How do you count your blessings as a member of the Church?

Criterion staff report

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is beginning to gather information to be used in its next strategic planning process.

The first step is to get feedback from the people that make up the Church in central and southern Indiana.

With that in mind, The Criterion is looking for people of faith to share their stories about the blessings of being Catholic in the archdiocese.

Following is a list of questions to begin the conversation:

• What are the blessings of the Catholic Church in central and southern Indiana?

• What are the strengths of our character as the Church of this time and place?

• How are we growing together as the Church in central and southern Indiana?

• What is best about our Church?

Please take a few minutes to share your best experiences of being Catholic. Answer any or all of the questions. We will summarize the responses, and report on them in a future edition of The Criterion.

An online version of the questionnaire is also available at www.archindy.org/blessings. Log on to the Web site to complete the process.

Please submit your answers by Nov. 12. Thank you for taking the time to be part of this important process.

Send responses by e-mail to criterion@archindy.org or mail to The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717.
Catholic and have a certain faith because of the culture," he said. "So just by showing the culture in different ways, you can evangelize without being overly evangelizing. All you're doing is showing the way these people live." This natural blend of faith, culture and the important questions in life into the everyday lives of ordinary people may be one reason why Bella has been so critically acclaimed. It received the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival’s People’s Choice Award, which several Oscar-winning films have received in the past. And recently at the Heartland Film Festival in Indianapolis, its filmmakers received the Crystal Heart Award for excellence in filmmaking.

Bella takes place in and around New York within a single day and focuses on two ordinary people: a waitress who is unmarried and pregnant, and a chef troubled by demons from his past. They explore together the twists and turns and ups and downs of their lives. And along the way, they meet other ordinary people with extraordinary stories.

At the end of their day, their lives are very different than they were at the start. The film was showing at 6 p.m. at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis by more than 200 parish and archdiocesan leaders.

Father Michael O’Mara, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, has been involved in Hispanic ministry for the archdiocese, now and considers having an abortion.

"Our motto from day one has been very clear," said Father O’Mara. "It’s not just a film. It’s an event. Young people came up to the screen to ask questions about what would happen if they missed the film, or how to get tickets for others.

Several months later, the day after filming for Bella had finished, Verastegui received a phone call from the archdiocese. His baby boy had been born the day before, and they asked if they could name their newborn son after him.

Verastegui said that other stories like Verastegui’s have happened through pro-life organizations.

"To us, those are our living Oscars," Verastegui said. "That’s success if we can touch people’s hearts and inspire them in a positive way."
Multicultural liturgy marks World Mission Sunday celebration

By Mary Ann Wyand

Their daughter is a lay missionary in Uganda so St. Roch parishioners Bud and Theresa Meyer of Indianapolis keep her in their prayers. They also prayed for her during the archdiocesan World Mission Sunday Mass on Oct. 21 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. During the festive multicultural liturgy, their daughter, Sherry Meyer, was one of six Catholics honored by the archdiocese with certificates of appreciation for distinguished service to God and the Church.

Meyer’s family accepted the award on her behalf because she is half a world away serving the poor and teaching the Catholic faith in East Africa.

“We’re very proud of her,” Theresa Meyer said after the Mass. “Very proud. I talked to her [long distance] this morning, and we’ll talk to her tonight [to tell her about the liturgy].”

Sherry Meyer was honored for 16 years of pastoral ministry in the Area Diocese in Uganda, where she has coordinated catechetical programs and now ministers as station manager for Radio Pacis, the new diocesan radio station.

She was able to make a monthlong home visit to Indianapolis last summer after Radio Pacis was honored by the British Broadcasting Corporation as “Best New Radio Station in Africa” on May 26.

The other honorees serve those who need help in home missions in the archdiocese.

St. Paul Catholic Center parishioner Kelly de Souza of Bloomington was recognized for coordinating the Bloomington tri-parish community’s participation in the Walk for Life for several years. This year, Bloomington Deanery Catholics raised more than $2,000 to benefit the Crisis Pregnancy Center ministry there.

Gary Favrot of Zionsville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, was honored for his longtime volunteer service at the Cathedral Kitchen in Indianapolis, where he helps homeless and low-income people with meals and other assistance.

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception parishioner Patricia Gerke of Aurora was commended for her volunteer service as secretary for the Right to Life Office of Dearborn County and Ohio County.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral parishioner Margaret Piek of Indianapolis was recognized for her dedicated volunteer service as director of the Cathedral Kitchen for the past two years.

Sister Demetria Smith, a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa who served as a nurse and midwife in Africa for 20 years and now ministers as mission educator for the archdiocese, was honored for her longtime service to the missions at home and abroad.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general and archdiocesan mission office, was the principal celebrant for the Mass then presented the awards on behalf of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein. The vicar general also thanked the Missionaries of Charity from India, the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from India, the Daughters of Mother Mercy from Nigeria, and priests from Korea, Africa and India for their ministries in the archdiocese.

Drummers and choir members from Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis provided music for the Mass and children from several center-city parishes in Indianapolis danced to African music during the processional.

The prayers of the faithful were offered by Catholics in the English, African, Spanish, French, Filipino and Burmese languages.

“Prayer has power,” Msgr. Schaedel said in his homily. “Prayer is talking with God, who is all powerful.”

Quoting from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Msgr. Schaedel said prayer is “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God” (#2559).

“We pray when we need something,” he said. “Yet we have no idea how powerful prayer is.”

World Mission Sunday was established by Pope Pius XI in 1926, Msgr. Schaedel explained. One year later, the pontiff named St. Therese of Lisieux—who lived from 1873 until 1897 and was known as “the Little Flower”—as the patron saint for foreign missions.

“Her death at age 24 in a cloistered convent in France,” he said. “A woman who was never a missionary—yet St. Therese loved the missions. She prayed for missionaries. … As she prepared to die, she promised her prayers, even from the other side. She said, ‘I will spend my heaven doing good on earth.’”

“Going to the missions is wonderful,” Msgr. Schaedel said, and donating to the missions is commendable.

“But nothing means more to missionaries than prayer and sacrifice,” he explained. “Because of her prayer, the Little Flower is the patron saint of foreign missions. Prayer packs more power than anything. … Christian faith calls us to pray always.” †

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By John & Kara Traub

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The Criterion  Friday, October 26, 2007  Page 3
Parish Diary / Father Peter Daly

Tridentine Mass II: ‘I’m sorry’

I'm sorry.

A few weeks ago, I wrote a column about the recent motu proprio from Rome permitting wider celebration of the Tridentine Mass. After 20 years of writing columns, I never got so much mail. The columns that even came close were about gun control and immigration.

On conservative Catholic blogs, my name has been mentioned, but I actually agree with many of them.

My previous column was a failure for two reasons. First, it did not convey my own affection for the old liturgy. Second, it did not recognize the good motivations of the people who want a return to the Latin liturgy.

I don’t dislike the Latin Mass. I participated in it every Sunday and many weekdays of my life until I was almost through high school.

As a priest, I excelled in its gestures and movements. Back then, I knew all the words from the prayers at the foot of the altar to the ‘Just Gospel.’ My Low Mass Daily Missal is still one of my prized possessions. When I hear the Latin Mass, I am taken back in my mind to a time of innocence and devotion.

In my parish today, we still occasionally use some Latin and Greek. We chant the “O Sustainer” and the “Tantum Ergo” at eucharistic adoration. We sing the “Agnus Dei.”

But I have come away forgetful that we have received and be thankful.

When we were connected to Francis Xavier in his clandestine mission in India and to ordinary peasants in their clandestine Masses in Ireland.

Fourth, I think the enthusiasm for the Latin Mass want to be ‘Catholic’ in the best sense of the word. They want to be part of the universal Church.

