Pope warns diplomats that conflicts threaten global stability

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Addressing diplomats from around the world, Pope Benedict XVI warned that numerous armed conflicts and social disorders have left global stability in a fragile situation.

In Iraq, the pope said on Jan. 7, the latest attack on Christian Churches reflects a continuing climate of terrorism and violence in the country and illustrates the need for constitutional reform to safeguard the rights of minorities.

On nuclear weapons, he urged the international community to undertake a joint effort to prevent terrorists from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

The pope also condemned “continually perpetrated attacks” against human life in areas ranging from the death penalty to biotechnology, and criticized efforts to weaken the traditional family and the institution of marriage.

The world’s problems illustrate that real solutions must be “solidly anchored in natural law, given by the Creator,” the pope said.

“This is another reason why God cannot ever be excluded from the horizon of man or of history. God’s name is a name of justice; it represents an urgent appeal for peace,” he said.

The pope delivered the annual talk, sometimes called his “state of the world” address, to representatives of the 176 states that have diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

The papal speech was not merely a litany of global troubles. It cited positive economic and social developments in Latin America, hailed the dismantling of North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, and noted progress in intercultural dialogue and, more particularly, in the Church’s own dialogue with Muslims.

However, the pope said a rapid overview of the world shows that “the security and stability of the world are still fragile.”

That is clearly the case in Iraq, he said, where reconciliation is urgently needed.

“At present, terrorist attacks, threats and violence continue, especially against the Christian community, and the news which arrived yesterday confirms our concern,” he said.

Church officials said on Jan. 6 that bombs had damaged four churches.
three convents in Baghdad and Mosul in Iraq.

I continued from page 1

Pope Benedict XVI meets with Vatican-accredited diplomats on Jan. 7 at the Vatican. In his annual address to diplomats, the pope said that security and stability in the world was "fragile" and urged the international community to work to prevent nuclear weapons from getting into the hands of terrorists.

The pope began remarks on Africa by expressing his "deep anguish" at the ongoing cycle of hunger and death in Darfur, a western region of Sudan where hundreds of thousands have perished, and he said he hoped a new aid effort there could bring some relief. He urged an end to military operations in Somalia to allow the delivery of humanitarian supplies, and said he was worried about the abrupt outbreak of ethnic violence in Kenya.

In Europe, he said a definitive status for Kosovo needs to be determined in a way that respects the rights of all the inhabitants and avoids a recurrence of the "spector of violence" in the Balkans. "Addressing the danger of nuclear

Faith

continued from page 1

stated. He said religious freedom is still not fully respected in many parts of the world.

The pope closed his talk with a reflection on peace, which he said must involve various areas of human development: food, water and energy resources, access to health services, and even the monitoring of climate change.

In confronting these serious problems, diminishing the violence "is not possible on the negative, he said, telling them, "Diplomacy is, in a certain sense, the art of hope.""

Official Appointment

Rev. C. Ryan McCarthy, currently completing graduate studies in Rome, to succeed Rev. Brian, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Annapolis, Md., for a week of January.

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three provinces—need generous aid from the international community to make "a global commitment on security" that can deal in particular with new threats from terrorism.

"A joint effort on the part of states to implement all the obligations undertaken to prevent terrorism from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction would undoubtedly strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation regime and make it more effective," he said.

The pope also encouraged the reduction of conventional weapons and cluster bombs, considered a particular threat to civilians.

In a passage that hinted at a potential theme for his planned U.N. visit in April, the pope noted that 60 years ago the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrined human dignity.

"In every continent, the Catholic Church strives to ensure that human rights are not only proclaimed but put into practice," he said.

"The Church willingly undertakes this service to the true dignity of human persons, created in the image of God. And on behalf of these considerations, I cannot but deplore once again the continual attacks perpetrated on every continent against human dignity," he said.

In bioethics, new discoveries or technological progress should not require people to choose between science and morality—"rather, they oblige us to a moral use of science," he said.

He said he rejoiced at the recent U.N. support for a moratorium on the death penalty and added: "I earnestly hope that this initiative will lead to public debate on the sacred character of human life."

Echoing a number of speeches to political leaders who were often more committed to the positive, he said, telling them, "Diplomacy is, in a certain sense, the art of hope.""

In Asia, the pope appealed to governments and political leaders of whatever kind that should defend this fundamental institution, the basic cell of society," he said.

