A different kind of Christmas story

Annual Cadeaux Ball assists people in need, builds lifelong friendships

By John Shaughnessy

If you want to know the true story behind one of the most fun and most generous Christmas parties in the archdiocese, you would have to start with a clothing item that has fascinated, frightened and tormented countless women through the years: the bridesmaid dress.

Indeed, the desire of three friends to actually wear a bridesmaid dress for a second time has led to an annual Christmas ball that has supplied thousands of gifts for the Christmas Store, the archdiocesan setting where people in need come to choose gifts for members of their family.

The Cadeaux Ball has also raised tens of thousands of dollars to assist Catholic Charities Indianapolis in its year-round efforts to help people in need have a better life and a better Christmas.

“The Cadeaux Ball has always been about the reason for the season,” says Lisa Bradshaw, one of the founders who had the idea to use a bridesmaid dress for a Christmas party. “It was all about the dresses,” says Liz Bradshaw, who has been a part of the Cadeaux Ball committee since the beginning.

The first annual Christmas ball was held in 1997 and has become an annual event.

Pope Benedict creates 23 cardinals from 14 countries

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a liturgy that emphasized the Church’s cultural diversity and its unity of mission, Pope Benedict XVI created 23 new cardinals from 14 countries.


The pope, who was presiding over his second consistory, told the new cardinals he had chosen them to be the “closest advisers and collaborators” of his ministry in Rome, the Church’s traditional center.

At the same time, he said, the cardinals’ geographical variety reflects Catholicism’s global expansion and the fact that today the Church “speak[s] every language of the world.”

International groups of pilgrims who packed St. Peter’s Basilica for the Nov. 24 consistory added emphasis to the pope’s words, applauding, cheering, silencing and even waving national flags when the new cardinals’ names were announced.

The pope made a special appeal for peace in Iraq and said his naming of Cardinal Emmanuel-Karim Dely of Baghdad, the Chaldean patriarch, was a sign of his closeness to the country’s Christian population.

“Their experiences in their own flesh the dramatic consequences of an enduring conflict and now live in a fragile and delicate political situation,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict XVI will sign his second encyclical, a meditation on Christian hope, on Nov. 30 and the document will be released the same day, the Vatican announced.

The encyclical, titled “Deus Caritas Est” (“God Is Love”), will be presented at a Vatican press conference by Cardinal Georges Cottier, the retired theologian of the papal household, and Cardinal Albert Vanhoye, a retired professor at the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

Sources have said the encyclical, about 65 pages long, explores the theme of salvation and the hope offered by Christianity in light of modern philosophy and contemporary culture.

The title comes from St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans, in which he said: “For in hope we have been saved” (Rom 8:24). The text will be published initially in Latin, Italian, English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish, the Vatican said.

The pope worked on the encyclical over the summer during his stays in northern Italy and at his villa outside Rome. At the same time, he has been working on a third encyclical that deals with social themes, according to Vatican officials.

The pope’s first encyclical in 2006, “Deus Caritas Est,” called for a deeper understanding of love as a gift from God to be shared in a self-sacrificial way.

The pope has spoken about the importance of the virtute of hope on several occasions. In 2005, speaking to Mexican bishops on their “ad limina” visits to Rome, he said Christians need to be reminded that God never abandons his people and is alive and active in the world.

“Confronted by today’s changing and complex panorama, the virtue of hope is subject to harsh trials in the community of believers. For this very reason, we must be apostles who are filled with hope and joyful trust in God’s promises,” the pope told the bishops.

“With contemporary society, which shows such visible signs of secularism, we must not give in to despair or a lack of enthusiasm in pastoral projects,” he said.
The start of something special

It was the fall of 1997 when four young adults drove back from Saint Meinrad Seminary after helping their friend—the future Father Patrick Beidelman—celebrate his ordination as a transitional deacon.

During the three-hour drive to Indianapolis, Kristina Miller, Sarah Otto, Lizabeth Brashaw and her husband of then-four months, John Bradshaw, started talking about wanting to have another event to celebrate.

That’s when Lizabeth mentioned an annual Christmas gala in her hometown of Buffalo, N.Y. She told Miller and Otto how the women wore gowns and the men donned tuxedos for the elegant affair. The three female friends talked and laughed about having their own ball where they would dress in bridesmaid dresses from weddings they had attended. Lizabeth even offered her and John’s house as the setting.

As the plans for the low-key ball started, the friends decided that everyone who came should bring a small Christmas gift that could be donated to a charity.

When they asked then Deacon Beidelman to suggest a worthy charity, he recommended the Christmas Store. Otto suggested naming the event the Cadeaux Ball because “cadeaux” means “gifts” in French.

Invitations were extended to their circle of friends and family, which included other young couples, people starting their first jobs and friends who were attending graduate school or law school like John Bradshaw. Many of the young women wore bridesmaid dresses while the young men dressed in suits or semi-formal tuxedos. Money was tight for most of the 40 people who came, but everyone brought a gift.

“That first year, we collected 40 gifts and about $60,” Lizabeth says with a smile. The party was such a good time that they also decided to make it an annual Christmas tradition.

‘Everybody is giving something’

Fast-forward to the 10th annual Cadeaux Ball in 2006.

More than 400 people attended, including some who brought new bicycles as gifts for the Christmas Store. About $30,000 was raised for Catholic Charities Indianapolis, thanks in part to corporate sponsors that included St. Francis Hospital and Health Centers and St. Vincent Health.

The event was held in the beautiful ballroom of Marian Inn, an Indianapolis company.

The dress was elegant. Stylish.

Still, the grassroots quality of the Christmas Ball continues. Miller, Otto, the Bradshaws, Father Beidelman, Jim Hardee and their ever-growing list of friends still form the plan that leads the event. To get into the ball, a person needs to bring a gift and buy raffle tickets for a total of $25. (More raffle tickets can be bought for $10 each.) The combination of the gift and the raffle tickets gets a person a dinner, a drinks, a night of dancing and a warm feeling inside.

“We want it to be as much about giving as possible,” says John Bradshaw. “We give the party. People come in and give gifts. Everybody is giving something.”

That approach awes Suzanne Murphy, director of development for Catholic Charities Indianapolis and St. Elizabeth/Coleman Pregnancy and Adoption Services.

“The thing that impresses me the most in working with this group is that they’re very young, they’re so committed and they’re very hands-on,” Murphy says. “They’re just a delight to be around.”

No one knows that better than Father Beidelman.

“All of my fond memories surrounding Cadeaux involve renewing old friendships and making new ones,” Father Beidelman notes. “I am very proud of my friends for the vast amounts of time and energy they offer to make the Cadeaux Ball so successful. It is hard work, but it is work that produces much good, especially for those in need. That’s what the Gospel calls us to be about as followers of Jesus.”

Gifts from the heart

When this year’s Cadeaux Ball is held on Dec. 8, everyone associated with the event knows it is a producive occasion built around stories. It always does, including the story of a man and a woman who met at the ball, fell in love and return to the ball every year as a tradition in their relationship.

There are also other kinds of love stories.

Julia Affoldor told how she became involved in the ball five years ago when she moved to Indianapolis after getting married. Affoldor is a college friend of Kristina Miller. Miller told her about the ball, and Affoldor has helped with the decorations ever since. She also began to volunteer at the Christmas Store.