The old Latin ritual was universal. No matter where you were, from Korea to Chicago, it was the same. Its universality was undisputed and set us apart. I still remember the thrill I felt when I visited Rome in 1967 and chanted the credo in one voice with Catholics from everywhere in the world.

This does not mean I have changed my views. I think the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council were correct and necessary. But I was wrong not to recognize the good motivations of those who love the Latin Mass.

Given the realities of our contemporary culture, it is very important to be reminded that this is a sacred meal which was first celebrated at the Last Supper in observance of the Jewish Passover. It is also necessary to affirm that the Mass is not a private devotion, but a celebration that is undertaken by the faithful community in union with the whole Church.

In recent years, however, there has also been a renewed appreciation for the ways in which we are called to ‘adorne this gift.’ Eucharistic adoration is one of the most powerful forms of prayer available to us—placing ourselves in the Lord’s presence in a most concrete and spiritually profound way.

Where eucharistic adoration flourishes, parishes communities frequently experience a renewed spiritual vitality, a new commitment to evangelization and social justice, and, in many cases, an increase in vocations to ordained ministry, religious life and lay ecclesial ministry.

Adoration helps us to be conscious of the gift that the Eucharist is—and to express our gratitude in prayer and in service to others.

Let’s not squabble over the way the Eucharist is celebrated. Instead, let’s pay attention to the absolutely free gift we have received and be thankful.

You respond by providing a lifetime of service to those of us fortunate to come in contact with you. You are a gift from God to us as you continue Christ’s work in our world.

Serra Club of Indianapolis

Letters to the Editor

A thank you to our dedicated priests

Priests are more than spiritual leaders. You are the link to Christ’s original disciples.

Even more, today’s priests are teachers of and defenders of the dogmatic truths of the Church, as well as the doctrine employed to guide Catholics in everyday life. But those roles are only the tip of the both spiritual and intellectual iceberg.

You take on the role of counselor, confidante, confessor, leashing post, spiritual adviser, Christ’s representative and teacher. You are thought of as one who is available 24/7, a dispenser of truth and insight on spiritual matters, and a fulcrum between the soul and God.

You are cloaked with the mantle of both high esteem and responsibility immediately after ordination, and expected to celebrate liturgy, be a provider of all Church sacraments, and mediate troubled marriages and social conflicts with tact and as both counsel and intervention.

You are also expected to have the ability to counsel those whose brothers saddened with spiritual doubts and troubled souls. At the same time, you are responsible for balancing the budget and raising money for the parish.

In addition, parish members expect you to be bilingual to serve the people in your area. And you are to do all these tasks every day.

Your demeanor is expected to be upbeat, attentive, selfless and perpetually kind while you carry out the many tasks you face.

Priests are expected to be brilliant theologians and insightful homilists with the capacity to answer any questions you might have. And they must possess the aura of a kindly shepherd just waiting to solve others’ problems.

In short, priests are expected to be all things to all people. You can’t exude your human nature too much for fear of undermining your effectiveness with parishioners, and yet you must find an outlet that keeps yourself fueled to handle all that comes to you.

You are a part of a fraternity that lacks sufficient numbers while being asked to handle multiple chores. You are under- appreciated, overworked with some, and yet incredibly devoted. You have a deep devotion to a beautiful form of prayer.

Now, everyone, “Plat oecumenum.”

(Father Peter Daly writes for Catholic News Service.)
Los sacramentos son un recurso poderoso que generalmente se pasa por alto hoy día. Aunque no pensábamos que nuestras decisiones de asistir a la iglesia, recibir los sacramentos y confesiones los sábados en la tarde. Quizás no nos gustaba, pero esto definió un patrón integral en nosotros.

Si en el hogar familiar no hay un catolicismo, el Catecismo católico nacional para adultos constituye una fuente excelente para el aprendizaje de la familia. En las parroquias existen oportunidades para la formación religiosa de adultos y jóvenes adultos —y escuelas católicas donde están disponibles. En cierto sentido, si prestamos atención, buscamos y participamos en las actividades fundamentales ofrecidas por nuestras parroquias, tenemos allí los cimientos de la vida espiritual de la familia. En los católicos existen ayudas adicionales para vivir nuestra fe con un espíritu positivo.

Los ministros católicos sociales que nos hacen apartar de nuestras propias preocupaciones, proporcionan gracias bendiciones. El cuidado adecuado para la salud, de los ancianos, de los enfermos y los contundente

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¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a: Lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein Archidiócesis de Indianápolis 4100 N. Meridian St. P.O. Box 1410 Indianápolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipue, Language Training Center, Indianapolis.

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en octubre

Youth Ministers: that they may always encourage youth to consider serve in the Church, especially as priests and religious.

Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for October

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### Events Calendar

**October 26**
St. Therese of the Infants Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, social hall, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. Full luncheon and card party, noon luncheon, doors open 11 a.m., $8 per person. Reservations: 317-356-4976 or 317-567-0774.

St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Little Sisters of the Poor sponsor official opening and author signing for a new book, *A Day At A Time: An Indiana Girl’s Sentimental Journey to Doris Day’s Hollywood and Beyond* by Mary Anne Barothy, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-872-6240, ext. 211.

**October 27**
St. John the Apostle Parish, 4607 W. State Road 46, Bloomington. Archdiocesan Office of Worship, “The Cantor; Leader of Sung Prayer,” Charles Gardner, presenter, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 317-236-1483 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or e-mail worship@archindy.org.

St. Barnabas Parish, 8308 Ralphie Road, Indianapolis. “Wellness FaithWalk; and chili luncheon, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., $10 per person, $30 per family. Information: 317-885-5870.

St. Francis Hospital, 1600 Albany St., Breese Grove. Mini Health Fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: www.sfhealth.org.

**October 28**
Immaculate Conception Parish, 2001 E. County Road 82 S., Greensburg. Snack dinner and 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m., $30 per family. Information: 812-624-9679.

St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Drive, Sunman. Pro-Life breakfast, 7:30 a.m.-noon. Information: 812-624-9679.

St. John the Evangelist Parish, 9999 E. Base Road, Greensburg. Turkey and roast beef dinner, 11:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Information: 812-934-2840.

St. Christopher Parish, activity center, 7301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. “Encore party, 1 p.m. $3 per person.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Monte Cassino Shrine, one mile east of Archabbey, St. Meinrad. “Wellness “Understanding the Liturgy,” presentation: “Mevier’s View,” Charles Gardner, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 812-357-6611 or e-mail Domingo@sm.edu.

Benedictine Father Paul Nord, presenter, 2 p.m. Information: 317-357-6501 or e-mail paulnord@staugustineho.com.

**November 1**
St. Francis Hospital, Education Center, 5355 S. Emerson Ave., Suite 100. Indianapolis. Support for People with Oral, Head and Neck Cancer (SPOHCEN), 7:30-8:30 a.m. Information: 317-702-7982.

Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. “Practicing the Liturgy,” session three, “Liturgy Renewal,” Charles Gardner, presenter, 6:15-9 p.m. Information: 317-236-1483, 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or e-mail worship@archindy.org.


St. Francis Hospital, 811 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Brand new mausoleum dedication of new mausoleum, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., $7-8:30 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, Benedictine Father William Nowak, presenter, 7-9 p.m., no charge. Information: 317-357-6501 or e-mail writto@sm.edu.

November 2-4

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Celebrating Thanksgiving,” Benedictine Father Noel Mueller, presenter. Information: 317-357-6611 or e-mail mnoel@sm.edu.

November 9-10
Christ the King Retreat, 1827 Kesler Blvd., E. Drive, Indianapolis. Fall retreat for mothers, “Let Mary Show Us How to Make Christ the Center of Our Advent Season.” Fri. 5:30-10 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, Benedictine Sister Paula Hogan, founder of M.O.M.S. (Ministry of Mothers Sharing), presenter, $25 per person. Information: 317-255-3666.