"We are members of a brotherhood in engaging the "immeasurable sufferings" caused by continuing civil strife. He offered a prayer for a "season of dialogue" and respect for human rights in Myanmar.

St. Louis Church in Batesville, her home parish."

He did not mention China in his speech. Last year he wrote a lengthy letter to Chinese Catholics promoting human rights in Myanmar.

"Almost eight years ago, his brother, Brian, died of a heart attack in the Indianapolis. "He was checked by an emergency medical technician and declared dead in the ambulance. He was 16 when he died."

"The following day, my sister had a prayer service at her house with our priest. In the midst of this prayer service, Jimmy, who was 13 at the time, announced that the boy had just touched him and the other hockey team—to make<br />meaningful progress should not require people to choose between science and morality—"rather, they oblige us to a moral use of science," he said.

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Advent faith-sharing program unites cultures at St. Monica Parish

By Mary Ann Wyand

Eighty St. Monica parishioners in Indianapolis are starting the New Year as friends thanks to a bilingual faith-sharing program during Advent.

The 2,880-household, multicultural parish offers six Masses each weekend—including a Misa en Español—so many parishioners never meet the Catholics who attend other liturgies.

In December 2006, only 10 Latino and Anglo parishioners participated in St. Monica’s first bilingual Advent faith-sharing group organized by the Hispanic ministry committee.

In December 2007, 80 Hispanic, African-American and Anglo parishioners overcame the Spanish and English language barrier by sharing their stories through pictures, creating Advent decorations and—from most of all—making new friends, with help from translators.

“I feel like these weeks of coming together is a real proof that love is the common language that bonds, that unites, us all together as one, which was clearly manifested in today’s gathering,” Benedictine Sister Anna Marie Megel, pastoral associate for Hispanic ministry, explained after the Felic Navidad celebration and posada on Dec. 23 at the Indianapolis West Deanery parish.

St. Monica parishioner Gerardo Dimas of Indianapolis helped translate during faith-sharing conversations and explained the posada tradition cherished by Latinos.

“In Mexico, we do this [posada] from the 16th to the 24th of December,” Dimas told the group. “We do songs and some people are asking for shelter, representing Mary and Joseph, and other groups are inside the houses. Mary and Joseph [dressed in costumes] keep going to houses … until they are received.

“While we are waiting for the posada, we pray the rosary at the Nativity set and then we share food, the food of the season,” he said. “Usually, in Mexico, that is tamales, cookies and hot chocolate. … It is very beautiful, and also we share the piñata. It is to represent the evil so it has to be destroyed. The only ones who might destroy the evil is the children because they are innocent. … After they destroy the evil, good comes from it. That is represented by the candies in the piñata.”

Last year, Dimas said, the outdoor posada was “a little cold” so they celebrated it inside at the parish this year.

“Maybe our posada won’t be close to what we do in Mexico,” he said, “but we are trying a little bit different. I hope you can enjoy it and feel the meaning of Christmas as Christians.”

Many Hispanic Catholics are not able to return to their homeland for Christmas, Dimas said, so the parish celebration of Feliz Navidad is very important to them as they pass these holiday traditions on to their children and grandchildren.

Father Scott Noble, associate pastor of St. Monica Parish, said about one-fifth of the parish membership is Hispanic, and he is happy to see members of the Anglo and Hispanic communities become friends.

“If you go … to 80 people in one year just shows that there is a big desire for parishioners to know one another that don’t actually have a lot of interaction throughout the course of their daily journeys,” Father Noble said. “So especially during Advent, when we focus our preparation for the coming of Christ, it’s good for us to come together every Sunday to share friendship, to share faith, to share traditions and to share stories from their families. A lot of people have very diverse backgrounds within this small [faith-sharing] community. It’s amazing how people react to one another now that they know each other. I look forward to this program continuing.”

In addition to the posada presented by Hispanic children, members of the faith-sharing group exchanged inexpensive gifts at the suggestion of a Latino participant.

Parishioner Pinkie Evans, who is African-American, knitted a prayer shawl for Maria Pimental-Gannon, who is Hispanic, and prayed for unity in diversity.

“We’re all on a journey,” Evans said. “Everyone has different life stories. There are all these people that go to the same church I do, and I don’t know them. My whole purpose in coming was to meet new people, to make new friends, in our big parish.”

