there are common, basic issues for both the caregiver and the person receiving care.

It’s important for caregivers to understand what they are going through every day. The stress of providing care to another person can unleash a torrent of unexpected emotions and bring challenges that often have no clear solutions.

Caregivers need to find a support group or good friend to talk to about their role and emotions, which may range from anger to sadness to guilt.

Don’t fill the time running errands for the person in your care, going grocery shopping, getting the car fixed and so on. To find someone to help you with respite care, check with the local Catholic social service agency, ask at your parish or contact a local program in the community.

Every life is created by God and has a purpose. God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will richly bless you and your family every day.

Our son, Peter, was born early at 34 weeks by emergency caesarean section then was immediately baptized by the hospital chaplain due to his serious congenital health problems. Peter is now a happy 2-year-old boy who, although physically limited, brings joy to his family every day.

In the year after Peter’s birth, I thought often of the mothers and fathers who receive adult prenatal diagnoses followed by grim descriptions of the genetic condition and assessments of the baby’s prospects that are inaccurate, incomplete and even fallacious.

Don’t take over tasks or responsibilities formerly handled by one’s spouse—is rarely an easy transition. Your loved one may feel that a part of himself or herself is lost. It is a “cycle of grief.”

Admit that what you’re doing is hard. Remember that you’re not perfect. Know that you can ask for help. Don’t wait for a crisis to arise before getting supplemental help.

There is a spiritual component to the caregiving role in providing that care. Just as from the hospital chaplain on the day Peter was born, it is the Father asking you to help his Son take care of someone he loves deeply.

People receiving care are often concerned about “being a burden” to their family members. Your loved one might bring up the subject when you’re feeling angry, upset or frustrated. Admit that what you’re doing is hard. Look for outside support.

Realize that your loved one may need to be reassured more than once. See if there’s some small part of a bigger task that your loved one can do to feel like he or she is helping out at least a little bit.

Let your parent or spouse know that providing care for him or her is something you want to do and, while there are hectic moments, taking care of him or her is a privilege.

God has chosen you to play a central role in providing that care. Just as from the cross Jesus asked St. John—the patron saint of caregivers—to take care of his Blessed Mother, God asks you to help take care of someone else he loves deeply.

What you’re doing is a prayer, and the path that you and your loved one are taking is a spiritual pilgrimage.

It is the Father asking you to help him or her through the final stages of that journey. It is the Son who has told us that whatever we do for those in need we do for him.

And it is the Holy Spirit who is with you right now and will never leave you. God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will richly bless you and your loved one in this life and in the life to come.

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Prenatal Partners for Life helps parents

By Mary Kellett

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One in four adult Americans suffers from mental disorder

By Fr. Richard Gill

Pope John Paul II wrote that, "Whoever suffers from mental illness ‘always’ bears God’s image and likeness in themselves as does every human being. In addition, they ‘always’ have the value of what he produces, the goods of the spirit, tends to neglect the goods of the spirit, and to valorize material goods more than spiritual ones. This is the greatest of all the sins committed by our culture. It is also said that the United States has the highest rate of mental illness of all the advanced nations. One in four adult Americans suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.

Yet there is relatively little public awareness of the scope of the problem. And, tragically, the stereotypes and stigma which are so often attached to mental illness help to create a culture where those who are affected are falsely seen as helpless victims or objects of charity. Without addressing in any great detail the range of medical causes and treatments of mental illness or milder phenomena such as hedonism and materialism, which are all too common in advanced societies, can foster exaggerated hopes of pleasure and reward as well as distorted notions of what constitutes success. Unrealizable hopes leave in their wake people who are severely discouraged and exasperated. Our increasingly techno- 

Human values are defined more in terms of a ‘culture of having’ rather than a ‘culture of being.’

In a society that judges a person on the value of what he produces, the mentally ill person is easily seen merely as a burden on society. As Christians, we are called unceasingly to affirm their dignity as human beings who need to be treated at every point of their existence.

The dedication of so many individuals at work in the field of mental health points us to the dignity of people with mental illness. Often, they work amid many difficulties, and it can be challenging to recognize the human dignity of the people they serve. Caregivers for people with mental illness need a formation of the heart because they are dealing with human beings who need to be treated at every moment in accord with their God-given dignity.

Mental health workers with a deeply Christian understanding of the redemptive value of suffering will go beyond mere human sympathy to authentic solidarity in suffering, a bond between persons rooted in love.

In short, mental health care workers must have a formation that gives them an authentically Christian understanding of the person made in the image and likeness of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ.

A formation that gives them a proper understanding of the person’s nature and destiny will lead them to care for the person as a brother and sister, and to seek as much as possible to restore the person’s interior freedom and the capacity to orient his life toward the truth of existence.

So, we need to create a world that resists the policies that work against the true value to the community. We need to foster a serene, balanced workplace promoting true human goods and authentic growth of individuals, a solid consensus on clear moral standards by which we will live together, and real objectivity about behaviors which are detrimental to the health of the culture.