“I didn’t even know of the store prior to working on the Cadeaux Ball,” Affoldor says. “I started volunteering at the Christmas Store because I wanted to know where the donations were going. Once I got there, I was hooked. It’s the good I see that comes out of the store. I see the joy of them shopping for their children or their grandchildren. It makes me happy.

It also makes me imagine what they’re feeling on Christmas when they give their kids or grandchildren their presents.”

After 10 years, the original organizers are amazed at how the event has grown and how it has touched so many lives, including their own.

“That first year, we were amazed we were able to raise a wadgament of toys,” said Kristina Miller. “Now, it’s taken on a life of its own. But that’s the hallmark of something that’s worthwhile. It’s grown and it’s taken us with it. It’s opened our eyes to the work Catholic Charities does, and we’ve become much more involved in that work.”

An event that began with bridesmaid dresses has created a beautiful tradition.

“We think of the event as a way we can spend with our friends and family, and yet at the same time we make an impact with the toys, the donations and the different activities,” Miller says. “It reminds you of the people in your life as well as the small things you can do in your life to make a big impact.”

(Anyone who wants to donate gifts to the Christmas Store can do so until Dec. 18 at the Christmas Store from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The most needed items are toys, winter clothes and household items. All gifts should be new.)

Tell us how someone’s faith has influenced your spiritual life.

Has the faith of a friend, a family member or a stranger during a difficult time in their life had a dramatic impact on your own faith? If so, The Criterion is interested in hearing your story.

Please send your story to John Shaughnessy in care of The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or send him an e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org. Please include a daytime phone number where you can be reached.

Readers are invited to share their favorite Christmas memories

Favorite Christmas memories are worth telling again and again. The Criterion invites you to submit a brief story about a special holiday memory for possible inclusion in the annual Christmas Supplement, which will be published in the Dec. 21 issue. Your Christmas story may be written about a humorous or serious topic related to your faith, family or friends. Submissions should include the writer’s name, address, parish and telephone number, and should be mailed to The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or sent by e-mail to criterion@archindy.org by the Dec. 6 deadline.

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Prayers of gratitude are offered at annual interfaith service

By Richard Kaler
Special to The Criterion

As the sun set Nov. 20 on the second day of the conclave, the Pope gave everyone an official update on the process of the election. The Pope then went on to thank the clergy, the cardinals and all the witnesses who were making an effort to support the church.

“Together we want to reaffirm the solidarity of the entire Church with the Christians of that beloved land and ask prayers for the beginning of the hoped-for reconciliation for all the peoples involved,” he said.

During the consistory, each cardinal knelt as the pope placed on his head a red, three-cornered hat called a biretta. The pope told them the color was not only a sign of the cardinal’s dignity, but also a visible reminder of their readiness to act with courage “even to the point of shedding your blood” in order to help spread the Christian message.

In his sermon, the pope underlined that the cardinal’s bond of communion with Rome. Those over 80 included a visitor from Houston who held TV screens in the square. The crowd forecast. The overflow of several thousand people in St. Peter’s Square, but was moved back in French.

New American cardinals “on the edge of the happiest day,” page 10

Cardinal Dolly, 80, received the biggest applause when he approached the altar to receive his red hat; the pope gave him the gilded throne, wearing a gold cape instead of a biretta.

The eighth annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service that took place that evening was an opportunity for each spiritual leader to offer his own language and tradition.

New American cardinals “on the edge of the happiest day,” page 10

Cardinal Foley said he appreciated the great number of warm and positive articles about him in recent days.

“I’m nice to be canonized without the inconvenience of dying,” he quipped.

Cardinal DiNardo, 58, was the second-youngest of the new cardinals. He is the first cardinal from a Texas diocese, and his nomination was considered a sign of Pope Benedict’s attention to the growth of the Catholic Church in the U.S. Southwest.

“The cardinal’s bond of communion with Rome is the ideal that should guide the cardinals in their new role,” he said.

Each of the new cardinals was assigned a church in Rome as a symbol that they were becoming members of the clergy of Rome and were more closely bound to the bishop of Rome, the pope.

Cardinal Foley was given the Church of St. Sebastian on the Palatine Hill. Cardinal DiNardo received the Church of St. Eusebius, one of the city’s oldest churches, on the Esquiline Hill.

The consistory liturgy had been planned for St. Peter’s Square, but was moved inside the basilica when bad weather forecast. The overflow of several thousand people had to watch the consistory on big TV screens in the square. The crowd included a visitor from Houston who held a U.S. flag on a pole.

In the end, it did not rain during the consistory. The pope walked out to the steps to see how other people worship and hoped it would capture the vibe of the service. “May we be people of faith with a humble, an all-embracing spirit—not even inadvertently ignore, trespass against someone else’s dignity,” he said. “Instead, discover in them wisdom, universal common threads, strengths and reflections of our own spirituality and humanity.”

Quoting Franklin D. Roosevelt, Singh said our basic freedoms are vital in celebration of the holiday. “Freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, freedom from fear.”

Dan Pugh, 52, experienced the interfaith prayer service for the first time.

“I think it’s important to see how other people worship and pray,” he said. The first guest who performed during the service was Cantor Giora Sharon, a Jewish representative of the Congregation Beth-El Zedeck.

Dr. Girdhard L. Ahuja from the Hindu Temple of Central Indiana followed. Sister Carol Ann Allen of the Nur-Allah Islamic Center was next. Geshe Jimpa Sonam of the Indiana Buddhist Center came afterward. A small ensemble representing the Sikh Satsang of Indianapolis performed last.

Cathedral of the Saints Peter and Paul

Handel’s Messiah
Saturday, December 15, 2007 7:30 p.m. | Kirk Trewar, conductor

The Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul 1347 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis

The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir combine talents to perform a holiday classic: Messiah – The Complete Oratorio.

Featuring: Kierra Duffy, soprano
Delores Wothke, mezzo-soprano
Brian Slucki, tenor
Thomas Scavina, bass

$35 Festival Seating; $10 Students, Group discounts available. | call 317.940.9607 | www.icomusic.org

New Cardinal Emmanuel-Karim Darrell Dwyer leaves the conclave on Nov. 24 at the Vatican. Cardinal Ivan Dias, the retired archbishop of New York, said Pope Benedict XVI hoped that naming him a cardinal might promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Iraq.

“Where can we go, Lord?” written on the back in French.

Alphonse Mendy, a native of Dakar, said the nomination was especially important for the African country because it put the spotlight on the minority Catholic population in a country that is more than 90 percent Muslim.

After the consistory, the cardinals scattered to various receptions throughout the day, including a big open house held in the evening in the Vatican’s Apostolic Palace.

The following day, the pope celebrated Mass with the new cardinals and gave them each a gold ring to symbolize their special bond of communion with Rome.

The day before the consistory, the pope presided over a meeting with cardinals and cardinals-designate for discussions that focused on the state of the Church’s ecumenical elections. 
American bishops focus on leadership and pastoral priorities

When the U.S. bishops met in Baltimore for their annual meeting on Nov. 12-15, their discussions were not “business as usual.” While they engaged in many of the same activities as in years past, everything the bishops discussed took place in the context of a new focus—the pastoral priorities they established during several years of intense planning and discussion. These priorities include:

- Implementation of the pastoral initiative on marriage.
- Faith formation focused on sacramental practice.
- Priestly and religious vocations.
- Life and dignity of the human person.
- Recognition of cultural diversity with special emphasis on Hispanic ministry.