November 11

November 12
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Annual Day of Reflection on the Psalms,” Father William Mueller, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. $35 per person. Information: 317-547-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

November 16-18
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Celebrating Thanksgiving,” Benedictine Father Noel Mueller, presenter. Information: 317-357-6611 or e-mail mnoel@sm.edu.

November 20
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “An Evening with Matthew Kelly: A Call to Joy,” Matthew Kelly, presenter, 7-9 p.m. $50 per person. Information: 317-547-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

November 26-30
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Martha and Mary in Conversation with a Busy Parish Priest,” Benedictine Father Vincent Tobin, presenter. Information: 317-882-0988 or e-mail www.saintmeinrad.edu.

### Conservation award
Benedictine Father Damian Schmelz, left, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, receives theLifetime Conservation Achievement Award from John Gross, executive director of the Indiana Wildlife Federation, during a Sept. 18 ceremony in Indianapolis. Father Damian was honored for his work as a member of the Indiana Natural Resources Commission since 1976 and as co-auteur of natural areas of Indiana, published in 1969. The book served as a guide for the creation of Indiana’s Nature Preserves.

### Retreats and Programs

**October 29**

**November 2-4**

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Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “An Evening with Matthew Kelly: A Call to Joy,” Matthew Kelly, presenter, 7-9 p.m. $50 per person. Information: 317-547-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

**November 26-30**
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Martha and Mary in Conversation with a Busy Parish Priest,” Benedictine Father Vincent Tobin, presenter. Information: 317-882-0988 or e-mail www.saintmeinrad.edu.

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LICENSSED & BONDED BY THE CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS
United Way grant paves way to build new Holy Family Shelter

By John Shaughnessy

The bad news usually arrives twice a day for Bill Bickel.

Once in the morning and once in the afternoon, Bickel receives an electronic message telling him about the availability of open spaces for five Indianapolis shelters that serve the homeless.

“It’s typically full, full, full, across the board,” says Bickel, the director of Crisis Relief and Shelter Services for Catholic Charities Indianapolis. “It’s the situation we face nearly every day.”

So he was thrilled when he recently received the good news that United Way had made a $1 million matching grant to help build a new Holy Family Shelter—a shelter that will increase the number of homeless families it can serve while also increasing the number of services it can offer those families.

“We’re going to allow us to serve between 30 and 35 families,” Bickel says. “Now, we can serve 22. We’ll also have ample room to provide the services they need because the new building will have child care, a classroom, a homework room and a resource room.”

As he talks, Bickel stands on the future site of the shelter, which will be located on the grounds of Holy Trinity Parish on the west side of Indianapolis. He notes that two buildings on the grounds will be torn down before the construction of the new $4.6 million shelter begins, scheduled for spring of 2009. Archdiocesan officials hope the shelter will be completed by spring of 2009 at Holy Trinity Parish on the west side of Indianapolis.

“Twenty-three years later, we’re still using the same bathrooms that the nuns used when it was a convent, but we’re using them for 22 families,” Bickel says, citing one of the reasons for the new shelter.

“There are a lot of people behind the scenes that these homeless people will never meet, but they’re instrumental in seeing them become self-sufficient and permanently housed.”

—Bill Bickel, director of Crisis Relief and Shelter Services for Catholic Charities Indianapolis.

The dining room at the present location often served as the only meeting space to help residents at the shelter. Shelter staff recall one day when the dining room was simultaneously used for a health screening fair, a meeting between a family and a lawyer, and a meal for a new family that had just entered the shelter.

The new facility will provide more services and more classroom, storage and recreational space for the families in need.

The United Way contribution shows that serve the homeless. “These related services will assist our families to achieve employment, address mental health and substance abuse issues, meet educational needs, and provide incentives to strengthen their family,” says David Bethuram, the agency director of Catholic Charities Indianapolis.

The United Way support is made possible through a major donation from Lilly Endowment Inc., specifically for the capital needs of United Way affiliated agencies, officials note.

The United Way contribution shows how the shelter is a community effort, Bickel says. “It shows we can’t do this work alone,” Bickel says. “There are a lot of people behind the scenes that these homeless people will never meet, but they’re instrumental in seeing them become self-sufficient and permanently housed.”

The archdiocese is committed to that goal, Siler says. “Our ministry to the homeless is core to the mission of Catholic Charities, which finds its roots in the Gospel of Jesus Christ when he told us that when we shelter the lost, we shelter Christ himself,” Siler says. “We have provided this support to thousands of families over the years. This support from United Way will allow us to continue to provide this service in a facility much more suited to the needs of our families.”

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Catholic colleges welcome their over-55 students

By Cori Fugere Urban

Catholic News Service

Take a closer look on the nation’s Catholic college campuses, and you’ll find worship, enrichment and social opportunities for older students. Some colleges also specialize in training elder care providers.

Jesuit Father Daniel Ruff is director of campus ministry at the Baltimore campus of Loyola College in Maryland, and there—as on other Catholic college campuses—programs welcome senior learners. From on-campus lectures to Lenten evenings of reflection and theatrical performances, the campus hosts programs both for spiritual growth and entertainment.

Daily and weekend Masses also draw a number of older folks from the surrounding neighborhood who enjoy the dynamism, energy and enthusiasm of the college liturgical celebrations, which they find “really energizing,” Father Ruff said. At St. Michael’s College in Colchester, Vt., founded by the Edmundite Fathers, members of the surrounding community also join the campus community for daily and weekend Masses, and participate in Advent reflections and Lenten missions.

For seniors looking for social opportunities, Catholic colleges can offer interesting possibilities. St. Michael’s offers an annual senior ball that brings students together with area seniors. The event gives older neighbors a night on the town at the college’s International Commons building.

For seniors who can’t get to the Colchester campus, a Senior Citizen Commons building. town at the college’s International event gives older neighbors a night on the students together with area seniors. The interesting possibilities. St. Michael’s opportunities, Catholic colleges can offer Advent reflections and Lenten missions. At Loyola of Maryland’s campus in Columbia, Md., adult learners come to the graduate school, especially the ecumenical graduate program in pastoral and spiritual care, with a wide range of life experiences.

“Most of our students have had experiences in working with the elderly, especially with family members and friends,” said Jesuit Father Kevin Gillespie, director of the master’s degree program and associate professor of pastoral counseling. Such personal experiences have prompted a desire in them to serve people in nursing homes through parish or recreational centers or in hospice care.

“In so many contexts, the elderly are the most vulnerable, and so we encourage our students to be aware of the psychological and pastoral dimensions of accompanying the elderly,” he said. College Misericordia, in Dallas, Pa., trains those who care for aging religious order members in Elder Religious and Diocesan Priests Workshops that are offered on campuses in Texas, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Providing meaningful services for the aging in religious communities requires a special blend of spiritual, physical and psychological expertise.

In addition to its undergraduate and graduate degree programs, College Misericordia provides a wide array of noncredit opportunities, and some are particularly appealing to elders as an opportunity to develop body, mind and spirit, noted Tom O’Neill, director of the Division of Adult Education and Community Service. Programming is divided into two broad categories: fun and fitness-related programs, and lifelong learning or professional development programs.

“College Misericordia is committed to lifelong learning and consciously strives to reach out to people beyond the traditional college age population by being attentive to the educational needs of the whole person,” O’Neill said. “By offering broad-based opportunities to seniors to actively participate in a vibrant learning community, we are living out the Mercy tradition of hospitality and inclusion, and offering traditional age students, as well, the opportunity to see excellent role models of active learning throughout the lifespan.”

As you can see, it makes sense to check into what’s happening on your local Catholic college campus. You’re likely to find that there is much more there for seniors than you realized.