The Advent faith-sharing program is “all about Jesus and new life and friendship and new ways of being Church,” committee member Dede Swinehart said. “It’s our parish together.”

Committee member Lynee Brennan said Hispanics who cannot go home for Christmas are “happy they can welcome the Christ Child in their own way here.”

Parishioner Marcos Payamas, a native of the Dominican Republic who became a U.S. citizen last March, has been a St. Monica parishioner for seven years.

“It’s good for us because we are wanting to celebrate Jesus Christ coming … because that is hope,” he said. “When you have God in your heart, you have everything. … When you have Jesus Christ, you don’t have differences. It is the same people, the same blood, the same Jesus Christ, the same God.”

St. Padre Pio’s body to be exhumed, briefly displayed for veneration

SAN GIOVANNI ROTTONDO, Italy (CNS) — The body of St. Padre Pio will be exhumed, studied and displayed for public veneration from mid-April to late September, said the archbishop who oversees the shrine where the saint is buried.

Archbishop Domenico D’Ambrosio, papal delegate for the shrine in San Giovanni Rottondo, announced on Jan. 6 that members of the Capuchin friars of Padre Pio’s community had decided it was important to verify the condition of the saint’s body and find a way to ensure its preservation.

“With my personal conviction and that of the conferees of St. Pio that we have an obligation to give the generations that will follow after the possibility of venerating and preserving in the best possible way the mortal remains of St. Pio,” Archbishop D’Ambrosio said.

“A further motive for rejoicing,” he said, stems from the fact that the Capuchins, with Vatican approval, “have authorized the exposition and public veneration of the saint’s body for several months beginning in mid-April.”

In addition to marking the 40th anniversary of Padre Pio’s death on Sept. 23, 1968, the public veneration of his remains also will coincide with the 90th anniversary of the day on which he was believed to have received the stigmata, bloody wounds recalling the crucifixion wounds of Jesus.

According to the Capuchins, Padre Pio received the stigmata on Sept. 20, 1918. Immediately after Archbishop D’Ambrosio announced the exhumation of Padre Pio’s body, Italian newspapers and television stations began reporting that members of his family were opposed to the move, and were threatening to sue the archbishop and the Capuchins.

But a spokesman for the family denied the rumors and Archbishop D’Ambrosio told Avvenire, the Italian Catholic daily newspaper, that he had been in contact with the family and they raised no objections.

Padre Pio was born Francesco Forgione on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, Italy. As a Capuchin, he was a famed confessor and preacher, and had a widespread reputation as one whose prayers were effective in procuring miraculous cures. Pope John Paul II beatified him in 1999 and canonized him in 2002.
Our multiple vocations

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his first issue of the calendar year traditionally includes our annual “Religious Vocations Supplement.” We hope you’ll read on pages 13-22 what we believe are stories about some inspirational men and women who have accepted God’s call to the religious life.

We decided, though, to use this editorial space to remind you readers that all of us have vocations. We all have calls from God to use the unique gifts and talents he has given us to accomplish his will for us.

Furthermore, we receive more than one call. We receive many calls as we proceed through life, and we must never stop trying to discern what God is calling us to do—now. God’s call might be different when we are in our 40s, 50s or 60s than when we were in our 20s.

It’s true that our primary vocation may not change. The first thing we should discern is whether or not God is calling us to be a priest, brother or religious sister, or to married life, or to the single life in the world. But that’s only the first step.

If a man believes that he has a vocation to be a priest, is it as a diocesan priest or as a member of a religious order? If a young woman believes that she has a vocation to be a sister or a nun (one who belongs to a religious order with solemn vows), is it to a contemplative order or an apostolic order?

All religious men and women are also called to specific ministries within their primary vocation, depending upon the talents God has given them. It seems obvious, but some priests are called to be pastors, others teachers, others missionaries, others chaplains, others administrators—all in addition to the priestly duties of celebrating the Mass and the sacraments. Bishops or Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, lay their hands on the heads of Fathers Thomas Kovatch, Rick Nagel and Randall Summers at their ordination Mass on June 2, 2007, in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

Father Eric Johnson, from left, vocations director; Father Stephen Giannini, vicar of clergy and permanent deacons; Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, lay their hands on the heads of Fathers Thomas Kovatch, Rick Nagel and Randall Summers at their ordination Mass on June 2, 2007, in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

He was born in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter’s shop until he was 30. He then became an itinerant preacher. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He never went to college. He was only 33 when the public turned against him. He was turned over to his enemies. He was deserted by his friends. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executors gambled for his clothing. He was laid in a borrowed grave.

Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is still the central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned have not affected the life of man on this Earth as much as that one solitary life.

We are now in a new year full of potential. The rereading of the poem “One Solitary Life” summed up above, more than any other holiday tradition in our family, captures the significance of both Christ’s birth and our own personal obligation in the year ahead to choose life in the fullest sense of the Gospel.

The message of “One Solitary Life” is anything but one of detachment or distance. To the contrary, we are reminded how a single life impacted the universe.

Three contemporary lives have helped me better understand the meaning behind the poem.

Consider, if you will, the lives of Tim Tebow, the young college football sensation who won the Heisman Trophy, the life of August Rush in the movie of the same name, and a brief encounter I will tell you about that I had recently with my aging father.

The common denominator in all three lives and in “One Solitary Life” is this: the power of love.

Tim Tebow was loved by a mother who refused to accept a prenatal medical diagnosis urging that he be aborted. In the movie August Rush, a musical prodigy in an orphanage empowers the music of love and the love beneath it to reunite with his parents who—like so many moderns—place career and individual aspiration over family.

There is a sense of “think what we would have missed” if either the young Tebow or Rush had been taken from us.

Until a recent visit with my own elderly father, however, I doubt I grasped the meaning of “One Solitary Life.” An afternoon with my father, you see, can be embarrassing. Since my mother’s passing a few years ago, his clothing has taken on a very definite tie-dyed look.

His diet is irregular and often part of his wardrobe as well. And perhaps most distressingly, in public places he no longer seems capable of modulating his voice.

Unlike his more recent and private son, my father thinks nothing of strolling loudly through public libraries and offices distributing Christmas greetings in 28 different languages.

And so it was with sadness more than discomfort that I thought: How does my father’s solitary life matter?

After all, unlike Tebow’s headlining of the sports pages or movie reviews of August Rush, there is little sense that on the day God calls Dad home, his contemporaries will stop to take notice.

But suddenly there it was, the true meaning of this poetic holiday classic: It is not that each solitary life must prove to the world’s satisfaction that it has great value—it is simply that it does.

That my father’s solitary life, or our own for that matter, may never eclipse the achievements of quarterbacks or admirals or presidents says nothing about the love that it can convey and the difference it can make in the lives of others—yes, sometimes even in 28 different languages.

(Douglas W. Kmiec, a professor at the Pepperdine University School of Law, writes for Catholic News Service.)

Faith & Precedent/Douglas W. Kmiec

A lesson for the new year from my father’s solitary life

He was born in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter’s shop until he was 30. He then became an itinerant preacher. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He never went to college. He was only 33 when the public turned against him. He was turned over to his enemies. He was deserted by his friends. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executors gambled for his clothing. He was laid in a borrowed grave. Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is still the central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned have not affected the life of man on this Earth as much as that one solitary life. We are now in a new year full of potential. The rereading of the poem “One Solitary Life” summed up above, more than any other holiday tradition in our family, captures the significance of both Christ’s birth and our own personal obligation in the year ahead to choose life in the fullest sense of the Gospel.

The message of “One Solitary Life” is anything but one of detachment or distance. To the contrary, we are reminded how a single life impacted the universe. Three contemporary lives have helped me better understand the meaning behind the poem. Consider, if you will, the lives of Tim Tebow, the young college football sensation who won the Heisman Trophy, the life of August Rush in the movie of the same name, and a brief encounter I will tell you about that I had recently with my aging father.

The common denominator in all three lives and in “One Solitary Life” is this: the power of love. Tim Tebow was loved by a mother who refused to accept a prenatal medical diagnosis urging that he be aborted.

In the movie August Rush, a musical prodigy in an orphanage empowers the music of love and the love beneath it to reunite with his parents who—like so many moderns—place career and individual aspiration over family. There is a sense of “think what we would have missed” if either the young Tebow or Rush had been taken from us.

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Unlike his more recent and private son, my father thinks nothing of strolling loudly through public libraries and offices distributing Christmas greetings in 28 different languages. And so it was with sadness more than discomfort that I thought: How does my father’s solitary life matter? After all, unlike Tebow’s headlining of the sports pages or movie reviews of August Rush, there is little sense that on the day God calls Dad home, his contemporaries will stop to take notice. But suddenly there it was, the true meaning of this poetic holiday classic: It is not that each solitary life must prove to the world’s satisfaction that it has great value—it is simply that it does.