The Church community itself has a great opportunity and responsibility to recognize and witness to the uniqueness of each member. The parish community must create the counter-cultural environment in which all people can claim an equal place and contribute through presence and action.

(Father Richard Gill was the founding president of the Institute for the Psychological Sciences in Arlington, Va. Since 2005, he has served as director of Our Lady’s of Mount Kisco Family and Retreat Center in Mount Kisco, N.Y.)
Archbishop and governor to speak at Catholic Business Exchange programs

By Mary Ann Wyand

Catholic Business Exchange programs keep getting better and better every month.

Participation in the faith-based business organization’s early morning meetings in Indianapolis continues to grow as more Catholic professionals discover the benefits of praying together and learning together from knowledgeable mentors who discuss informative and entertaining topics related to Christianity in the marketplace.

Meetings begin with Mass at 6:30 a.m., followed by breakfast and a fast and short program at the St. Pius X Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., in Indianapolis. The $15 fee covers the cost of the meal.

Catholic Business Exchange founder Jim Liston believes putting God first is the secret to the organization’s success.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, the featured speaker for the Oct. 18 meeting, will address the importance of bringing the Catholic faith and values into daily life.

The archbishop endorses the Catholic Business Exchange in a letter on the Web site and quotes Pope John Paul II’s statement that part of the Church’s new evangelization involves bringing Catholic faith and values into the marketplace.

“I think that hits home as to what we’ve done with our strategy of combining a faith-based organization with business,” Liston said. “Catholic men and women want to meet other people in business, learn from them, share their faith with them and do business with them.”

Gov. Mitch Daniels is scheduled to speak at the Nov. 16 meeting.

Mgr. Joseph F. Schaeidl, vicar general, is the celebrant at Mass at the October and November meetings. A member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis and financial services professional with Wells Fargo Financial Group, Liston called to start a Catholic business networking group on the north side of the city four years ago.

He enjoyed Civilian Dei programs at Marian College on the west side and Lumen Dei meetings at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish on the south side with Catholic professionals and decided to organize a similar group for business men and women who live in northern Marion County as well as Hamilton County.

In four years, participants representing more than 50 parishes in the archdiocese and the Diocese of Lafayette have heard 33 Catholic or Protestant speakers ranging from a hospital administrator to an editorial cartoonist to sports experts.

“Each of them in their own way has incorporated their faith journey or how they feel about their faith along with their message of business,” Liston said.

“When the governor speaks in November, it will be a combination of his faith base along with a business summary of what you would expect from the chief executive officer of the state,” Liston explained.

Lumen expects sell-out crowds of more than 300 people for the Archbishop’s speech in October and the governor’s talk in November. He recommends that people register early for those meetings.

 Twice a year, participants meet for a “business after hours” social gathering.

Next year, Liston plans to change the group’s organizational structure from participation to membership and guest status. He also wants to help Catholic business professionals start groups in other cities.

St. John of the Abbey business organization of Indianapolis, the owner of Stellar Trainning Products, helps Liston with the meetings and schedules priests for Mass every month.

“Sometimes in today’s society you can feel that you’re the only person left who believes in honesty, fair-dealing and that the way you do business is the way you treat others. You feel that there are other people who share the same values that I cherish. … At the meetings, you meet such interesting professionals and realize that people are really being rewarded in both personal and professional ways.”

Jesuit Father Thomas Widner, former editor of both The Criterion and The Criterion America, who recently stepped down as U.S. secretary of veterans affairs, and Corrine “Lindy” Boggs, a former congresswoman from Louisiana, installed as archbishop of Baltimore on Oct. 1.

Other dignitaries at the Mass included two former Catholic business professionals who support religious, educational and charitable activities in the archdiocese. †

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis

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Charitable trust provides families with educational options

By Sean Gallagher

When a new academic year started in August, many students attending Catholic schools in Marion County did so because of the scholarships they received from the CHOICE Charitable Trust.

CHOICE, which stands for “Creating Hope and Opportunity in Children’s Education,” was founded in 1991.

It awards need-based scholarships to families living in Marion County who want to send their children to private schools in kindergarten through eighth grade, but find it financially difficult to do so.

Currently, CHOICE awards approximately 800 scholarships annually. In the 2006-07 academic year, 476 students attending 22 Catholic schools in Marion County received more than $583,000 in CHOICE scholarships.

Overall, since 1991, more than 60 percent of CHOICE’s scholarships have been awarded to students attending Catholic schools.

Robert Hoy, executive director of CHOICE, said his organization would like to award scholarships to families throughout the state, but can only award grants according to the charitable contributions available to it.

“We can’t meet all [the funding desires right now],” Hoy said. Hoy is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis.

Hoy said that there were 100 families in Marion County last year who applied for scholarships, but did not receive them due to lack of funding.

One way that CHOICE has worked in 2007 to increase educational options for Hoosier families was in its advocacy for a state tax credit for those who make contributions to private scholarship granting organizations like CHOICE.