(Cori Fugere Urban is the staff reporter for The Vermont Catholic Tribune.)
Opportunities abound for older volunteers to serve

By Pat Wargocki

Catholic News Service

The joy in helping others feeds the soul. Volunteers get back much more than they give. Many seniors are taking volunteering to a new level by making full-time commitments ranging from one week to more than three years of service. Why? Some have been volunteering all their lives and now, retired or with families raised, have the opportunity and desire to do more. For others, it’s a whole new experience, perhaps something they always wanted to do.

Here are just a few of the volunteer programs available for people 50 or older:

‡ Maryknoll Lay Missioners—For those wanting to volunteer overseas and willing to make a commitment of three and one-half years, the Maryknoll Lay Missioners have volunteer assignments in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. They welcome seniors with overseas experience or languages. The admissions process is rather long, and volunteers must attend a 13-week orientation offered annually in the fall.

‡ Shorter affiliate programs are also available outside the U.S. with Maryknoll. Programs, look at their Web site at www.MercyVolunteers.org or call their central office in Gwynedd Valley, Pa., at 215-641-5535.

‡ Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps—Volunteers 50 and older are placed in service inside the U.S. Volunteers live in their own homes, but get together as a community once a month to discuss their volunteer experiences and pray in the Ignatian tradition. They also attend three retreats during the year and meet with a spiritual guide monthly.

‡ The Ignatian Volunteer Corps partners with various agencies, including soup kitchens, literacy centers, schools, hospices and prisons that need volunteers in several cities, including Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Philadelphia, New York and St. Louis. For more information, see their Web site at www.livc.org or call the Baltimore office at 888-831-623-1119.

‡ Franciscan Covenant Program—This is a full-time, volunteer program for mature adult Catholics to live, work and pray in community with Franciscan Friars at retreat houses in California. Most members are in their 50s and 60s, having taken early retirement in order to spend part of their lives working at something they can feel strongly about.

‡ The program is open to singles or married couples and requires a commitment of one year, renewable by invitation for up to six years or until age 65. Members share in daily prayer, Mass and meals with the community, and they live in private rooms at the retreat center.

‡ For further details, see www.franciscancovenantvolunteers.org or call the St. John Bautista, Calif., office at 831-623-1119.

‡ Christian Appalachian Project—The unique part of this program, which serves 13 counties in eastern Kentucky, is that seniors can commit for whatever time they have available. Most short-term opportunities for individuals are for three weeks. If seniors want to come for just one week, they are encouraged to do so as part of a group. Long-term commitments of nine months or more also are available.

‡ Depending on the volunteers’ skills and interests, there are numerous opportunities for seniors to work with children, help adults get a GED, and repair roofs or build handicapped ramps at elderly people’s homes. All volunteers receive room and board, and most live in community in a Christian Appalachian Project house. Groups stay at local churches.

‡ For more information, log on to www.chrisapp.org or call the Lancaster, Ky., office at 800-755-5322.

‡ Catholic Network of Volunteer Service—Dozens more opportunities can be found through the Catholic Network of Volunteer Service. Their comprehensive list of U.S. and foreign volunteer placements is posted on their Web site at www.cnvs.org.

‡ Patrick Wargocki is a freelance writer living in Tucson, Ariz. (Pat Wargocki is a freelance writer living in Tucson, Ariz.)

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**National Catholic radio host Al Kresta visits Indianapolis**

By Sean Gallagher

Al Kresta is the host of a nationally syndicated Catholic radio talk show, "Kresta in the Afternoon," which is broadcast weekdays from the studios of WDIV in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Following the lead of other talk show hosts who have taken their program on the road, Kresta went on a tour of the Midwest in September to visit Catholic radio stations that broadcast his show.

He visited and broadcast his show from the studios of Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 FM on the northwest side of Indianapolis on Sept. 10.

Other stops on his tour included Fort Wayne, Ind.; Louisville and Lexington, Ky.; and Canton and St. Petersburg, Ohio.

When Kresta began his work in Catholic radio a decade ago, such a tour would have been a real challenge because he said there were only about four Catholic radio stations in the country, located in Ann Arbor; Jacksonville, Fla.; Reno, Nev.; and St. Louis.

Now there are more than 100 radio stations across the U.S. broadcasting Catholic programming.

"It's very gratifying because it's good, slow, solid growth," said Kresta. "It's hard to find stations that have failed."

Kresta often says on the air that his program focuses "on the things that matter most."

He frequently discusses with guests and listeners who call in how the Catholic faith intersects with various political and cultural issues of the day.

Earlier on the day that he broadcasted from Indianapolis, Greg Petrova gave his long-awaited report on the war in Iraq to members of Congress.

"What's the future of the proclamation of the Gospel in Iraq when all this is done?" Kresta asked on the air. "We will know sometime in the next two years or so whether ... we have a better environment in which to preach the Gospel and to establish the right worship of God or if we have a more difficult environment in which to do that. At the present time, of course, it's more difficult."

Kresta has been carrying on discussions like these for decades. For 10 years before moving into Catholic radio, he worked at a Christian radio station in Detroit. For much of that time, he was away from the Catholic faith of his childhood, but he returned to it in the early 1990s.

In February 2003, conversations of a national scope took a back seat. At that time, Kresta contracted necrotizing fasciitis, a rare disease where flesh-eating bacteria can quickly kill the person that it has infected.

In order to stop the spread of the disease, Kresta's left leg had to be amputated above the knee.

"I was unconscious for about five days after the surgery," he said. "When I came back [into consciousness], my daughter, Alexis, was there as well as my son, James. ‘... Alexis was very quick to talk to me about how many people were praying for me. From that moment on, I had this sense of being lifted up, buoyed by the prayers of God's people. It was palpable.'"

Many of those prayers came in response to appeals for spiritual help for Kresta that went out nationwide by radio and the Internet.

Some two decades earlier, Kresta was hospitalized on two occasions for clinical depression. Many of his friends and family members feared that this depression might result as a result of his amputation.

"I really believe that the reason it didn't happen is because I was being held up by so many people in prayer," Kresta said. "I received hundreds and hundreds of cards and e-mails from people. It was most astounding."

Kresta's illness confirmed for him the positive influence that Catholic radio can wield in individual lives.

But he also knows from experience that there are divisions among Catholics in the United States about the role that Catholic radio plays in the Church here.

"I think that there are many people who would benefit from Catholic radio, but somehow feel alienated from it because they see Catholic radio as too politically conservative," Kresta said. "And the reason for that is that we're very comfortable dealing with abortion as a primary issue."

"I think those who are more explicitly committed to issues of poverty, immigration, race and the environment don't hear enough of their agenda being put forward on Catholic radio. And that's a matter of patience on everybody's part."

Despite this difference of opinion, Kresta said he works hard to discuss a wide variety of issues on his two-hour show, which is broadcast Monday through Friday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time. In Indianapolis, only the second hour is heard.

"I tell people we deal with AIDS, war and peace, gender, dissent, old age and New Age, heavy metal and light eating. And we deal with life, death and God. We cover the whole range of things."

Whatever the timeline might be for resolving the debate about the role of Catholic radio in the Church in the United States, Kresta believes God's grace has had a part in its continued growth.

"I think there's something very special going on," he said. "I'm always very reluctant to try to attribute causes within history to God."

"[But] there's a strong sense of Providence about it. The endurance rate of the stations is great when you consider how many new businesses and apostolates just collapse. Those stations just keep going."\*"
Greenwood Marian conference marks Fatima anniversary

By Sean Gallagher

GREENWOOD—Oct. 13 was the 90th anniversary of an event that thousands claimed to have witnessed at Fatima, Portugal, the place where three young children were said to have experienced apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary for several months prior to that fall day in 1917.

Those present that day were said to have seen what is called “the miracle of the sun.” The sun seemed to disperse and reappear in strange ways and career toward the Earth.