As a result of this new focus, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is reshaping itself into an organization that is reduced in size—up to 30 percent smaller—and requires less annual support from dioceses throughout the United States (an overall reduction of 50 percent).

In his opening remarks during the annual meeting, the outgoing USCCB president, Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., offered some reflections on the important leadership role that the Church in the United States.

Looking to the words and example of the Apostles, to be his voice in our time,” said Bishop Skylstad, “And that is the model we should follow.”

He said, “And our time needs to hear the voice of Christ. … We cannot shrink from calling to be shepherds, to be leaders.”

What are some of the ways that the USCCB responds to the call to pastoral leadership?

Certainly by working to promote vocations to ordained ministry, consecrated life and lay ecclesiastical ministry. By educating adults, youth and children in our Catholic faith—especially in the sacramental life of the Church.

By continuing to be clear about the fundamental injustice of abortion and of sacrificing sacred human lives at their earliest moments for the sake of supposed progress in medicine and science or for convenience.

By seeking to move minds and hearts to care more for those who are needy and disadvantaged. By speaking the truth to all our elected leaders, and to those whose policies affect our society and our world, which so longs for justice and equity.

By serving as teachers who advocate a moral and ethical stance in the area of immigration reform, to matters affecting war and peace.

The response given to the USCCB by its recently articulated list of five pastoral priorities:

- Life and dignity of the human person.
- Priestly and religious vocations.
- Life and dignity of the human person.
- Recognition of cultural diversity with special emphasis on Hispanic ministry.
- Recognition of cultural diversity with special emphasis on Hispanic ministry.

As we enter this holiday season, a new report shows that Catholic Charities agencies across our nation are serving an ever-growing number of people—up to nearly 8 million people in 2006.

The report, “Poverty in America: Beyond the Numbers,” tell us that the mission of Catholic Charities agencies across the nation is to meet the immediate needs of the poorest and most vulnerable among us, and to empower them to build lives of dignity and economic security.

One important development is that among the many people served by Catholic Charities agencies in 2006 were 4.1 million adults and children who were living below the poverty line for $20,000 a year for a family of four. That means Catholic Charities nationwide served more than one in five of those people living in poverty.

But as much as we have done, we know that our work is far from finished. The “Poverty in America” report highlights the fact that over the last few years Catholic Charities agencies have seen more and more clients living in poverty.

In 2006, 52 percent of Catholic Charities clients were from below the federal poverty line, up from 43 percent in 2002. The report also shows that there are a growing number of people turning to Catholic Charities for help and in fact, local Catholic Charities agencies saw a 12 percent increase in the need for food service programs in 2006.

By serving as teachers who advocate a moral and ethical stance in the area of immigration reform, to matters affecting war and peace.

The more support we have, the more we can make a real difference in the lives of so many who come to us—especially in this holiday season and throughout the years ahead.

We are calling on individuals, local communities and government leaders to give the needs of the working poor a higher priority in budget and policy decisions in four main areas:

- Health services—such as soup kitchens, food banks and food pantries, home-delivered meals and congregate dining—increased by 2.7 million, or nearly 60 percent.
- The number of people who are hungry, the homeless, the working poor and the elderly, the working poor with high medical costs and the working poor living in poverty has increased by more than 7.8 million people a year regardless of religious, social or economic backgrounds.
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Poverty is a moral and social crisis. Our Catholic values tell us that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God, no matter how well hidden that is. This is the focus given to the USCCB by its recently articulated list of five pastoral priorities.

- Life and dignity of the human person.
- Priestly and religious vocations.
- Life and dignity of the human person.
- Recognition of cultural diversity with special emphasis on Hispanic ministry.
- Recognition of cultural diversity with special emphasis on Hispanic ministry.

Last month, our archdiocese gained a great and mighty voice in heaven when Valerie Dillon died.

Val was a gifted writer who devoted much of her time and talent to Catholic publications. She was one of the first catholics to advocate for the church in the time of Jesus, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 P 4-11).

—Daniel Connew

Letters to the Editor

Valerie Dillon’s life was an example of the Christian joy of living

Reader: Sister Marcie Malone is a pioneer in interfaith relationships

At this Thanksgiving time, let me add my gratitude to Carmelite Sister Marcie Malone, one of the Monastery of the Resurrection in Indianapolis.

Twenty-five years ago, she began an interfaith prayer service, a rather “pioneering” project at that time. In the intervening years, attendance has grown with the prayer space at the monastery filled to overflowing and parking space at a premium.

The prayer service is an integral part of the Spirit and Peace Festival. Prayers and assistant director of the Indiana Catholic Conference and designed its logo.

She wrote prolifically and had articles in various lay publications, usually about strengthening marriage and family life. All of this while a devoted wife and mother. Heaven has gained a new saint while we are left with a great example of a life with a Christian joy of living.

Bill Wood

Indianapolis
We want without delay, but Advent is about what’s worth waiting for

Anhelamos sin demora, pero el Adviento significa esperar por aquello que vale la pena

...
Abortion memorial

Members of Teens for Life, a pro-life organization at St. Pius V Parish in Troy, place pink and blue flags on the parish grounds on Oct. 21 as a memorial for the approximately 4,000 babies who die there are two victims—mother and child. Pray to end abortion. Presented by Teens for Life.”

Missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe to be displayed in archdiocese

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Advent Day of Recollection,” Msgr. Joseph F. Schaeudel, vicar general, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $35 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

December 9


December 13


December 14-16


December 31-January 1


January 4-6


VIPS

George and Maryfrances (Wendling) Jennings, members of the Catholic Professional Business Association of Central Indiana, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 29. The couple was married on Nov. 29, 1947, at the former St. Catherine of Siena Church in Indianapolis.

They have 12 children: Anne Bredevold, Sue Hillman, Joyce Myles, Joann Sanew, Marion Taylor, Teri Breakfast with Santa, Carol Wall. K. 9-11 a.m., $25 per person, reservations deadline Jan. 5. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictus@benedictus.org.

January 14

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “The Spirituality of Aging,” Dominican Sister Romona Nowak, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

First Communion reunion

Members of the First Communion class of 1957 at St. Mary Parish in Greenwood pose at St. Mary Church on Oct. 28 after the Mass at which they gathered for their 50th anniversary reunion.

Mssr. Harold Kneuven, administrator of St. Mary Parish and celebrant of the Mass, stands with, from firs from left, Linda Fatima, Patricia Klene, Janet Priibl, Teresa Volk, Sharon Kriger, Marvin Schottner, Ron Kruger, Kenny Koons, Nick Peters and Dan Nobbe; and third row, from left, Bucky Noble, Ernie Clemmons, Eddie Obermeyer, Ken Vogel, Jim Tebo, Ron Obermeyer, Jim Hortermir, Harold Menvedik and Stephen Buringen.