“We need to have people consider that,” Hoy said. “People talk about charter schools. That’s better than nothing, but that’s not the answer to the needs of all the children.”

It is “a shame,” he said, “that the state isn’t doing what other states are doing.”

A proposed tax credit almost made it into law last year, Hoy said, but it was put out of the budget on the last day, actually.”

“And it made it to the 11th hour and then it was put out of the budget—on the third-grade classroom at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis.

“I loved school,” she says. It’s obvious as she talks about her students that she also loves teaching and her students.

Crystal’s mother struggled to pay her tuition at Holy Cross. In 1991, when Crystal was in the sixth grade and her mom was desperately trying to find a way to continue to pay tuition, she was told about a new program started by J. Patrick Rooney of Golden Rule Insurance to help families like hers pay tuition at the non-public school of their choice.

She applied and, much to her surprise and joy, Crystal was selected as one of the inaugural Educational CHOICE grant recipients.

After eighth grade, Crystal attended Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. After her graduation in 1998, she enrolled at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis to study pre-med. But she soon changed her major to elementary education.

“I had always loved school, and knew that I wanted to impart that same love for learning to children,” she says.

Having been the recipient of one of the first CHOICE scholarships in 1991, Crystal now teaches many students who receive them today.

Support the archdiocese receives from CHOICE.

“Working with the CHOICE board has inspired us to be the very best we can be in our urban schools,” she said. “This is not always an easy task, but the support and the expectation for greatness have encouraged us to move forward.”

Hoy would like to see those opportunities expand both to students in high school and to all students statewide.

“It just takes more funding,” he said.

“We will continue to work legislatively to do whatever we can through scholarship tax credits—whatever it has to be—to continue to provide families, especially the underserved, options in education.”

St. Philip Neri teacher was among first CHOICE scholarship recipients

By Robert Hoy

Special to The Criterion

When she was in preschool, her teachers expressed concern about her shyness. They told her mom that if there were 11 children in the class and only 10 cookies for snacks, she’d always be the one to not get a cookie. She just wasn’t aggressive.

For the first grade, her mother enrolled her at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis. Teachers there were concerned about her shyness, but made it their goal to “open up” this intelligent child.

In December of her first year, she had a small speaking part in the school’s Christmas pageant—not an easy task for even the most outgoing of children, but daunting for someone with her personality.

She recited her line without a hitch.

“Instead of having just [800] children in central Indiana getting to go to private schools, that would be the only way to give someone who is in the hole a chance to have 10 cookies for snacks,” Hoy said.

 reviewed the work of Carlos Caldera, left, Fernando Zuniga, second from left, waits to talk to Barthel. Barthel was in the first class of recipients of scholarships from the CHOICE Charitable Trust in 1991 when she was a student at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis.

Crystal knows that’s why she is where she is today. She’s there to help her students recite their lines in their school Christmas pageant—in whatever form it takes for each of them.

Just like the teachers and staff of Holy Cross Central School did for her. (Robert Hoy is the executive director of the CHOICE Charitable Trust.)
Jesse Romero loves the Catholic faith. So does Darrell Miller. At 17, both husbands, fathers and former world-class athletes are not afraid to let everyone know it.

Romero’s passion is evident as he holds a rosary high in his outstretched hand and discusses how Jesus and Mary are key players in his life.

Miller clutches a Bible as he talks about the power of the Eucharist and the path that led him to join the Catholic Church 13 years ago. “I want to be holy. That’s my goal in life,” Romero said.

“We are charged to live the Gospel,” Miller said. “We are charged to be different.”

The pair, along with Father Larry Richards, Father Jonathan Meyer and Denver Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, were among the speakers at the second annual Indiana Catholic Men’s Conference on Sept. 28 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. (A story on Archbishop Chaput’s keynote address was published in the Sept. 28 issue of The Criterion.) Sponsored by the Marian Center in Indianapolis, the title of the conference was “Lions Breathing Fire: Living the Catholic Faith.” Taken from a homily of St. John Chrysostom, it describes what people should be like after receiving Communion.

The event included Mass celebrated by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and Archbishop Chaput, and the opportunity for confession as well as exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

“Look up, get up and don’t ever give up!” As he did the previous year, Archbishop Buechlein welcomed the more than 1,000 men who decided to use this September Saturday as an opportunity to reconnect with their faith.

“Thank you for taking your baptismal call to holiness seriously, … and placing yourselves in the hands of God,” he said.

The archbishop also recounted a speech given by Michael Irvin, a three-time Super Bowl champion with the Dallas Cowboys in the 1990s, when the wide receiver was inducted into the National Football League’s Hall of Fame in August.

Though his life after football has included several bumps in the road, including drug arrests, Irvin asked his children to learn from his mistakes. Shaving Irvin’s previous unibrow, the archbishop told the men in attendance, “… Look up, get up and don’t ever give up. We would be a good motto for today,” the archbishop said.