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A
s I write this column, my mind turns to a new year and what we
might expect.

When I became a bishop 21 years ago, I would not have predicted the
crises and war would become the stuff of everyday
news reports. I wouldn’t have thought of war as something our world would have to
live with day in and day out.

Conflict and tension in the Mideast had been a specter for years, but the peculiar
circumstances which have escalated to perturbing warfare today were not always
so evident. Presently, the situation is

further complicated because our country has
become polarized about how to move toward a reasonable transition out of the
war in Iraq—and when to do so.

Terrorism is a reality of our day, and it is
a crime against humanity. Our nation has
a moral right and even a grave obligation
to defend the common good against
terrorism and to protect its people.

Bolstering homeland security, denying
funding to terrorist organizations and a
wide range of non-military measures must
be pursued. Military action may be
required. It seems clear, nonetheless, that for
the good of all concerned it is time to find
a resolution to the enduring situation in
Iraq.

¿Qué podemos hacer como particulares?

El conflicto y las tensiones han sido
importantes para los Medios
Oriente durante años, pero las
circunstancias peculiares que se han
agravado hasta llegar a las perturbadoras
hostilidades de hoy en día, no siempre
fueron tan evidentes. En estos momentos la
situación se ha complicado aun más porque nuestro país se ha
polarizado respecto a como avanzar hacia una transición
razonable para salir de la guerra en Irak y
cuando hacerlo.

El terrorismo es una realidad de nuestra
época y constituye un crimen contra la
humanidad. Nuestro país tiene el derecho
moral, e incluso la solemne obligación, de
defender el bienestar común contra el
terrorismo y de proteger a su pueblo.

Se debe ir en el paso del refuerzo de la
seguridad territorial, denegar los medios
para financiar organizaciones terroristas, así
como una amplia gama de medidas no
militares. Quizás las acciones militares sean
necesarias. Sin embargo, resulta evidente
que por el bien de todos los involucrados, se
ha llegado el momento de encontrar una
solución a la situación que persiste en Irak.

¿Qué podemos hacer como particulares?

Nuestra mayor comprensión comienza con
la oración por la paz y por aquellos que son

La oración constante es el secreto para la paz y la justicia en nuestro

Mentrás escribo esta columna, mi
pensamiento se vuela en un año nuevo y en aquellos que
esperamos.

Cuando me convertí en obispo hace 21 años, nunca habría imaginado que el
horror de la guerra se convirtiera en el tema cotidiano de las noticias. Nunca me
habría imaginado que la guerra sería algo con lo cual nuestro mundo debería vivir día
después de día.

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El terrorismo es una realidad de nuestra
época y constituye un crimen contra la
humanidad. Nuestro país tiene el derecho
moral, e incluso la solemne obligación, de
defender el bienestar común contra el
terrorismo y de proteger a su pueblo.

Se debe ir en el paso del refuerzo de la
seguridad territorial, denegar los medios
para financiar organizaciones terroristas, así
como una amplia gama de medidas no
militares. Quizás las acciones militares sean
necesarias. Sin embargo, resulta evidente
que por el bien de todos los involucrados, ha
llegado el momento de encontrar una
solución a la situación que persiste en Irak.

¿Qué podemos hacer como particulares?

Nuestra mayor comprensión comienza con
la oración por la paz y por aquellos que son

responsables como líderes de las naciones. Obviamente debemos continuar con nuestro
apoyo piadoso y moral para aquellos que
sufren las consecuencias de la guerra y lo hacen
por nuestra seguridad, arriesgando enormemente sus propias vidas.

Con la llegada del nuevo milenio
cristiano tenemos grandes esperanzas para la paz y sin embargo, nos encontramos en
el escavo de profunda inestabilidad en nuestro
mundo.

En cierta ocasión durante una entrevista
con un reportero religioso, se me preguntó
qué le pasaría a las personas de fe si, a
la presencia de la intensidad de sus oraciones, la
paz no viniera el día siguiente aconteciendo,
de todos modos.

¿Significaría eso que la oración es
infructuosa? ¿Acaso significaría que Dios
derrotadamente no acude al llamado de las
oraciones de intercesión? Estas preguntas son muy importantes y apuntan a una
teoría mucho más complicada de la que
podemos abordar en un periódico o en esta
columna.