Abortion memorial

Members of Teens for Life, a pro-life organization at St. Pius V Parish in Troy, place pink and blue flags on the parish grounds on Oct. 21 as a memorial for the approximately 4,000 babies who die from abortion each day in the United States. A large sign that was part of the display read: “Each flag represents one abortion per day in the U.S. In the past, 4,000 of Father Anthony, there are two victims—mother and child. Pray to end abortion. Presented by Teens for Life.”

Events Calendar

November 29-December 1

 Marian College, Peine Theatre, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. “R.F.K. Remembered,” play about the late Sen, Robert F. Kennedy, 5 p.m. Student, 2 p.m., $10 adults, $5 students, $1 for non-students. Box office: 317-955-6588 or e-mail benedictus@benedictus.org.

December 1

Roncalli High School, 3300 Plogue Road, Indianapolis. Alumni Association, annual breakfast with Santa Claus, 8-11 a.m., $5 adult, $4 children, $2 family rate. Information: 317-924-4333, ext. 242.

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December 3

St. Pius X Church, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. Archdiocesan Office of Family Ministry invites high school students to “New Marian Way,” 1 p.m., Father Elmer Bursiwick, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

December 3

St. Francis Hospital, 1201 Hadley Road, Mooresville. “Look Good, Feel Better,” free workshop for women with cancer, 2-6 p.m. Information: 317-782-6704.

December 4

The Master’s Chorale and Monument City Brass Quartet present “Joy to Joy,” 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-462-6600.

December 5

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles 50 and over, single, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 8:30 a.m. Information: 317-979-1128.


December 6

St. Francis Hospital, Education Center, 5953 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Support group for oral, head and neck cancer patients, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-782-6704.

December 7

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Lumen Dei meeting, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast at Shapiro’s following Mass. Information: 317-919-5516 or e-mail LumenDei@shegbglobal.org.

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Couple to Couple League Natural Family Planning (NFP) classes, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-965-2376.

St. Francis Hospital, Swidler Conference Center, 1201 Hadley Road, Mooresville. Seminar for cancer patients and their families, Dr. Stephen Eberwine, presenter, 9-2 p.m., lunch included. Registration: 317-257-1505 or www.sFrancis Hospitals.org/cancer.

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. The Master’s Chorale of Central Indiana, Christmas concert, dinner buffet, 6 p.m. Information: 317-233-3471.

December 8

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, 3560 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Placement test, 9 a.m. noon, registration, 8:30 a.m. Information: 317-924-4333, ext. 242.

Roncalli High School, 3300 Plogue Road, Indianapolis. Alumni Association, annual breakfast with Santa Claus, 8-11 a.m., $5 adult, $4 children, $2 family rate. Information: 317-924-4333, ext. 242.

Father Thomas Scovina Memorial High School, 5000 Nolash Ave., Indianapolis. Breakfast with Santa and Cookie Walk, 9-11 a.m., breakfast admission unrestricted, toys to be donated to Catholic Social Services Christmas Store, $30 for container of holiday goodies. Information: 317-356-6577.

December 9


December 10


December 14


December 24

St. Pius X Church, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. Archdiocesan Office of Family Ministry invites high school students to “New Marian Way,” 1 p.m., Father Elmer Bursiwick, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

December 26

St. Francis Hospital, 1201 Hadley Road, Mooresville. “Look Good, Feel Better,” free workshop for women with cancer, 2-6 p.m. Information: 317-782-6704.

December 31

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Advent Day of Recollection,” Msgr. Joseph F. Schaeudel, vicar general, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., $35 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.
Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

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

Batesville Deanery
Dec. 1, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
Dec. 2, 7 p.m. at St. Maurice, Batesville
Dec. 5, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, St. Mary-of-the-Rock
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, New Albany
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, St. Leon
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris

Bloomington Deanery
Dec. 5, 7 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford

Connersville Deanery
Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at St. Mary (Immaculate Conception), Rushville
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Michael, Brookville, and Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Grove, at Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Grove
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery
Dec. 5, 1:30 p.m. at St. Philip Neri
Dec. 5, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Thérèse of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) and

Please be generous with your donations!
December 8 and 9

REIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

74 is the average age of retirement from compensated ministry.

19,521 religious have less than 20 percent of the amount projected for retirement and health care.

5,452 religious need skilled nursing care.

$49,850 is the average annual cost of skilled nursing care for a religious. (U.S. average is $65,985)

94 percent of donatons aid elderly religious.

Parish envelopes collected December 8 and 9

SHARE IN THE CARE

Franciscan Sister Rita Volovic smiles after Mass on Nov. 4 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. Although Sister Rita is eligible for retirement, she has chosen to continue teaching freshman English classes at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.
The hurricanes that recently raged through the Caribbean and Central America have left a path of destruction that will last for months, or perhaps even years. Restoration and recovery efforts will be difficult and lengthy.

After the storms, Food For The Poor responded quickly in helping those who lost family members, homes and crops. Immediate assistance is critical for people in dire need, but for victims of such devastation, the needs are ongoing. Food and other necessities are now in short supply.

Many of those affected by Hurricanes Dean and Felix are subsistence farmers who rely on the land around them to feed their families. For them, there is no insurance… no backup plan… no way to recover quickly. They need help today.

Losing one’s house, clothing and belongings takes a heavy toll on the human spirit. But losing crops — a family’s very means of income and survival — can mean the loss of all hope. This is the case for many of our poorest brothers and sisters who are victims of these hurricanes. The ferocity of the storm may rage for a few intense hours, but the aftereffects are long-lasting. For those who lost everything, day-to-day survival can be a challenge. But with your help, Food For The Poor can restore hope and rebuild lives.

“He who has compassion on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his good deed.”

(Proverbs 19:17)
Right now, you can provide much-needed food — and encouragement — to our brothers and sisters who have suffered tremendously. Your gift of $45 will feed 20 hungry children for an entire month. A gift of $81 will feed 36 children, and $135 will provide food for 60 hungry little ones.

Although the hurricanes have passed, their destruction and devastation linger. For those of us who were not affected, the storms are “old news.” But for families who lost everything, these disasters are an ongoing nightmare.

You can let God’s love shine through you today through your gift for suffering families. With your help, Food For The Poor can bring lifesaving food to our poorest brothers and sisters. In this time of great need, please respond to Christ’s call to “Feed My sheep.” (John 21:17b)

The victims of Hurricanes Dean and Felix need your support and prayers. Please do whatever you can to help.

Founded in 1982, Food For The Poor is an interdenominational ministry working to end the suffering of the poor in the Caribbean and Latin America. Not only do we provide food for the starving, but we also build small houses for the destitute, dig water wells for parched villagers, provide medicine and medical equipment for the sick and elderly, support orphanages and education for children, and much more. And we work diligently to be good stewards of your gifts. In 2006, more than 96% of all donations received went directly to programs that benefit the poor.

Your gift for food to aid the victims of these hurricanes will not only meet an immediate need; it will also provide hope for the future. Your help today will allow hardworking families to get back on their feet and start planting crops that will feed them in the future. Most importantly, your act of compassion will serve as a reminder that God’s love is alive and at work long after the storms pass.

Your gift of just $45 will feed 20 children for a month. At Food For The Poor, we believe that by serving our hungry brothers and sisters we serve the Lord. But we need your help in feeding the poor.

Because we acquire and ship food items in bulk, we are able to feed a child for an entire month for only $2.25. Your gift of just $45 will feed 20 hungry children, and $81 will feed 36 children who are on the brink of starvation.