A hunger for the Eucharist

One of five children raised in a Baptist home, Darrell Miller was always eager as a youth to go to the altar calls at his church every Sunday.

“The reason? ‘I wanted to receive Christ.’” Miller said. The older brother of former Indiana Pacers star Reggie Miller, Darrell became familiar with the Catholic faith when he starting during his wife, Kelly, during his career as a man and later, major league baseball player with several teams, including the now Anaheim Angels.

Though he initially tried to get his wife interested in exploring the Baptist faith, Miller soon found himself immersed in learning more about Catholics. “A Life Teen Mass in Arizona planted another seed in his faith journey.”

“There were people, including men, fully and actively participating in the Mass,” said Miller, who is director of Major League Baseball’s Urban Youth Academy and a board member of Catholic Athletes for Christ.

But that was only part of his attraction to the Catholic faith.

“One thing I could not deny is the power of the Eucharist,” he said. “Every single Sunday, I wanted to receive Christ … This Church is the real deal.”

The sacrament of reconciliation is something else about the faith that Miller has learned to love. At his first confession, Miller recalled thinking, “I need forgiveness, and I wept and I cried. ‘I knew I was forgiven, and I was whole,’ he said. “It was the most difficult but best thing that ever happened to me.”

For some individuals, that may mean reprioritizing their life and turning it over to Christ, Miller noted. It also means letting Christ run your life.

“We know about him [Christ], but we don’t know him,” Miller said. “I urge you to be the body of Christ to your family.” Miller told the men, “TGIF—Thank God I’m forgiven!”

A cradle Catholic, Jesse Romero didn’t begin embracing his faith until 20 years ago. It was through his study of Scripture that he realized the Bible “is a man’s book.”

Quoting Scripture throughout his presentation, Romero encouraged those in attendance to become like “lions breathing fire” to fight the culture of death that is so prevalent in today’s society.

“There’s one thing that makes the devil afraid—as receiving holy Communion,” said Romero, a former member of the Los Angeles Police Department, a three-time world Police Boxing Champion and a two-time U.S. Kickboxing Champion.

“Learn the basics of [the faith] well,” he continued. “This is the Lord’s gym. God has given us the one-two punch: confession and Communion.”

Many people face spiritual struggles in life, Romero noted, but “the sacraments of the Church are the nuclear warheads God has given us. We need that Jesus blood transfusion.”

The sacrament of reconciliation has made national news in recent months, Romero noted. He mentioned a story in The Wall Street Journal that discussed how other faith traditions are realizing the power of confession.

“We are blessed that Jesus has given us the way to get rid of all that unresolved guilt,” he said.

There should be a placard in every confessionals that reads “TGIF—Thank God I’m forgiven!” Romero added.

Secular experts have noted that people who practice the Catholic faith have the lowest suicide rate. The reason? The sacrament of reconciliation, Romero said. “America needs a heart transplant—the Sacred Heart of Jesus,” he added. “He is a physician,” and his healing “happens every day in that confession.”

As we live on the front lines trying to rid society of its dehumanizing effects, Romero encouraged conference participants to love the Lord and develop a devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary through the rosary. “Stay close to Jesus and stay close to Mary,” he said.

A devotion to Mary

Father Larry Richards had simple advice for men at the conference. If you don’t own a Bible, go out and buy one.

And carry a rosary in your pocket and pray it every day. He also shared a motto for living each day as a person of faith: No Bible, no breakfast. No Bible, no bed.

“You should start and end each day with the Word of God,” he noted. Father Richards, a nationally known mission preacher and retreat master, encouraged the men to follow the Virgin Mary’s example and be people of prayer.

“No human being spent more time with Jesus than Mary,” said Father Richards, a priest of the Erie, Pa., Diocese.

Richards encouraged daily praying of the rosary. He called it a great defense against Satan. “This is a weapon. You’ve got to use it,” he said.

“Mary is the last gift Jesus gave to us,” he continued. “You’ve got to take her into your care. Like a pair of glasses, we look through her to see Jesus, her son.”

“Gentlemen, you need the mother of God.”

When praying the rosary, Father Richards told the men to put themselves in each scene. “As you look at the life of Jesus Christ, then you become like Jesus,” he said.

As a follower of Christ, you must be able to embrace life’s crosses and challenges, and tell people that you love them, Father Richards added.

“Twenty-five years ago today, my dad died,” Father Richards said. “I spent my whole life judging my dad instead of loving my dad. ‘Be a man of love, and tell your family you love them,” he added.

‘Lions Breathing Fire’

There are 1,400 minutes in a day. Can you not give 30 of those minutes to the Lord [to attend daily Mass]?” asked Father Jonathan Meyer in his address focusing on the conference theme.

“Are we willing to make the sacrifice? This is not about talks, it’s about salvation,” said Father Meyer, associate pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis and archdiocesan director of vocations.

“Fast food is great, but Jesus is eternal life,” he added.