On the 90th anniversary of that event, approximately 1,000 people gathered for a Marian conference titled “Behold Your Mother” at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood to pray and learn more about the Church’s teachings about Mary as co-redemptrix with Jesus.

It was 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.

Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis was the principal celebrant and homilist for the conference’s Mass.

In his homily, Archbishop Burke meditated upon the advice Mary gave to the three young children of Fatima each time she appeared to them: to join their personal sufferings to those of Christ to further his work of redemption and to refer to the Church’s teachings on Mary and on exorcisms.

The criterion, in which he went from a passion to a precise belief, was one moment to the next. Father Pablo Straub, has lived in Mexico the last 16 years. Before that, he ministered for 20 years in Puerto Rico, Peru and the Philippines.

In his presentation, in which he referred to a quiet whisper to a passionate bell from one moment to the next, Father Pablo Straub reflected on an event that connected Mary to Christ’s redemption that went even further back than the Incarnation and the Crucifixion, her own Immaculate Conception.

“In Mary being conceived, God the Father reached into history and, with that divine omnipotence, he brought the future death of his Son [and made it] present in the being conceived full of grace,” Father Pablo said. “The very first person saved by Jesus was Mary, his mother. The very first person redeemed by Jesus was Mary, his mother.”

Near the end of his remarks, Father Pablo laid out, in very simple terms, the fact that while Mary’s cooperation with Christ was not necessary, it was nonetheless part of God’s plan.

“Could [Christ] have come into the world without a mother?” Father Pablo asked. “Of course he could have. Could he have saved the world without anybody’s help? Of course he could have.”

(Read more about the “Behold Your Mother” conference in next week’s issue of The Criterion.)

Priest to speak about exorcisms at Tap's Halloween program

By Sean Gallagher

Halloween is a day for children and adults alike to dress up frighteningly as ghosts and other ghoulish characters.

But, throughout its history, the Catholic Church has taught that the demons that people might imagine on Oct. 31 are real and can, under certain circumstances, take possession of a person’s soul.

Although this belief isn’t a core doctrine, the Church has, over the centuries, developed a ritual exorcism to help people in this spiritual condition.

Father Vincent Lampert, pastor of SS. Francis and Clare Parish in Greenwood, will speak about exorcisms at the next meeting of Theology on Tap, which will begin at 7 p.m. on Oct. 31 at Vito’s, 20 N. Pennsylvania St., in Indianapolis.

Father Lampert gained a new perspective on society’s interest in the dark corners of the spiritual world when he was given a Borders gift card and visited the bookstore to find a book on exorcisms.

“All I could find were books on witchcraft, on casting spells and putting hexes on people,” Father Lampert said. “And I thought, ‘That’s rather interesting that he would do all this, but yet there isn’t anything about the Christian approach to all of that.’”

In 2006, Father Lampert spent time with a priest who is an official exorcist for the Diocese of Rome. He learned from the Romans that actual exorcisms are rare, happening only about once in every 5,000 people who may consult him about possible cases.

Nevertheless, Father Lampert said that the possible evil effects of the spiritual world upon us should not be discounted.

“A lot of people today just question the whole presence of evil;” he said. “Haven’t we become more enlightened in our more modern society, if you will?”

“Of the challenges of exorcisms is how you balance the notion of evil with an understanding of mental health. Are you dealing with something of a mental condition or is it in the spiritual dimension?”

Gabrielle Campo, a young adult member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, helps organize Theology on Tap programs in Indianapolis, and said she is looking forward to Father Lampert’s presentation.

“It’s Halloween, and everyone is geared up for being scared and spooky;” she said. “And so everybody should be ready to hear those present.”

“Even if it weren’t Halloween, people are fascinated with the whole concept of exorcism. I even have co-workers that aren’t Catholic, and they’re coming because they’re fascinated by it.”

Ultimately, Father Lampert said that learning more about the spiritual world and about exorcisms should lead Catholics to grow in their own life of faith.

“It’s a call for people to deepen their own commitment to their faith and their relationship with Christ,” he said.

Theology on Tap is a young adult faith formation program that started in the Archdiocese of Chicago in the 1980s. Working with Catholic young adults in their area, dioceses around the country, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, have begun their own Theology on Tap programs.

It is called “Theology on Tap” because its sessions ordinarily occur in bars where young adults often gather. And it is often organized around a set of six presentations, or a “six pack” given over a 12-week period.

Father Lampert’s upcoming presentation will be the second in the current set sponsored by Theology on Tap in the archdiocese.

(For more information on Theology on Tap in Indianapolis, log on to www.indytheologyontap.com or call 317-506-9537.)
By Julie McCarty

As my husband, Terry, and I parked the car at the Benedictine monastery, I felt just a pinch uneasy. A married couple staying a couple of nights with the monks? Just how would that work? Strolling through the entrance courtyard, a large statue greeted us with open arms: “Let all guests be received as Christ” was inscribed along the base. My fears evaporated.

Since that day, I’ve observed Benedictine hospitality in action on several occasions. This attitude of welcoming the stranger is found in the Rule of St. Benedict, written approximately 1,500 years ago.

St. Benedict’s understanding of Christian hospitality is based on his reflections on the biblical story about the separation of “sheep” and “goats” at the end of time. 

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Mt 25:35). In his earthly life, Jesus must have known what it was to be a newcomer. As a child, he spent time in a foreign land (Egypt) and would have had to make new friends when he and Mary and Joseph moved to Nazareth. As a single man, he must have felt like an “outsider” when others wanted him to just “settle down” (read that “get married and raise a family”). Traveling from town to town to preach, Jesus observed that although foxes have dens and birds have nests, “the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head” (Mt. 8:20; Lk 9:58). Jesus experiences must have given him special sensitivity to those considered “strangers” by others.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Who are the “strangers” in my life? I think of co-workers whose political views differ from mine. There are the Catholics attending the Spanish Mass at my parish, and the people I know who travel many miles to participate in a Latin Mass. I think also of those who have become estranged from their families.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” These words of Jesus have led me to learn more about the official Catholic teachings about migrant workers and immigration. As I write this, the U.S. government has not yet reformed legal immigration policy, but I am working on reforming my heart.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” I encounter newcomers every day. How do I treat them? I have new neighbors from Turkey and Southeast Asia. I know priests and seminarians from African nations. I encounter Somali women draped in colorful clothing when I shop or travel.

How do I treat them?

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Help me, dear Jesus, to truly welcome all other people. Remind me to smile, to offer an outstretched hand, to learn from these “others” who you have called your brothers and sisters. In loving them, may I also discover and adore you, hidden within their depths.

Reflection questions

• Who are the “strangers” in my life?

• How might I reach out to them?

To explore Catholic teaching on immigration and migrant workers:


• “Dying to Love: A Migrant’s Journey” (DVD)—This award-winning film puts a human face on those who cross the U.S./Mexican border. A free reflection guide is available. Log on to www.nd.edu/~latino/dyingtolive.

Life’s a picnic when you’re with Sagamore!
Good Christian-Muslim relations requires combating ‘Islamophobia’

By Carole Norris Greene

Scott Alexander is an associate professor of Islam and director of Catholic-Muslim Studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Cultivating and respecting the relationship between Catholics and Muslims both globally and locally has been of vital concern to him for more than 20 years.

“As a freshman in college, I was considering the priesthood and chose to concentrate in comparative religion with a focus on Christian origins,” Alexander said. “By the time I discerned that I was called to the married life with my high school sweetheart, I wasn’t sure where my interest in religion was going to take me.”

Then, when a group of Iranian university students held hostage the staff of the American embassy in Tehran in 1979, the Muslim world first appeared on the radar screen of American TV. What I was learning about Islam in class was very different from what I was seeing on the ABC hostage crisis update show that would eventually become “Nightline.” My interest in Islam eventually blossomed into an intellectual love affair that led to graduate work in Islamic studies.