Please be as generous as you possibly can and send a gift today to help feed precious children. Please use the postage-paid envelope in the brochure located in this publication to send your gift today.

May God bless you for your compassion.
New American cardinals were ‘on the edge’ of happiest day

The pope asked the pilgrims to continue offering the new cardinals “friendship, celebrations.

The new cardinals, stationed in various rooms of St. Peter’s Basilica. Making the rounds in the Apostolic Palace, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the two new U.S. members of the College of Cardinals are important and deserving.

“Cardinal Foley has been a faithful servant of the Holy See for many years,” he said. “And Cardinal DiNardo represents an important area of growth of the Church in our country.”

Cardinal George said it was “very moving” to watch the new cardinals receive their red hats from the pope, and “it reminded me of what the moment was supposed to be.” He said he used the word “supposed” because the moment when he received his own red hat from Pope John Paul II in 1998 was so overwhelming that “I went through it on automatic pilot.” The Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, a chivalric and philanthropic order with special ties to the Holy Land, hosted another reception for Cardinal Foley on Nov. 25 in its Rome headquarters.

Among the guests were Latin-rite Patriarch Michel Sabbah of Jerusalem, who said he was pleased that Pope Benedict has chosen Cardinal Foley to lead the knights and their efforts to assist Catholics in the Holy Land.

Charles J. Curry, a knight from San Antonio, said, “We are absolutely thrilled. Coming from Texas, we got doubly blessed” with both Cardinals Foley and DiNardo receiving red hats at the same ceremony.

“I know Cardinal Foley only by reputation and that is extremely positive,” he said. Several of Cardinal Foley’s classmates from the Columbia University School of Journalism also were on hand, but the star among his peers was Henry Gibson, the comedian and actor currently appearing on the ABC television series “Boston Legal.”

Gibson said he and the cardinal have been “solid friends” since 1949 when they were classmates at St. Joseph’s Preparatory School in Philadelphia. They and three other classmates referred to themselves as the “Rat Pack,” and were involved in the debate team, drama club and other activities. ↑

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By Mary Ann Wyand

Love God and love your neighbors. If you do that always, Father Oscar Anguiano emphasized in his homily on the feast of St. Martin de Porres, you will teach others about the kingdom of God.

Father Anguiano, who ministers to Hispanic Catholics at Holy Spirit and St. Lawrence parishes in Indianapolis, was the principal celebrant for the bilingual Mass on Nov. 3 at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis.

The fourth annual liturgy, which brought Hispanic, African-American and Caucasian Catholics together for worship, was sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Multicultural Ministry. One Hispanic family traveled from Franklin to participate in the Mass.

The Gospel reading for the liturgy, taken from the Book of Matthew, relates the story of Jesus answering the scribe’s question about what is the greatest Commandment. Jesus told him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’ ” (Mt 22:37-39).

“A way to help us care for each other is to embrace our diversity,” said Tucker, CRS regional director for the mid-Atlantic area who formerly served four years as the regional director for the Catholic Relief Services in Africa and North Africa.

“I think there is recognition that peace for one is peace for the other,” she said. Tucker said many on both sides recognize that a two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians is key to any peace process.

She is concerned about what she called the “humanitarian crisis” in the Palestinian territories that is complicated by strict travel restrictions imposed by Israel. There are 38 CRS staff members working in the Palestinian territories, providing food and other relief support, she said. Checkpoints and restrictions “put great difficulty on our ability to deliver assistance,” she said.

“One can travel freely throughout Israel and there’s access to jobs, health care [and] education, and so these same elements that are part of daily life are simply not there on the Palestinian side,” she said.

Father Anguiano said he is always encouraged “by the courage” to take real steps toward peace.

“The Israelis and Palestinians can and do live in peace,” he said. “We have extremist groups that always topple the equilibrium, but when there’s an episode everything changes.”

The pope made the remarks on Nov. 25. The Vatican also sent a delegation to the conference headed by Mgr. Pietro Parolin, undersecretary for the foreign affairs section of the Vatican Secretariat of State. He was accompanied by Mgr. Franco Copparo, another foreign affairs specialist.

Palestinians and Israelis reach a “just and definitive solution.”

The pope ended the U.S. bishops’ call for prayers for the success of the conference, saying prayers were needed so that negotiators will have the “wisdom and courage” to take real steps toward peace.

He said the Palestinian-Israeli conflict “for 60 years has been bleeding the Holy Land,” causing “so many tears and so much suffering among the two peoples.”

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Church leaders say Middle East peace is possible, but U.S. must lead

Holy Angels parishioner Sally Stimmel of Indianapolis directs the Spiritual Dancers as they praise God in dance during the bilingual feast day Mass in memory of St. Martin de Porres on Nov. 3 at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis.

BISHOP TUCKER: "There’s a need for an outside party to provide leadership, as long as it’s going to be even-handed."
‘Deeper Waters’
Bread for Eucharist, bread for the poor

By Julie McCarty

Bags of clothes, sorted out months ago, sit in my basement, waiting to be given to those in need. Certain cupboards are bursting at the seams. I can’t even close my sock drawer all the way.

“Women’s section” to receive their loaves of bread. As this was happening, other clergy gathered bread from other sections of the church. At this time, too, the archdeacon began to collect the wine from the nobles brought to him in little flasks and poured into a larger chalice. When the chalice became full, the contents were then poured into a much larger bowl, held by yet another liturgical minister.

(Mixing the wines together certainly makes a statement of oneness. I wonder how it looked and tasted.)

When this long gathering process was completed, deacons prepared the altar, selecting a portion of the bread and wine to be used for this eucharistic celebration. A pitcher of water was provided by the choir, who had been singing as the gifts were gathered.

What about the rest of the bread and wine? Based on what we are told, there must have been mountains of bread and many large containers of wine. Scholars tell us that a portion of the un consecrated bread and wine would have been used to support the clergy. The vast majority of it was given away to the poor. (Did they think of Jesus feeding the multitudes?)

I don’t recall ever thinking about food for the poor when I see lay persons bring forward gifts of bread and wine at Mass. Yet, the current General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2003) continues to see a connection between gifts of bread and wine for the eucharistic celebration with gifts for the poor (see GIRM 97).

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta had a beautiful way of describing this relationship. “In holy Communion,” she taught, “we have Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. In our work [with the poor], we find him under the appearance of flesh and blood. It is the same Christ.”

As I sit here writing this, it’s Friday. I’m putting those bags of clothes and old cell phones by the garage door so this midlife brain of mine can remember to drive them to their new homes tomorrow. What better way to prepare for Sunday Mass?

Reflection questions
- How did Christ treat the poor? How did he assist them?
- Spend some time pondering the above quote from Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

Coming next month: Thoughts on loneliness

(Julie McCarty is a syndicated columnist and author of The Pearl of Great Price: Gospel Wisdom for Christian Marriage (Liguori Press). Readers can contact McCarty via her Web site at www.juliemccarty.com.)

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WORLD AIDS DAY
DECEMBER 1, 2007

On World AIDS day thousands of students at Jesuit schools in the US will raise awareness and support for fellow students at St. Al’s High School in Nairobi, Kenya.