In discussing the conference theme, Father Meyer told participants, “We are called to be like Christ, to be lions, to die to our sins and rise again.

“We are called to lions breathing fire.”

At our baptism, we are given candles that carry not tiny but enormous flames that exhale truth, justice and the charity of God, Father Meyer noted.

While the lion represents Christ, breathing represents the Holy Spirit and fire is the power of God, he added. “It’s not about us. It’s about what God does through us,” Father Meyer said.

If we become individuals who receive the Eucharist daily, “the devil can do nothing but flee,” he noted.

“We are called to be lions, to breathe the fire of God,” Father Meyer said.
MUNCIE—This fall, St. Lawrence School children have Christmas on their minds. Visions of angels, shepherds and Baby Jesus dance in their heads.

In art class, their little hands are busy rolling, stretching and shaping clay into Nativity figures that will be auctioned at the annual Fall Festival on Oct. 5-6.

Art teacher Liz Guntle is enthusiastic about the project. It is an ideal way for the students to learn more about their religion and develop new art skills, she said.

The project was made possible by a donation from Derek Ruttan, the grandfather of third-grader Caleb Fouts, who wanted his grandchildren to learn about our religion and culture.

Before they began sculpting, they talked about the main figures—who they were and their role in Jesus’ birth.

“They all wanted to make Jesus or an angel,” Guntle said. “The next most popular figures were the kings [because] they got to bring presents to Jesus.”

Kindergartner Katie Hunter said she was glad that she got to make Baby Jesus.

“Some of the children were so taken with the color and pattern of the multicolor [that] they applied the beads everywhere,” she said.

“We are going to have Nativity sets for the fall festival for the school and parish. Everyone who works on the project will get to keep their figure,” Guntle said.

The Nativity sets will be up for bid during the class auction on Oct. 5 and at the fall festival, the major fundraiser for the school and parish.

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From left, seventh-graders Angelika Norris and Kiona Johnson and eighth-grader Taylor Brown take a closer look at the fourth-grade Nativity set at St. Lawrence School in Muncie.
As an adjective, the word “ancient” has several definitions. One of them—“having the qualities of age or long existence; venerable, old-fashioned, antique”—gave rise to a question posed to two Catholic adults: “What would you tell someone who asked how your ancient faith relates to your actual 21st-century life?”

Grayson Smith, a member of St. Irenaeus Parish in Rochester Hills, Mich., didn’t hesitate in answering. “I’ve never thought of my faith as ancient,” he said. “I think of it as timeless, for all times.”

Smith, who recently retired after working 40 years for General Motors, said there were surprising opportunities to exhibit his faith in his career.

“There were lots of times to set examples for people when given an opportunity to make a choice, to go the right way,” he said.

“I think it was obvious to people. There was never a question about the priorities in my life, even working for the largest corporation in the world. When prioritizing what was important to me, GM was always third behind family and faith.”

In a high-stakes, 21st-century businessman’s life, the Catholic faith formed his character in “very subtle but easily understood” ways, in “the little things,” Smith said.

“I had somebody say to me once, ‘What drove you to that decision? Why did you choose the difficult way when you could have chosen the easy way?’ ” Smith recalled. “I think that became more apparent to me as I matured—that going to Mass on Sunday was only a part of my faith. It’s what you do outside of church that matters,” too.

Mary Pat Carothers of St. Irenaeus Parish in Cypress, Calif., a mother of four, answered the question with the same confident quickness as Smith.

“I would say that truth is timeless,” she said. “Almost all the great religions treat the same essential truth, and that is that we are beings who are meant to act together in a benevolent way. Religions older than Catholicism have been teaching that, too. We just have to keep on doing it. We don’t [always] get it right, obviously, but we have to keep trying.”

Are there religious contradictions to life in the 21st century?

Carothers scoffed. “Contradictions in life as opposed to religion? I would say that, if you count religion as being institutions and human bureaucracies, there will always be contradictions. “The more humans you get in one place, the more chance you have of not getting it right. But the more people you get ‘trying to do it right, the more hope there is.”

Carothers considers the legal and financial implications of the civil cases recently settled by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as an apt example of our ancient faith colliding with 21st-century life.

“I would hope people wouldn’t confuse human bureaucracies and traditions with the eternal truths we—as a people and a Church—are meant to convey.”

“Look at the big picture,” she continued. “Human beings haven’t changed in essence over the last 2,000 years so the ancient messages of Catholicism will always be relevant. Technology has changed the way we live on the outside, but on the inside the words of Jesus and the tenets of our faith, including our Judean roots, are still very much alive and nourishing.”

(Elizabeth Rackover is a catechist at St. Irenaeus Parish in Rochester Hills, Mich.)

_Eternal wisdom found in the Bible gives hope for today_

By Fr. Dale Launderville, S.B.

Hope is a virtue essential to human life. We grow and change; we acquire new insights and let go of blind spots. This demand for change is not simply an imperative addressed to individuals, but also to the groups and communities intertwined with us.