La sabiduría de Dios es infinita, la
nuestra no. Y en su sabiduría, Dios
nunca nos ha quitado el don del libre albedrío
que nos entregó a los humanos cuando
nos creó.

Por lo tanto, incluso las decisiones más
cruciales sobre la guerra y la paz, tales como las que enfrentan los líderes
mundo hoy en día, dependen del libre
albedrío humano.

Dios no elimina el libre albedrío
humano, aunque sí tiene una elección en
perjuicio del mundo, aunque la decisión
parece reducirse al hecho de que una de las
partes del conflicto necesita “salir airosa
de una situación.”

¿Acaso el hecho de que Dios no elimina
el libre albedrío humano, aunque tomemos una mala decisión, significa que nuestras
oraciones de intercesión son infructuosas?

No. A pesar de que no podemos obligar a Dios a eliminar el libre albedrío humano,
debemos rezar. Debemos arrodillarnos
y reconocer que existe un poder superior al
domínio de Dios.

La oración es una forma importante para
que nosotros y todo el mundo recuerde que
existe un Dios y no se trata de terroristas o
líderes que buscan la paz.

La oración nos recuerda que somos una
familia humana y es posible amar y estar
en paz unos con otros porque existe un Dios
que nos ama primero que nada y es el
autor de la vida humana.

En la oración recordamos que, aunque
algunas personas no crean en Dios como nosotros, Él nos ama a todos por igual,
porque somos seres humanos.

La oración constante, día tras día en
momentos de crisis y en momentos de paz,
se acomoda a un número creciente de nosotros
evolver el mandato del amor que Dios nos
entregó. Es allí donde se escinde el
secreto para la paz y la justicia en nuestro
mundo.

Asimismo, rezamos para que el espíritu
de Dios impulse a los líderes mundiales a
buscar soluciones pacíficas a las
crisis humanas. Esperamos que la oración
impulse a los líderes mundiales a abrirse a

La orientación del Espíritu Santo porque
sabemos que Dios no forzará la aceptación de los
dones libres del Espíritu Santo. Dios obra milagros, pero al final, no
destruye el don de la libertad humana.

Aunque pareciera que nuestras
oraciones para que termine la guerra no son
escuchadas, no dejaremos de rezar.

Continuaremos rezando con sostenimiento y
profunda fe porque la oración es nuestra
forma de recordar quiénes somos y la
verdadera razón de la vida y la muerte.

Recemos para que cada vez más de nosotros reciba libremente el misterio del
amor de Dios y por consiguiente, nos
mimémos a vivir y a amar a todos.

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

¿Tiene una intención que desea
incluir en la lista de oración del
Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

| Archdiocese of Indianapolis
List of Oración del Arzobispo Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

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

La oración constante es el secreto para la paz y la justicia en nuestro

Consistent prayer is the secret to peace and justice in our world

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SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD
BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.
SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD
BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR
January 12
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 224-43 Main St., Oldenburg. “Fully Alive! Fully Franciscan!”, 9-11:30 a.m. Franciscan Sister Diane Januson, presenter, $20 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com

January 14
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “How Addiction Affects the Family”, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com

January 15-17
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 224 Main St., Oldenburg. “A Lenten Retreat”, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com

January 19-21

January 22

January 24
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Silent Prayer Day”, Benedictine Father Eugene Renzel, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZefer@sanmein.edu

January 26

January 27

January 30

February 3

February 5

February 9

February 12

February 18

February 19

February 21
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 224 Main St., Oldenburg. Lenten Lecture Series, “Bread Blessed”, Franciscan Sister Olga Wittendik, presenter, 2-3:30 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m. $10 per session. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com

February 25

February 27

March 4

March 7

March 9
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 224 Main St., Oldenburg. Lenten Lecture Series, “Lovers Leap! Twists and Turns of Married Life”, Father Clem Davis and St. Monica Parish Small Church Community Team, presenter registration deadline Feb. 15, 2:30 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictineminist@gmail.com

March 14
St. Christopher Church, 5301 W. 56th St., Indianapolis. “How Addiction Affects the Family”, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com

March 19
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Reﬂecting on the Life and Message of Jeremiah the Prophet”, Benedictine Father Eugene Renzel, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZefer@sanmein.edu