Thank you to the faculty and students of Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School for your show of solidarity with the students of St. Al’s.

How Can You Help?

It costs so little to change a life.

Three ways you can help:
- Sponsor a St. Al’s student for only $750 a year
- Help us build a new campus in 2008 by making a gift today
- Meet ongoing operating costs as the number of students increases

For information or to make a gift, please contact
Mark Maxwell
Jesuit International Ministries
607 Sycamore Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202-2512
1-800-831-9470
mmaxwell@jesuits-chi.org

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St. Al’s currently functions in this blue building. Building a new school on land next to Kibera slum allows us to double the number of students earning a college prep education with hopes for a better tomorrow.

Jesuits Plan to Double Enrollment at World’s First High School for AIDS Orphans

St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School in Nairobi, Kenya

Help us Build a Brighter Future

Our dream to build a permanent school in Nairobi is quickly becoming a reality. With your help, we plan to begin building a new school in January of 2008. The new school will allow us to increase enrollment from the current 220 students to 420 when completed.

Generous benefactors have contributed over $1 million towards the total cost of $2 million. We hope to use the ongoing tuition needs and raise additional funds to complete the new school by the end of 2008.

St. Al’s was co-founded in 2003 by Jesuit Terry Charlton and Christian Life Community. St. Al’s is a Catholic school dedicated to serving AIDS-affected youth from the Kibera slum. It gives students hope for a better life by providing a college preparatory education and support to overcome the challenges of the loss of parents along with extreme poverty.

It is estimated that Kenya has more than 3 million AIDS orphans and that the number is steadily increasing. Roughly 1.5 square miles, the Kibera slum is home to 1 million people, 30,000 of whom are AIDS orphans of secondary school age. These children are not able to continue their education due to poverty, prohibitive costs, and a lack of accessible schools.

To view a 10-minute video about St. Al’s called “A School in Nairobi,” go to the Chicago Province Jesuits website and click on the red AIDS Day ribbon, or request a DVD or VHS by calling Eileen Meehan at 1-800-922-5327.

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Liturgical year provides an ongoing message of hope

By Fr. Herbert Weber

It was a couple of weeks before Christmas, and I had just enough time to stop at a department store for a small purchase. In the parking lot, I found an open slot near the store entrance. I drove my car into the space and put my foot on the brake. But the car did not stop! I braked harder, but the car continued to move forward. Then, in a near panic, I slammed my foot on the brake. Only then did I realize that my car had stopped the first time. By a strange quirk of timing, the drivers in the cars on both sides of my parking space were reversing just as I was pulling in. Their movements backward created the optical illusion that I was continuing forward. In relief, I turned off the ignition and just sat there, catching my breath.

For me, that event is a vivid description of the way that many people feel in the weeks before Christmas. Even those who know that Advent is a season of waiting and finding themselves caught up in the hustle of holiday shopping, mailing cards and planning parties. It is as if they are unable to stop or even slow down.

Perhaps what is needed, what the Church can offer, is an opportunity to look at time in a different way in order to review what is really happening. This takes place through what is called the liturgical calendar.

The season of Advent and the entire liturgical year have a purpose and message for modern-day people. That calendar is about time and the passing of time. It is about grasping the Gospel message that unfolds each year. It is about choosing how to respond to events that really matter in people’s lives.

One of the blessings of following a liturgical calendar is that those who immerse themselves into each week’s Scripture readings or Church feasts will focus on the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation. As opposed to secular events dictating moods and responses, the liturgical year provides an ongoing message of hope.

At one and the same time, the liturgical calendar is timely and timeless. Its endless cycle of Scripture passages—as well as its movement of seasons and feast days—provides a backdrop for our personal awareness of God’s work in our lives. It sanctifies time and becomes a reminder that each day is part of a larger picture.

Meanwhile, the liturgical calendar also takes us one out of the realm of the daily grind. Its timeless quality does not grow old nor does it simply yield to the latest trend.

Sunday readings are based on a three-year cycle. Consequently, it takes I fall three years before various passages are repeated at Sunday Mass. Occasionally, I go back three, six or even 12 years to look at my homily notes. Invariably, I am surprised by what I preached at that time.

While the passages remain the same, my response to the readings can be so different. Certainly I have changed over the years. More importantly, however, I find that the circumstances in which these passages are being read have changed.

One of the joys I have found is that Catholics and many Protestants using the common Lectionary follow very similar liturgical calendars, often with the same Scripture passages. Knowing that millions of other Christians are immersed in the same readings or events is a powerful and uniting force. In contrast, a minister from a nondenominational Church told me that he takes a week each season to choose all the Scripture passages that he will use for the upcoming year. While I admire the fact that he is trying not to simply fall back on his favorite passages, I also feel sorry for him having to start from scratch each year. His selections could easily detach him and his congregation from what is happening with other Christians journeying through the calendar.

There are times when people misread the liturgical year. For homilists or catechists to approach Advent as if Jesus has not yet been born is to misunderstand the liturgical movement.

In reality, Jesus took flesh 2,000 years ago. The purpose of Advent, including the story of the pregnancy of Mary, is not to pretend that Christ’s birth hasn’t already happened. It is to help people enter into this mystery in their own lives.

Some people do, however, over-compartmentalize their sense of liturgical happenings.

Last summer, I made a reference to Christ’s birth during one of my homilies. It seemed a fitting example of the point I was trying to make in my reflection. After Mass, a woman thanked me for helping her celebrate “Christmas in July.” I found it sad that she felt it was out of the ordinary that we would talk about the incarnation other than at Christmastime.

The rhythm of the liturgical calendar allows differing ways, seasons and events for celebrating God’s involvement with humanity. At the same time, the complete picture of God’s presence in our world is constantly before our eyes.

The liturgical year allows people to come to know this profound reality!

(Father Herbert Weber is the founding pastor of Blessed John XXIII Parish in Perrysburg, Ohio.)

permitting the body to choose the time and place in which to pass on... Under my watch, the body’s... beloved, I was... turn to God. Ps. 24:2. “You... each... my second... St. Philomena was... was not... is not... When we prayed, it was so... (Nicole Plourde, Berlin, N.H.)

“Attending reconciliation helped me change a pattern of behavior. Repeating and acknowledging it in confession helped me to see the pattern and... change the behavior.” (Trish Keller, Garden City, Kan.)

“After the prayer for the deceased, I said: ‘May your memory never fade. Amen’. Then I said: ‘You are in the company of friends you have never met.’” (Franciscan Father John Sarles, Ph.D.)

“Be aware, and you will be humbled. That is the purpose of the liturgy. It will humble you... anointing are the most profound of human acts of... They open the gates of heaven for... When we... when you think and... When you...” (Fr. Stephen Hiney, O.F.M.)

“Do not pollute your home. Let... Then the matter is... When...” (Rev. James A. Twyman, O.P.)

“The liturgical year provides an ongoing message of hope. People can ask themselves: Is the calendar about time or the passing of time? Is it about grasping the Gospel message that unfolds each year? Is it about choosing how to respond to events that really matter in people’s lives? And...” (Fr. Herbert Weber)

When I found that my 14-year-old daughter and I seemed to be drifting apart, I started reading, ‘looking for solutions.’ I found that praying to St. Philomena was said to help change things you requested so I did that. I’ve seen a difference in our relationship. Now we often talk about faith and what choices God would want her to make.” (Mae Samek, Fargo, N.D.)