This communal dimension emphasizes that the change we are asked to undergo is not a call to free-wheeling spontaneity in which all our options are open—a situation in which we let go of the past as if it did not live on in the present.

We know that who we are is not only a gift from God, but also a result of what we have accomplished and experienced in our interactions with others. Who we are has been shaped by God, our parents, friends and mentors. Who we will be in this life and the next will be shaped by God, the saints and our loved ones.

To cast away the past carelessly would be a dangerous step toward jettisoning the future. Hope is grounded in memory. A helpful way for us Christians to imagine our journey toward God is to think of ourselves in a rowboat: We face backward in order to move forward.

One of the vital sources for generating growth in Christian individuals and communities is gained through our interactions with the Scriptures. By listening to God’s word and meditating on it, we allow the wisdom of more than two millennia to shape our priorities and our outlook on life.

This process of engaging with the Scriptures and trying to discern how God is speaking to one in the present circumstances is a discipline that does not end. In fact, the goal is not to accomplish this task of listening and speaking to God so that it ends, but rather to become proficient at this activity so that it becomes a source of joy and nourishment.

When we read and meditate on the Scriptures, we are inviting a conversation not only with those faithful ones who have written these texts, but especially with God whom Jesus tells us is present where two or more are gathered in his name.

(Benedictine Father Dale Launderville is a Scripture scholar at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn.)

Discussion Point

Times change, but people and the truth don’t

_This Week’s Question_

What would you tell an inquirer who asked how your ancient faith relates to your actual 21st-century life?

“It doesn’t feel ancient to me. I follow my faith in my everyday life, applying the tenets to everyday [situations]. The faith might be ancient, but there’s a universality that applies to my life today. If it wasn’t alive and current to me, it wouldn’t be my faith.”

(P.J. Gill-Gorenc, West Chester, Pa.)

“It’s the truth, it doesn’t change, and you can believe it’s the truth because you can trace it back. But you have to distinguish between the essence of the Church itself and the fallibility of the people—aiming for perfection—who may be running it.”

(Jane Sullivan, Rocky River, Ohio)

“They’re really old stuff, but we’re the same people as they were back then. We’re exposed to a lot more today, but if you go back to the Ten Commandments and [the concept of] loving your neighbor as yourself you find the basics don’t change through the centuries.”

(Lindy Rankin, Carthage, Tenn.)

_Lend Us Your Voice_

An upcoming edition asks: What attitudes or approaches are needed to address a troubled situation constructively?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to greene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
**Biblical women: Story of Deborah and Jael**

(Tenth in a series of columns)

The Book of Judges records the exploits of 12 Israelite heroes who exercised authority over the Israelites between the death of Joshua and the time of Eliezer. However, in this time frame, the Israelites did not rule all of Palestine.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was one of those seven judges who ruled during this period. In fact, she was the first woman to exercise authority over them. She made it a practice to sit under a palm tree between Bethel and Ramah, a little north of Jerusalem. It is to her that we come for judgment. We’re not told how this woman became a judge in a naturalocial society.

During this period, the Canaanite king, Jabin, ruled Palestine. Sisera was his general.

One day, Deborah summoned Barak, who lived in Kedesh, north of the Sea of Galilee in the region of Naphtali. Deborah ordered Barak to round up 10,000 Naphtalites and Zebulunites, who lived between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as 40,000 men from the tribe of Zebulun, located near the south end of the Sea of Galilee. Deborah said that she would then lead Sisera’s army. Barak agreed to do it only if Deborah went with him. OK, she said, but then Barak learned a lesson in expedition because Sisera would fall into the hands of a woman.

Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh, where they raised their army and led them up Mount Tabor. When Sisera learned what she had done, he assembled 900 iron chariots and all of his force at the base of the mountain. Deborah ordered Barak and his men to charge up the mountain because “the Lord marches before you.”

Deborah and the Israelites routed Sisera’s army. Sisera dismounted from his chariot and fled on foot while Barak pursued Sisera’s army. Sisera made his way to the tent of Jael, wife of Heber, a Kenite, since the Kenite family and King Jabin were at peace.

Jael met Sisera and told him to hurry to the tent because the enemy was about to arrive. Jael said, “It’s the life blood of many organizations. It’s the life blood of many organizations.”

Still, there are many needs that require actual hands-on attention, and throwing government or private money at them is not the answer. Maybe we should slow down, consider the priorities, our obligations and the time required to fulfill them. Maybe, just maybe, we can do a few less things every year and know we could spare and be surprised by how satisfying it is for us and for others.

Jael calmly went out to meet him and that initial hesitation, that momentary fear, is not only satisfying for us, but also that it’s the life blood of many organizations.