March 26

March 29-March 31
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Lenten Retreat “Reﬂecting on the Life and Message of Jeremiah the Prophet”, Benedictine Father Eugene Renzel, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZefer@sanmein.edu

April 2

April 3

April 6

April 7

April 10

April 14

April 17

April 20

April 21

April 24

April 25

April 26

April 27

April 28

April 29

April 30
Prayer helps artist create portrait of Bishop Bruté

By Mary Ann Wyand

Colorful brush strokes bring the dramatic oil painting of the Servant of God Simon Bruté to life. Artist Kara Halla prayed to God and Mary as well as to Bishop Simon Guillaume Gabriel Bruté de Rémur—who was named the first bishop of the newly created Diocese of Vincennes in 1834—while she painted the French priest’s portrait in December.

With divine help, Halla said, she was able to complete the painting of the bishop—which is 3 feet wide and 4 feet high—in about 18 hours by using a preliminary sketch that she drew in June as a guide.

“I read a little bit about his life and prayed to Bishop Bruté to help me to make him [look] the way he should be,” she said. “I had all my holy cards and my crucifix with me, and I prayed the rosary.”

In her painting, Bishop Bruté is shown holding a crucifix with the Old Cathedral in Vincennes at the top left. A horse symbolizes his missionary travels during the early years of the diocese. At the time, the diocese included all of Indiana and the eastern portion of Illinois.

The painting was commissioned by Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office for Life, a lay order dedicated to pro-life ministry in the archdiocese, and archdiocesan Birthline volunteers also helped sponsor Halla’s artistic endeavor.

Sister Diane gave the painting to Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on Dec. 19 at the Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center. It will be hung in the parlor at the Cathedral Parish rectory.

“In gratitude for his 15 years as Archbishop of Indianapolis and 20 years as a bishop, The Missionary Servants of the Gospel of Life, a lay order dedicated to pro-life ministry in the archdiocese, and archdiocesan Birthline volunteers also helped sponsor Halla’s artistic endeavor.”

Sister Diane Halla, a very talented local artist, to paint a portrait of Bishop Bruté for Archbishop Buechlein.

“Through Bishop Bruté’s life of extraordinary sacrifice, charity and missionary zeal, the Church in Indiana began its historical roots,” Sister Diane said.

“Bishop Bruté’s life of humble and generous service continues to serve as a model for all of us today.”

Archbishop Buechlein expressed his appreciation for the unique and historical gift in a “thank you” note to Sister Diane.

“The portrait of Bishop Bruté is splendid,” the archbishop wrote, offering his congratulations to the artist.

“Through Bishop Bruté’s life and prayers I was able to see his relics,” Halla said. “To be able to experience that was amazing.”

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Looking ahead: What American Catholics can expect in 2008

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Those who put stock in the expression “as idle a brain is the devil’s workshop” can take heart that American Catholics won’t give the devil much to work with in a very busy 2008.

Four archdioceses—Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Louisville, Ky.—will be celebrating their 200th anniversaries with special events slated throughout the year. The archdioceses were erected from the Philadelphia Archdiocese in 1808.

New York Catholics will also have major Church events on April 18-20 when Pope Benedict XVI visits their city as part of his six-day visit to the United States. During the pope’s New York stay, he will address the U.N. General Assembly; participate in an ecumenical event to celebrate Mass for priests, deacons and religious; meet children with disabilities; and join a youth rally.

He is also scheduled to visit Ground Zero for a ceremony with responders to the 2001 terrorist attack and victims’ family members. The pope will conclude his visit by celebrating Mass at Yankee Stadium.

Prior to the New York visit, the pope will spend two busy days in Washington for a White House reception, a visit with the U.S. bishops, a Mass at Nationals Stadium, a meeting with Catholic educators and an interreligious gathering.

Another foreign trip the pope has scheduled for 2008 is for World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, on July 15-20. By scheduled for 2008 is for World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, on July 15-20. By

The document is part of a series that has been issued before every presidential election for more than 30 years. “Faithful Citizenship” outlines for voters in 2008 seven key themes: right to life and dignity of the human person; call to family, community and participation; rights and responsibilities; option for the poor and vulnerable; dignity of work and the rights of workers; solidarity; and caring for God’s creation.