Alexander said he developed a kind of “holy envy,” to use the words of Harvard Divinity School professor emeritus Krister Stendahl, when he found something in Islam that reawakened him to elements in his own Catholic tradition.

The Muslim dedication to prayer, for example, forced him to reconsider the integrity of his own prayer life. Overall, Muslims taught him to be a better Christian.

Alexander acknowledged that Islamophobia is more a problem in Europe than in America partly because the European Muslim community is less well-integrated into the larger society there.

“We are in a very prolonged period of anti-Muslim feeling whereby individuals practicing their faith have been demonized,” said Alexander, who commits to nearly 60 speaking engagements each year to discuss Christian-Muslim relations.

He said he witnesses both prejudice and misunderstanding along with the “fantastic interest of people in learning more about the values Christianity and Islam share.”

Alexander said his role is essentially that of a peace builder, which is both difficult and sometimes politically dangerous.

“The chances of being accidentally or deliberately misunderstood and slandered are very high,” he said. “But through my work, I can testify that God has a way of bringing incredible goodness out of human evil—even the heinous acts of Sept. 11.”

“So many people are hungry to understand our differences … God is calling us to respond to the evil of violence, not only through legitimate acts of self-defense, but through building bridges of mutual understanding and by standing up for justice for all people. This is the silver lining.”

(Margo MacArthur lives in Andover, N.J.)

Discussion Point

Communication is key to better understanding

This Week’s Question

What must happen, for the sake of their relationship, when two groups or individuals misunderstand each other?

“To me, the way to resolve any issue is to talk.”

“Communicating is the key to each getting a better understanding of the other.”

“First, everybody should be calm and talk about their own beliefs and viewpoints, then have the other side explain theirs. [This way], everyone can understand that even if we don’t agree, we should respect the other’s belief.”

(Margaret Bradley, East Machias, Maine)

“I think you have to try to learn about a group and what’s motivating them. Culture? Emotion? Then try to find a way to develop mutual respect. … Differences aren’t bad. They can result in growth because they challenge you to broaden your own perspective.”

(Sally Mulhern, Portsmouth, N.H.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What does your parish do to share the spirit of Christmas?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †
Biblical women: Samson’s Philistine wife

Quick, who was Samson’s wife? If you automatically said Delilah, you’re wrong. I’ll write about Delilah next week, but she was not Samson’s wife. Samson went down to Timnah to take a wife. In his youth, he was west of Jerusalem, where he saw a Philistine woman who pleased him. Returning home, he brought her to his father and mother. They tried to persuade him to choose a wife among the Israelites, but Samson said, “I have not chosen one of the daughters of Israel for myself to be my wife.”

As part of the wedding celebration, Samson gave a feast—a seven-day feast. The father of the bride appointed 30 Philistine men as Samson’s “companions” for the feast. Samson proposed a riddle and for them and made a bet. The loser would have to provide 30 sets of tights and 30 sets of garments for the winner.

The riddle Samson proposed was: “Out of a great flood and a great fish.” Samson fell asleep and they brought him a torch near his head, but he was able to kill it with his bare hands. When he returned to marry the Philistine woman, he felled 30 Philistines to the remains of the lion and found a swarm of bees and honey in the lion’s carcass. The Philistines asked, “What is the riddle, therefore, would be a lion and honey.

Naturally, none of the “30 companions” could solve the riddle so they asked Samson’s wife the answer for them. They threatened to burn her and her family if she didn’t solve the riddle. The Philistine woman was the only one of the 30 who could solve the riddle, and tied a torch between each pair of tails. When he then set them loose and they burned up the Philistines’ standing grain, vineyards and olive orchards.

When the Philistines were told that this had been done by Samson because his wife was given to his best man, they retaliated by burning Samson’s wife and family.

Cornucopia/Cynthia Deves

Friendship, just the perfect blendship

Recently, I found an article that complained about the concept of friendship found on social media such as MySpace. It seems that in the sites’ terms, friendship exists for people who sign up for their service. Some of these sites even foster competition for having the most friends, which can lead to pages listing the names of a subscriber’s friends so that the person who has only one or two names listed feels she must look for more contacts, more so-called friends.

The truth is the sites are not providing a social service, but simply are after more revenue.

What is really sad is that some of these subscribers actually believe these sites’ assurances they see on the screen as their friends. The idea is quantity, not quality, and what constitutes friendship doesn’t seem to be part of their thinking. It seems to me that teenagers have enough self-esteem problems without their adding insult-by-Web-site to the mix.

Recently, a friend of ours presented a report to her reading club on visiting Alaska as receiving Jesus in the Eucharist.

“In Alaska, we was up in my mind at this time of year. I learned them from a Sister of Christian Charity when I was in high school at St. Bernard School in St. Louis. The little city—and Alaska itself in former years—is dull and innocent now when compared to some of the ghoulish music and practices in more recent years.

Not long ago, I received an e-mail about the dangers of Halloween, not only for children, but for adults, too. The emphasis was on the rise of black magic and other frightening practices. I wasn’t surprised when I learned that some adults and children are now “talking with the dead.” I understand there is even a TV program about this.

In my opinion, just like similar practices have been around for centuries in one form or another. Some are relatively harmless, traditional christian events that give some needed entertainment and a little serious unsettling—and even dangerous.

By the same token, through the years I have actually liked the presentation of a deified counterpart of a saint’s intercession for a particular concern or request. Such moments are comforting and peaceful although not as deeply satisfying as receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. Halloween began as All-Hallow-everything that has to do with children pretending to be adults and many adults acting like children. This trick-or-treating is a tradition, but it is not official sanctioned models to look to for inspiration.

One thing I’ve noticed in my study of Church history and in teaching the faith to our boys in a large number of the Church’s saints were either men or women religious, those who were ordained or martyrs who died in times of persecution.

I deeply appreciate these holy men and women, and try to teach our boys how they can emulate their virtues.

While there are a good number of married saints, those who lived in circumstances very different from our own or, in many cases, were kings, queens or other members of the royal family.

These men and women are still gifts from God so I venerate them and encourage our sons to do the same.

But there doesn’t seem to be many that might be called “ordinary” married or other lay folk, either.

There are exceptions. St. Gianna Beretta Molla was an Italian mother and physician who died in 1962, almost a year after the birth of her fourth child. During her pregnancy, she was diagnosed with an ovarian cyst. Flawed surgery would have been performed on Oct. 26 in Linz, Austria. An Austrian father of three and a farmer, Franz’s sanctity was recognized in 2004. For other things, the fact that he was executed in 1943 after he refused to serve in the Nazi army, in which the Catholic faith was incompatible with such service.

While this man and woman are worthy of veneration, they are emblematic of the struggles for people of faith in the past century; they still seem exceptional. Their holiness was tried in the fires of harsh trials that most of us haven’t faced to face.

Yet the message of All Saints Day is that every person who is baptized is called to be a saint. Now it is arguably true that most of those named in the Scriptures whose God’s throne in heaven are not and will never be formally canonized.

One may say that the Church’s leaders who oversee canonizations are responsible for this lack of ordinary modern lay saints. But a formal process that could lead to a canonization starts with the emergence—at the grassroots level—of an individual’s reputation for holiness. We need not necessarily look at our Uncle Henry or the necklace of ordinary people we see, although they should learn from their holiness.

But as long as the laity don’t consider and manifest in the ordinary events of their daily lives that becoming a saint is the number one goal of their lives, we won’t be able to have the kind and women like you and me added to the Church’s role of saints.