Men’s volunteering usually involved organizations such as the Boy Scouts or sports teams like Little League. They helped with more strenuous parish projects by setting up new playground equipment or building kids’ play areas. They ran parish financial campaigns, and drove trucks to pick up people’s cars for the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Whatever was one’s talent or lack of talent, there was a volunteer job begging to put it to use today. Today, with both parents often working away from home, the number of volunteer jobs has dropped considerably. People just can’t manage to find time for it while maintaining full schedules of work and family duties and can blame them.

And Jesus said that this is where we find the love of God. Those who have no one to talk to. After all, the first volunteer was Christ, who served us all in fulfilling his destiny. We know that good hearts come from God.

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

**Junk mail can offer worthwhile reflections**

We’re always suspicious of the guy who raises his hand first, aren’t we?

“Junk mail can offer worthwhile reflections on human nature.” Of course, I share one here. This came from a Catholic friend in Indianapolis who reads only what she knows I will appreciate.

What follows is the message in that e-mail. As with many such messages “making the rounds” electronically, the man who speaks is not identified. Nor do we learn what type of seminar he is teaching. However, given the comments that follow since the message is what’s important:

“A well-known speaker started his seminar holding a $20 bill. He asked, ‘Who would like this $20?’ Hands went up. He said, ‘I am going to give this $20 to the person who can tell me how I got this.’ He crumpled the $20 bill then asked, ‘Who still wants it?’ No one lowered their hands. He added, ‘What if I do this?’ He dropped it on the ground and began to grind it into the floor with his shoe. ‘You kicked it up, crumpled and dirty, and asked, ‘Who still wants it?’ Again the hands went up. ‘My friends, we have learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth $20.’

“Many times in our lives we are dropped, crumpled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless, but no matter what has happened or what will happen, you are still priceless to those who love you.”

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

**The data tells us that in 2006, almost 778,000 Hoosiers lived in poverty.**

Charlie’s story is not much different than nearly one in five children living in the United States, according to the 2006 U.S. Census Bureau data releases that 277,000 Indiana children live in families with income below the federal poverty line—up 6 percent from the previous year.

But those (mostly) ladies were still just too entrenched in the bureaucratic mentality. It’s not only satisfying for us, but also that it’s the life blood of many organizations.

Among anyone with a good heart can visit nursing homes just to sit and listen to those who have no one to listen. After all, the first volunteer was Christ, who served us all in fulfilling his destiny. We know that good hearts come from God.

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

**Faith, Hope and Charity**

**David Siler**

*A face for Jesus*

Charlie is just 12 years old, but he already knows what divorce means and feels, what it feels like to wake up hungry in the morning, what it feels like to beitched at by a mother and what it feels like to have to fall behind in school and feel like a failure due to an inconsistent and unloving home environment. By God’s grace, Charlie, who currently lives in Terre Haute, found his way to the after school faith program of the Catholic Charities program, says that when Charlie first came to the youth center, he was extremely withdrawn and angry most of the time. Now he smiles all the time, and enjoys reading and drawing. He told me recently that school is now a bright spot in his life.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Oct. 7, 2007
• Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4
• 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14
• Luke 17:5-10

The first reading for this weekend comes from the Book of Habakkuk. Little is known about Habakkuk. It is known that the author was regarded as a prophet. Scholars believe that it was written between 626 B.C. and 612 B.C. when outside forces threatened the Assyrian empire. However, it is clear that Habakkuk was composed after God’s people already had suffered great problems from foreign invasions and brutal occupations. The book laments these past terrible experiences.

This weekend’s reading conveys well the sense of how awful had been these circumstances through which the Hebrews had lived, and it also clearly presents the anguish and even despondency of the people as they looked out to the effects of all that they had endured. To these cities of desperation and great anxiety, God—speaking through the prophet—reassures the people, telling them that relief and security will come. They will endure.

The epistle urges Timothy to be strong and never to relent in preaching the Gospel. This is his vocation. This was the responsibility conferred upon him when hands were laid on him, ordaining him a bishop. St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading.

Some trees, such as the sycamore, have a deep and extended root system and are uprooting from them the soul would not have been easy or even possible. Mustard seeds were very small, but would have been other seeds, pits of fruit, and so on.

The culture at the time of Jesus did not look upon the tasks undertaken by a servant or a slave as voluntary for the person performing the task. Rather, the task was a duty and an obligation. Also, slaves or servants were never invited to dine with a master. Dining together represented equality and the close relationship of peers.

The message here is not that slaves or servants are inferior. We must not allow our modern concepts of slavery or even employment to color our perception of this reading. The lesson here is that we are God’s servants. He is supreme. We are not. Serving God is not our option. Rather, it is our duty.

Reflection
The second and third readings confront us with a reality we perhaps rarely admit. Serving God by obeying God’s law is not open to our decision about whether to conform or not. In fact, we have no choice. God is the Creator. He is the master. We are subjects. Despite all that we may possess, or all that human ingenuity has created, we are not almighty. So Timothy has to fulfill his obligation. The servants in the Gospel had to fulfill their obligations. We must fulfill our obligations. The wonder is that God protects and strengthens us. We need God, as Habakkuk tells us. Peril awaits us otherwise.