An upcoming edition asks: Are you ever present when a life-and-death medical decision was made? How was the decision made?

Lend Us Your Voice

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.
Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Past and future come together at end of year

November is coming to a quick end. The start of December and, with it, the start of Advent and all that is materialistic during the 12 days before Christmas is right around the corner. That is the ending of one liturgical year and the start of another calls us to be thankful for the busyness and the different amount of time in just something in front of us.

Ken Follett is a popular novelist whose books concern the same town in England, Roman Catholic Church. Thus, in these books, we learn about orders of nuns and priests, monasteries and convents which are overseen by the monks. In the English class system, which still exists in our day-to-day life, we can’t escape the status this kind of system seems so unfair. Let’s begin with the English class system, which still exists in this time. We can’t escape the status common sense and care for others. She also leaves her order to marry her true love, a commoner. Sometimes, yes. But the story isn’t as simple as that. There’s a great way to learn the history of those times. Ken Follett is a popular novelist whose books concern the same town in England during the 12th and 14th centuries, respectively. They are filled with details about the Catholic Church in England, feudalism, medieval economies, medicine, and more. They provide a great way to learn the history of those times. This was England before the Protestant Reformation and beyond. It’s a simple way to enlighten anyone who wants to learn the history of those times.

As I learned this summer from Aline’s life, there are lessons we can learn from the past. For example, most of us know how unsettling it is to wait for a bus or a train that is running late. Aline’s life is a reminder of how important it is to be patient and to trust in God’s timing. The tone for the rest of the month is set on the gifts that will soon be exchanged and the social gatherings that fill our December calendars.

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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Nov. 28, 2007

- Isaiah 2:1-5
- Romans 13:11-14
- Matthew 24:37-44

With this weekend’s reading, the Church begins its new liturgical year. In so doing, it also begins to use Cycle A for the readings at Sunday Masses. The first part of the Book of Isaiah is the source of this reading. Isaiah was an interesting person. He had access to the innermost chambers of his time. He hardly liked everything that he saw. He denounced national policies that, in his view, toyed with the people’s bond with God. His frankness generated great dislike and critics raged against him. Isaiah engaged the top echelon, but he also addressed himself to the people. He called upon them to be faithful to God. They acquiesced in the bad judgment of the leadership by not protesting themselves.

While Isaiah condemned ignoring God, he also insisted that God would not forsake the Chosen People. God would protect them, but they had to be faithful to God.

With this weekend’s reading, the Church offers us its first scriptural lesson for the new year for Advent 2007. It is a call to faith and a warning that if we voluntarily allow ourselves to stray from God, we risk disaster. However, we must never despair. God will protect us and guide us.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the next reading.

Always, Paul urged Christians to be true to their calling to find God in Jesus. This, of course, referred to life in the world, on the Earth. However, Paul also impressed upon his audience in the first century A.D.—and impresses upon us through this reading—the fact that we must live our lives on Earth with the afterlife clearly in mind. We must live our lives on Earth with the afterlife clearly in mind.

Hearing this reading is a good time to call on You in need, To call on You in need, To call on You in need.

Recommit ourselves to be true disciples of the king born in Bethlehem. We must shape our lives with these priorities in mind.

Thank You

You called me.
I heard. I came.
You taught me how to give.
Now more than ever, I want to live.

Thank you, Lord.
Your grace rains down.
You’ve taught me to love,
To call on You in need.
To trust in Your love,
So I can live.

I thank You
For family and friends,
For teaching me to give,
To receive and give.
Now more than ever,
I’ve learned to live.

By Sandy Bierly

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. She wrote this poem after meditating on “all of the many blessings that God has given me and my family.” This story of Mary holding the Child Jesus is next to the entrance of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany.)

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen

Tradition of Mass offerings dates back to early Christianity

What does a Mass intention actually mean? Some priests say, “This Mass is being offered for John Doe,” but some do not. Also, a few names appear in the intentions frequently, others maybe never. Do some people get to heaven faster because they have interested family members or maybe have more money to give for Masses? (Missouri)

Making an offering for Masses, especially on Sundays, goes back to early Christianity. At first, people brought material gifts, the bread and wine for Mass, for example, or gifts for the poor. Financial offerings came later. By the 1100s, accepting a “stipend” of money for Masses became common and remains so today.

John Huels of St. Paul University in Ottawa wrote an interesting comment about this practice.

"From the Middle Ages until the liturgical reforms of the 20th century, the liturgy was largely a clerical affair and the laity were silent spectators," Father Huels explains. "Most did not understand the Latin language, and the reception of Communion was rare. Thus, to give an offering for the priest to remember one's intention at Mass became a way of participating more closely in the action of the priest." (New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, 2000, p. 1129).

The Church has never established a firm position on what exactly it means for a priest to "apply the Mass." Bishops at the Council of Trent, which discussed the subject at length because of some opposition from Protestant reformers, disagreed with each other. In the end, the belief was that a Mass celebrated by a duly ordained priest is beneficial for those for whom it is offered and that some grace for remission of sin flows from it. What that means specifically or how it happens is left open.

Although the Church has struggled to avoid misunderstanding or the semblance of commercialism about the meaning of these offerings, language that is at least open to misunderstanding is common.

The example you give is a good one. Among our beliefs about the celebration of the Eucharist is that its reach and intentions are as broad as the first offering of that sacrifice on Calvary.

One of the Church’s prayers make clear that every offering of this sacrifice includes not only the whole Church, but also the whole human family, living and dead.

Even should he wish to do so, no priest has the power to show down that worldwide embrace as Jesus reveals his sacrificial offering in the person of the Church on Earth. This should answer the last part of your questions.

When a priest accepts a Mass offering, he accepts the responsibility to include that intention in his prayers at Mass. This is the meaning of the Church law which states, “It is lawful for any priest who celebrates or consecrates Mass to receive an offering to apply the Mass according to a definite intention” (Canon 9495).

For this reason, a statement that the Mass is “being offered for” an individual or to include that name in the prayers for the dead in the Eucharistic Prayer is generally considered at least inappropriate since it places undue attention and emphasis on that particular intention rather than on the intentions of the entire Church.

In other words, the word “stipend” implies a businesslike exchange of money for some material needs.

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3515, Peoria, Ill. 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail to jdietzen@ao.com.)
Confirmation: A way for young people to embrace their faith

By Bryce Bennett

For Kristina Carson, Mary Ording, Allyson Malad and hundreds of other young people in the archdiocese, confirmation is an opportunity to make their Catholic faith their own.

“Through confirmation, I am hoping to deepen my understanding of the religion,” said Mary Ording, 17, a junior at Cathedral High School and a member of St. Christopher Parish, both in Indianapolis.

Many young people in the archdiocese have recently begun confirmation meetings at their parishes. It is often a misunderstood sacrament and one that can reveal itself to its candidates in numerous ways.

“Confirmation is about receiving the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit,” explained Father Eric Augenstein, administrator of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. “The sacrament should not be considered a rite of passage into adulthood.”

“[Young people] are the future of faith in action.”

For this year’s confirmation meetings, St. Christopher Parish has a focus on the Beatitudes.