We need not necessarily look at our Uncle Henry or the necklace of ordinary people we see, although they should learn from their holiness. But as long as the laity don’t consider and manifest in the ordinary events of their daily lives that becoming a saint is the number one goal of their lives, we won’t be able to have the kind and
The Book of Sirach, one of those books classified by scholars collectively as part of the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, is the source of this weekend’s first Scriptural reading. The Wisdom Literature arose when devout Jews and conscientious Jewish parents realized that in the midst of the pagan societies to which they had immigrated, they needed to better convince their children of the worth of the ancient Hebrew religion. The Second pugnasm amid which they lived had Greek origins and therefore human reasoning was elevated almost to the status of the divine, the authors of this literature sought to persuade audiences that the Hebrew religion in itself was the summit of human logic. Even with this overall pattern, each of the Wisdom books was composed in its own time and in the face of its own circumstances. Thus, it is important always to know the context in which a book was written, despite the fact that a similar purpose was the driving force and pugnasm was the common concern. It is easy, and not out of place, to imagine the conditions in which this particular work, the Book of Sirach, was composed. The Greek mythology was the way of thought of the best and the brightest people. This mythology presented gods and goddesses who on occasion were selfish, petty and outright cruel. By contrast, Sirach offers a picture of the God of Hebrew religion as far above the tawdry shortcomings and schemes of humans. God did not bargain. He is truly wise. God alone is the model of perfection. God alone provides the only reward. God is everything. Anyone who seeks an end other than God, as the Pharisee sought other ends in the story told by Luke, chases after phantoms. The humble man in the Gospel story is truly wise. His wisdom causes him to be humble. He receives the reward. He succeeds. He achieves. Humility, therefore, is an essential Christian virtue. It is not a denial of who and what we are. It expresses the deepest insight of who and what we are. It does not demean. It frankly sees us as we are.†

Q

A priest on a Catholic radio program said recently that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. However, one of the nuns at our parish told me that nowhere in the New Testament does it say that. Is the priest linking her to the woman caught in adultery?

Mel Gibson also portrayed them as a nectar necessary for all life. What is most interesting is that a lay cardinal once served as pope. If a lay person should be elected pope today, he would be immediately ordained bishop before assuming his office as bishop of Rome (#31).

After his election, he suspended the "obscure" rules for conclaves established by a previous pope, which turned out to be his only administrative act as supreme pontiff. He soon moved to Viterbo to escape the summer heat in Rome and died there shortly later. Pope Hadrian V ruled from July 11 to August 1 and is listed in the official roster of popes of the Catholic Church, but died without ever being ordained a priest or bishop.
DOICNE OF EVANSVILLE

As veterinarian, Sister Vivian sees ‘how exquisite all of God’s creation is’

By Mary Ann Hughes
The Message staff writer

Benedictine Sister Vivian Ramos keeps a small prayer card and medal of St. Francis of Assisi in the pocket of her lab coat. He’s the patron saint of animals, and she says they are buddies.

“I keep him busy,” she says. “I pray for his connection to animals, and he has a special to remember him.”

When the goldfish died, I had a car full of nuns dusting silk flowers.”

She did have a special connection to the Church or the religious life when she was a child. “I saw a car full of nuns one time. My parents pointed them out, and it looked like they were having a good time,” Sister Vivian said. “That was it.”

She did have a special connection to animals, and enjoyed the dogs, cats and goldfish that were family pets. “When the goldfish died, I would cut them open to see what they looked like inside,” she recalled.

Her parents told her they expected her to become a doctor, “but they didn’t say what kind. My brother is a dentist, and I thought the animals would be a little more interesting” than people.

When her father retired from the Navy, the family moved to the Philippines, where she earned her doctor of veterinary medicine degree. She followed that work with clinical rotations at Purdue University, and that’s how she arrived in Indiana.

And that’s where she had her “conversion” experience. “I was agnostic,” she said. “I doubted. Since I was a teenager, my parents couldn’t get me into a church.”

On the eighth anniversary of her father’s death, she decided to do something special to remember him. “It was the first one alone without my family, and I went to the Catholic Center at Purdue,” she said. “I wasn’t sure what to do at the Mass, but I smelled the aroma of roses. And I had that comforting feeling—you know, when you are being guided, and your mom hugs you.”

“That’s when the scales were peeled from my eyes.” During Mass, she felt God was telling her not to worry about her dad because he was fine.

“I started smelling the roses, and then I saw a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe with yellow roses in front of it.”

The comforting feeling that started in the church followed her into her life. “You know what it’s like when you are infatuated with someone, and you think about them all the time. It was like that with God.”

One day, she returned to the church and, as she stood in front of the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe, she realized that the yellow roses were dusty silk flowers.

She soon became acquainted with several other Catholic students and became active in the church. “I went to California, and my career was going great. I had a beach-front condo, and I enjoyed dating. It was great.”

But in the midst of that wonderful life, she would often pause and ask herself, “I wonder what it would be like at Ferdinand?”

A year later, she went back. “I came to see. I came to get off the fence.”

Up to that point, she said, “I had it all. I was happy, but I knew there was more. Life was already good, but I knew there was something better.”

I didn’t do anything useful. The sisters were all teachers known as a teaching order.

“I thought being a vet would be a hindrance because I didn’t do anything useful. The sisters were all teachers and nurses.”

She discovered that her career choice didn’t matter. “That’s why our community is thriving because it doesn’t matter what you do as a Benedictine. Our main focus is seeking God, and you can do that as a nurse, as an accountant, as a vet or as a teacher.”

She made her final vows as a Benedictine sister in 2005. Today, she lives out her days as a vet working in a clinic and joins her fellow Benedictine sisters in the evenings.

Her work as a vet has become her ministry, and working with the owners has become as important as working with their pets.

“This is the only practice where I ever worked where the clients tell us, ‘Please pray for us.’”

“It’s a very privileged place to be—that trust is there.”

The work is hard, too, she says, especially the deaths. It also strengthens her faith.

“When you think about how these different bodies work … a cat shows you how clever God is.”

You see how exquisite all of God’s creation is. We see the Creator and the creature and, yes, it’s very exquisite. “I think God is a scientist as well as an artist.”
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. 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 archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


KELLEMS, Margaret, 63, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 5. Wife of Patrick Kelloms. Daughter of Marie (Oberhausen) Clemens. Sister of Mary Becker, Ruth Here, Jane Stiles, Angela That, Paul, Peter and Steve Clemens.


St. Vincent Health is an organization dedicated to “Healthcare That Leaves No One Behind” as it cares for the needs of individuals - body, mind and spirit.

During fiscal year 2007, St. Vincent Health committed over $117 million in community benefit. From inner-city neighborhoods, to suburbs, to rural communities...there is evidence of this commitment in the 2007 Community Benefit Report.
By Mary Ann Wyand

Two dreams have come true for Christ the King parishioner Mary Anne Barothy of Indianapolis.

She got to meet and then work as a personal secretary for actress Doris Day, and recently published a book about her friendship and experiences with the popular movie, television and recording star in Hollywood during the late 1960s and early 70s.

Barothy wrote Day at a Time: An Indiana Girl's Sentimental Journey to Doris Day's Hollywood and Beyond as “a loving tribute to Doris for inviting me into her world.”

Her fun-to-read memoir also includes stories about meeting singer Elvis Presley, comedienne Carol Burnett, singers Sonny and Cher, country singer Glen Campbell, actor Durward Kirby, actress Patricia Neil, actor James Cagney, actress June Allyson, actor William Bendix, and many others.

“Doris is one of the kindest people and a wonderful friend,” Barothy said. “She’s a joy to know. She sees the joy of life. She is that way in person. It was not an act. She was always bouncy and very positive even though she had a lot of ups and downs personally.”

Day completed 39 movies in 20 years while recording albums, then working in television. She is 83.