Q
I am wondering what happened to communal penance ceremonies where a group is given absolution. We had some several years ago at our church, and I’ve never seen more pious bunch of Catholics in my life. Now I wonder who decided that it must be face-to-face before a priest? (Iowa)

A
I think it will help first to review the different forms of the sacrament of penance, or reconciliation, offered by the Church.

Today there are three rites for celebrating this sacrament.
First is the rite for reconciliation of individual penitents. This is the one-on-one “private” ritual that is similar to traditional personal confession with which most Catholics are familiar.
Second is the form most familiar to many Catholics today, reconciliation of a number of penitents with individual confession and absolution. As the ritual for penance points out, this form shows more clearly the social or ecclesial nature of penance. Everyone listens together to the word of God, examines how their lives conform or not to that word, and all support one another by their prayer together. One or more priests are present so individual confession of sins and absolution is available.
The third rite is also for reconciliation of a number of penitents. It includes all the common elements that the second form offers, but general—not individual—isolation is given by the priest to all at one time.

It seems you letter refers to the first and third forms of penance. It is true, as you suspect, that this way, with general absolution, while it is a valid form of the Church’s official ritual, is not now permitted as a general rule. The popes, especially the late Pope John Paul II, have decreed a number of times that it may be used only in emergencies or other clearly defined circumstances.

During the past few decades, the second form of the rite—prayer and reconciliation together with opportunity for individual confession—seems to be more and more common, and it enjoys nearly all the spiritual advantages of the third form.

Experiences where I have been pastor, and those of priests and lay in many other parishes around the country, are most positive.
It is not uncommon for hundreds of people to participate in these ceremonies, obviously convinced that this method of expressing personal and asking forgiveness best fits their personal sense of sin, and fulfills their need for absolution and healing.
It combines the best—at least most of the best—of both worlds. We express our personal sinfulness before God and our desire for forgiveness, but also our need not only of God’s pardon but of “reconciliation with our brothers and sisters who are always harmed by our sins” ([Introduction to the Rite of Penance] #5).

Many parishes celebrate a communal penance service with individual confessions and absolution several times during the year, at least during the seasons of Advent and Lent. There should be one or more parishes in your area where you can participate and receive the sacrament of reconciliation this way.

The culture at the time of Jesus did not look upon the tasks undertaken by a servant or a slave as voluntary for the person performing the task. Rather, the task was a duty and an obligation. Also, slaves or servants were never invited to dine with a master. Dining together represented equality and the close relationship of peers. The message here is not that slaves or servants are inferior. We must not allow our modern concepts of slavery or even employment to color our perception of this reading. The lesson here is that we are God’s servants. He is supreme. We are not. Serving God is not our option. Rather, it is our duty.

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My Journey to God

While you were gone,
I thought of you
Every second of every day.
You were never far away.
While you were gone,
I remembered you,
The hallowed blessing of that mom
When you were born.
While you were gone,
I searched my soul
And asked myself what injury
I’d caused to make you shut of me.
While you were gone,
I cherished you.
And all God’s love in prayer I sought
To hold you now, where I could not.
While you were gone—
You still are gone.
In deepest dark I lay awake,
And pray your name, and wait.

By Linda Abner

(Linda Abner is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. She wrote this poem for parents who miss their grown children now living in other states. “Maybe that’s how God feels about us too sometimes,” she wrote, “just aches to hear from us.” The message printed on this cross found among the debris in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina reminds the faithful that, “The cross is where you leave your burdens and walk in faith.”)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

Church offers three rites for sacrament of reconciliation

Q
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The Criterion

Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdio-
cese or have other connections to it; those are separate obitui-
aries on this page.

ALEXANDER, Joan F., 81, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Sept. 22. Aunt of several. Great-aunt of several.


ERNST, Kris G., 78, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Sept. 16. Husband of Zelia Ernst. Father of Mary McQueen and Jeffery Ernst. Brother of Marjorie Long, Jerri Sullivan and Benny Emstes. Grandfather of one. Step-grand-
father of three.


The Criterion Friday, October 5, 2007

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Eternal life

A statue of Christ holding a cross stands in a cemetery behind SS. Philomena and Cecilia Church in Oak Forest. Below the statue is a Latin inscription “Ego sum resurrectione vitae” which translates as “I am the resurrection and the life.” An apostrophe that features the traditional Latin Mass administered by Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter Gerard Sagato has been based at the Batesville Deconastery church since 2005.

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The Criterion, Friday, October 5, 2007

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Classified Directory

For information about rates for classified advertising, call (317) 336-1572.

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High School Principal
St. Teresa High School in Decatur, IL seeks Principal/CEO. The Principal of St. Teresa is the Chief Executive Officer of the school and is ultimately responsible for the total operation of the school and reports to the Board of Directors. Responsibilities: Directing all aspects of a comprehensive religious education program for children, teens and adults. Candidate must be an active Catholic and have a degree in religious education.

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