“Every meeting has a theme of a certain Beatitude,” said Tom Steiner, confirmation coordinator at St. Christopher Parish. “We try to include an interactive activity in each meeting so the candidates can see their faith in action.”

The prospect of meeting new people excites Kristina Carson.

“I am excited about strengthening my faith by interacting and meeting new people,” said Kristina, 17, a junior at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School and member of St. Christopher Parish.

The faith in action element is something that is also very important to confirmation coordinators. Nearly every parish tries to include at least one service activity and a retreat in its confirmation program.

“The retreat is really important because it gives a religious experience to a young person maybe has never had before,” Steiner explained.

“St. Lawrence holds two retreats,” Wesolowski explained. “The first is a day retreat and the second is an overnight retreat that focuses on maturing in faith. There are games, question-and-answer sessions and a celebration of reconciliation.”

For Kasey Hall, 17, preparing for confirmation was a particularly memorable time.

“At our confirmation retreat, I found myself able to express myself openly. It was a very emotional experience,” said Kasey, a senior at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School and member of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville. “Our youth minister, Marianne Hawkins, put a lot of time into getting letters and pictures from people close to us. Overall, I felt comfortable in my own skin.”

Stammerman gets just as excited talking about the service opportunities that come with the sacrament.

“St. Jude has a Justice and Service Team that plans and coordinates different service projects. Some different projects we have done include trips to the Rosegate Nursing Home to visit with the people, and to do some landscaping,” Stammerman said. “Additionally, we ask them to do service opportunities in their families and through their school.”

The candidates are reminded by the coordinators that the sacrament does not end the day they are anointed. They are reminded that these gifts and these faith experiences need to continue to fully celebrate the sacrament.

“I hope that the candidates can come away with the knowledge to keep God a part of big life decisions,” Maria Solis said.

“Faith is a lifelong process,” Steiner said. “It’s a continual process of growing. If I am able to get this through to the candidates, then I know I have done my job and they will be successful in whatever they choose to do.”

For Kristina Carson, Mary Ording, Allyson Malad and hundreds of other young people in the archdiocese, confirmation is an opportunity to make their Catholic faith their own.
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Disciples of Christ

Echo graduates move into catechetical leadership positions

By Sean Gallagher

Two young faces are making a difference in catechetical leadership in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Paul Siluentes, youth ministry coordinator at St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, and Alexa Puscas, director of religious education at St. Pius X Parish, also in Indianapolis, have come to serve the Church in central and southern Indiana after spending two years in training for this specific ministry.

Last spring, both completed their participation in Echo, a two-year service program in faith formation leadership established in 2004 and administered by the University of Notre Dame’s Catechetical Initiative.

Puscas is not new to the archdiocese. She served as an Echo apprentice at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. Siluentes spent his two years of service in the Echo program in the Diocese of Peoria, Ill.

Both, however, only came upon their current ministry positions early last summer, ordinarily after parishes have filled open staff positions. As her time in Echo was coming to a close, Puscas, who enjoys oil painting, was considering studying at an art school. Then she interviewed for her current position at St. Pius X Parish.

“As I was walking out, I just really thought, ‘I can do this. I can really be happy here,’” Puscas said. “I felt God’s call.”

Siluentes was called upon at an opening at St. Simon the Apostle Parish last June while he was on a golf outing at a family reunion. He interviewed for the job, and was at a restaurant when he received a call on his cell phone from St. Simon’s pastor, Father Paul Eitenne, offering him the position.

“I felt so comfortable there,” Siluentes said. “I prayed about it and just decided to take this position.”

In addition to serving two years as apprentices in parishes under veteran catechetical leaders, Puscas and Siluentes also took graduate-level theology classes through Notre Dame. At the end of their time in Echo, they earned master’s degrees in theology from the Catholic university in northern Indiana.

Both Puscas and Siluentes said Echo gave them good training for their current ministries.

“Echo apprentices who are now full-time professional catechetical leaders have the advantage of an excellent academic background. But the pastoral experience these people gain while they’re apprentices is priceless.” — Kenneth Ogorek, Echo’s combined academic and pastoral approach to forming possible future catechetical leaders.

Siluentes views his ministry position as a profession. But at the same time, he doesn’t lose sight of his overarching call to holiness.

“As a disciple, I see my vocation as one to holiness, of course,” he said. “But as a staff member here at the parish, I see myself in a professional way. I may not always dress the most professional in a three-piece suit, but I find myself as a professional in being a representative of the parish.”

Ogorek said that more young adults are considering entering catechetical ministry full time than in the past. One reason, he said, is because men and women currently in their 20s have grown up knowing professional youth ministers and directors of religious education.

“We have a generation of people now who have grown up seeing that this is a profession,” Ogorek said. “I think that may be a little bit of what’s going on. And I think that’s a good thing.”

According to the Center for Catechetical Initiative at Notre Dame, Echo has produced 26 graduates. Of them, 18 have moved into full-time catechetical ministry or educational positions.

Puscas noted that the young adults entering full-time catechetical ministry through programs such as Echo are still relatively small in number. However, she added that they are growing and are committed. There are 23 apprentices currently in the Echo program.

“We may be starting small and starting slow just to familiarize ourselves,” Puscas said. “But I think we understand this ministry as a vocation, our own vocation in living our discipleship of Christ.”

(For more information on Echo, log on to www.nd.edu/~cci)†

Three new Echo apprentices begin ministry in archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

The relationship of the University of Notre Dame’s Echo program with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis continued to grow this fall as three new apprentice catechetical leaders began their ministry in three Indianapolis South Deanery parishes.

John Paul Lichon is serving at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish. Joshua Schaffner is an apprentice at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish. Joshua Swaim is ministering at St. Jude Parish.

Lichon is a 2006 Notre Dame graduate from Naperville, Ill., who majored in Asian Studies and Chinese. Although his undergraduate studies were not directed toward theology, he was significantly involved in ministry in a number of youth and campus ministry programs.

“When it was my senior year, I realized that I really enjoyed this kind of thing.”

Lichon said. “I had always been something on the side. But it was always something I had enjoyed, and I realized that this is something that I should do a bigger priority in my life and try to make a job out of it.”

Schaffner is a 2006 graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas. A native of Dallas, he was also involved in campus ministry as an undergraduate student.

He said he is happy to be serving in a diocese that is familiar with Echo and where graduates of the program are now serving as full-time catechetical ministry professionals.

“It makes me proud to be a part of this program,” Schaffner said. “[and] to go and be a part of various meetings and ministries around the archdiocese, and [learn that] people already know about the Echo program and the graduates of it that are already making an impact in dioceses, not only here, but [also] around the nation.”

A native of Fort Wayne, Ind., Swaim graduated from Notre Dame last spring, where he majored in theology and philosophy.

Four of the five people in the archdiocese who are either Echo graduates or currently apprentices are men.

Swaim sees this and the presence of other young men in the program in other places around the country as a good thing for the Church in the United States that, over the past few decades, has seen the number of lay women ministers far outnumber their male counterparts.

“There’s been a good group of young men that are in the Echo program,” Swaim said, “and so that’s also making for a more diverse community of leaders in the Church.”

“and I think the young leadership, as well as the leadership by young men especially, are going to invite the youth to be more active, but also to bring people our own age back into the Church.”†
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