She’s an American icon not only for her films, but also for her television show and records,” Barothy said. “She’s done it all. She’s an historic person, and my memories are history.

Barothy will sign copies of her book for the public during the “official opening” from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Oct. 26 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 96th St., in Indianapolis.

She has worked as a development assistant for the Little Sisters of the Poor since 1999.

Book sales at the St. Augustine Home this Friday and in coming weeks will benefit the Little Sisters’ ministry to the elderly poor.

“Art and Nancy Baxter at Hawthorne Publishing and I wanted to do something for the Little Sisters,” Barothy said. “We decided to donate a portion of the sale of each book sold there to the sisters.”

The Baxters are promoting Barothy’s book as “stories never told and personal photos of Doris never seen anywhere, [which] bring a Hollywood world now vanished to life.”

Day “at an apex moment in her career and personal life in the years 1969 to 1974,” Barothy said, when she worked for her.

The actress had just begun work on “The Doris Day Show,” a popular TV comedy, following her marriage to Melcher, her third husband and agent, and she needed a secretary.

Barothy, who was a devoted fan since her grade school years, was in the right place at the right time. She was thrilled to work for Day for four years and live at her home for two years. She returned to Indianapolis when her mother developed health problems in 1973.

While attending Christ the King School, the former St. Agnes Academy and Marian College in Indianapolis, Barothy was a loyal member of the Doris Day Fan Club and never gave up on her dream to move to southern California and hopefully work for her favorite actress.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in journalism, she worked as a reporter for The Indianapolis News and saved money so she could move to the West Coast in 1968.

It was “the golden age of movies and television,” Barothy recalled, and she admits that “Catholics may feel politically disenfranchised, sensing that no party and no candidate is pro-life,” sensing that no party and no candidate is pro-life. She is that way in person. It was not an act. She was always bouncy and very positive even though she had a lot of ups and downs personally.”

Day completed 39 movies in 20 years while recording albums, then working in television. She is 83.

The statement before the bishops is to be presented to the bishops this fall is a draft version of the document, which called on each diocese to develop its own curriculum guidelines and evaluate religion textbooks for use as a parish bulletin insert.

“A draft version of the document, ‘Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living: Guidelines for Curriculum and Publication Design,’ was sent to the bishops for review in the spring.

Its introduction states that these guidelines should not only help publishers, but parents, catechists and teachers “in their respective roles in this crucial and delicate task.”

The bishops will be asked to approve a $147.7 million budget for 2008 and a 14 percent reduction in the assessments on dioceses that help fund conference activities. Despite the drop in assessments, the 2008 budget is 7 percent more than in 2007, due primarily to growth in funds received from national collections and federal grants for migration-related work.
By Mike Krokos

In today’s society where many embrace a secular-materialistic mindset “that has more or less decided that life goes on just fine without God and moral values, at least in the public forum,” it is up to people of faith to put God first in their lives.

That was the message Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein shared at the Catholic Business Exchange breakfast on Oct. 17 at the St. Pius X Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis.

“No individual or group, no thing or theology or human experience can come before God,” the archbishop told the more than 100 business leaders in attendance. “It is a great challenge for any of us to keep Christ centered in our lives, especially in everyday business.”

A person’s real goal is whatever he or she consults most often in life, the archbishop warned. “We are incorrigible god-makers. Self, money, career success, another person, movie stars [and] sports heroes are often false gods.”

People of faith do not concede to the pessimism in our world, Archbishop Buechlein added.

“To doubt that God is with us in the struggles of our times is to doubt Christ’s faith,” the archbishop offered four practical ways that people can live their Christian faith and call to holiness, and put their trust in God in everyday life. They included:

• Try to see the connection between your work during the week and Sunday.
• Try to practice at work, in your business, is good stewardship of work,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “Your work or business is a way of responding to God’s gifts with your God-given talents.

The late Pope John Paul II suggested that we see work as a way to cooperate with God’s creation, the archbishop noted.

An intentional awareness of the stewardship of work is a big part of lay Christian spirituality.

“It is a major way in which you can become holy,” he said.

The archbishop encouraged people to bring “their week’s work and the fruits of your stewardship of work to the Lord at Sunday Mass as a spiritual offering of the fruits of your work.”

The connection with Sunday Eucharist, he said, integrates our Christian stewardship of time, talent and treasure to the offering of the Eucharist.

“If you will, it is part of your stewardship offering at Mass on Sunday,” the archbishop said. “What you put in the offertory collection is an external sharing of your treasure as a fruit of your daily stewardship of work.”

• Try to seek a right balance of family love and family business.

Your business profession, the archbishop said, is a significant way in which you exercise your responsibility to provide a living for your spouse and children or, if you are single, it is a way to exercise your responsibility for the welfare of the local community of extended family and friends.

“In the pressure of being effective in business, it is difficult to find the right balance,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “I encourage you to pray for the discernment to make good decisions about how much time should be given to work in order to succeed, to provide for family, and how much time and energy needs to be expended with family.

“Somehow, the priority of family love over family wealth needs to be lived in a practical way,” he added. “It’s not easy in the climate of secular cultural values that press for material wealth.”

• Try to practice presence of God in your day-to-day business life.

St. Jospehmaria Escriva was a great proponent of the holiness of laypeople, Archbishop Buechlein said, who emphasized the notion of what he called “practice of the presence of God.”

“By this practice, he meant intentionally making yourself aware of God’s presence in your daily life and work,” the archbishop said. “We do that by an occasional short mental prayer, such as ‘Lord, help me.’ Lord, thank you for your help through a tough stretch.”

• Try to seek a right balance of family love and family growth.

“Every one of us has a responsibility in charity to our neighbor,” he said. “Our responsibility is measured by the blessings that are ours.”

Christian spirituality doesn’t need to be complicated, the archbishop said. “Yet, it needs to be intentional.”

Bill Montgomery of Brook, Ind., said the archbishop’s words had a special meaning for him as he took short periods each day to offer prayers of thanks.

For Montgomery, that means “trying to keep the recognition of God in front of you... not letting it be [just] a Sunday thing.”

A member of St. Joseph Parish in Kenlet, Ind., in the Diocese of Lafayette, Montgomery, who read about the Catholic business breakfast in The Catholic Moment, newspaper of the Lafayette Diocese, and told himself, “I need to be there,” even though the breakfast was 100 miles away and in the eastern time zone.

Brook is in the central time zone, he noted.

“It was definitely worth it,” Montgomery said.

Pope Benedict XVI

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Involvement in politics is a role reserved to laypeople, but Catholic Church leaders must explain and promote the moral principles that will contribute to the common good, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“The Church, while recognizing that it is not a political agent, cannot abstain from taking an interest in the good of the whole civil community in which it lives and works,” the pope said in a message published on Oct. 18.

The papal message marked the 100th annual celebration of a week dedicated to studying Catholic social teaching sponsored by the Italian bishops’ conference.

Working for a just social order is a task that belongs to laypeople, the pope said.

“As citizens of the state, it is up to them to participate personally in public life,” and to dedicate themselves “with generosity and courage, enlightened by faith and the teaching of the Church, and animated by the love of Christ,” he said.

The role of Church leaders is to provide guidance, he said, particularly when modern society is facing “multiple ethical and social emergencies that threaten its stability and seriously compromise its future.”

Pope Benedict said the most pressing issues include “respect for human life and the attention that must be paid to the needs of the family founded on marriage between a man and a woman.”

“As has been said many times, these are not only Catholic values and principles, but common values to be defended and protected, like those of justice, peace and the safeguarding of creation,” the pope said.

The particular contribution of the Church, he said, lies in educating the faithful, political and business leaders in a “genuine spirit of truth and honesty aimed at the search for the common good and not personal profit.”

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Pope says political field is for laypeople, but Church must guide

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Suzanne L. Yakimchick, Chancellor, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1410

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