The document has received a mixed reaction. Some praised it for its clarity and emphasis on the needs of the poor while others said it was not strong enough in condemning Catholic politicians who take positions contrary to the Church on abortion, embryonic stem-cell research and other life issues.

U.S. Catholics will be taking a close look not only at where candidates stand on those issues, but also at how politicians look not only at where candidates stand on those issues, but also at how politicians

Opposition to the death penalty made news at the end of 2007, with New Jersey’s abolition of capital punishment signed into law by Gov. Jon Corzine on Dec. 17 and a vote by the U.N. General Assembly the next day calling for a moratorium on executions.

The topic continued to be on the front burner at the beginning of 2008 as the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in a Kentucky death penalty case on Jan. 7. The ruling on this case will determine the constitutionality of lethal injection and whether the most commonly used combination of drugs for lethal injections constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. Until the court rules, more than a dozen states have stopped executions.

Congress failed to pass immigration reform legislation in 2007 and will likely steer clear of the issue during an election year, but that does not mean Church officials will keep quiet about it. At year-end, bishops in Oklahoma, Maryland and California called for action on immigration, stressing the human rights of undocumented people and their need for an opportunity to legalze their status. Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony wrote letters to all the presidential candidates in December urging them to “show leadership on the issue of immigration” and to replace verbal attacks on immigrants with a focus on policy solutions.

In November, the need for embryonic stem-cell research was called into question by studies showing that human skin cells can be reprogrammed to work as effectively as embryonic stem cells, whose use has long been opposed by the Church because it involves the destruction of human embryos.

The bishops will also continue to speak out against state legislatures seeking to legalize same-sex civil unions and endorse U.S. involvement in the war in Iraq, which they have already described as “unacceptable and unsustainable.”

Across the country, some dioceses will continue to be impacted by the Church sex abuse scandal as they make payments on multimillion-dollar settlements reached with abuse victims and modify the ministries they provide.

Judge Michael Metz, chairman of the National Review Board, said the Church’s response to the abuse crisis will be ongoing.

“Church efforts for prevention, healing and vigilance will be demanded for the rest of our days,” he said in a December statement coinciding with the group’s five-year report on the abuse crisis.

Italian cardinal says it’s logical to support moratorium on abortion

ROME (CNS)—Cardinal Camillo Ruini, papal vicar for Rome, said the vast majority of Italians who hailed the U.N. General Assembly’s support for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty should think about extending the moratorium to abortion.

“I think that after the happy result obtained regarding the death penalty, it might be logical to call attention to the theme of abortion,” the cardinal said in a Dec. 31 television interview.

Cardinal Ruini told the Canale 5 news program that the proposal for a moratorium on abortion, launched before Christmas by the Italian newspaper Il Foglio, was an opportunity to “stimulate, reawaken the consciences of all to help them recognize that a baby in its mother’s womb really is a human being,” and that abortion is the taking of a human life.

Abortion in Italy is legal, in most cases, until the 24th week of pregnancy. The cardinal said at the very least Italian politicians should consider reduc- ing the time abortion is legal, particularly because medical advances have made it possible for some fetuses delivered at 24 weeks to survive.

“It is truly inadmissible to proceed with an abortion when the fetus is at an age to survive on its own,” he said.

Italy led the campaign to convince the United Nations to support a universal moratorium on using the death penalty. The resolution was passed in early December.

The campaign’s success has led several pro-life Italian politicians to consider ways to demonstrate to the public, which overwhelmingly supports a total ban on capital punishment, that protecting human life includes protecting the unborn.
Pope Benedict XVI

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Pope Benedict XVI looks at his 2008 calendar, he’s no doubt recognizing that life doesn’t slow down after 80.

With three foreign trips, a world Synod of Bishops on the Bible, a jubilee year dedicated to St. Paul, an important dialogue with Muslims, and an encyclical and a new book in the works, 2008 is shaping up as perhaps the busiest year of his pontificate.

The pope will celebrate his 81st birthday in Washington on April 16, the day he scheduled his first foreign trip to the United States.

George W. Bush at the White House and with U.S. bishops at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. There’s bound to be a birthday cake somewhere along the way.

The April 15-20 trip to the United States and the United Nations will be the pope’s first journey outside Italy in 2008.

In Washington, the pope also is expected to say Mass in the Nationals’ baseball stadium and hold meetings with educators and interreligious leaders.

In New York, in addition to his U.N. visit, the pope’s tentative schedule includes a meeting with ecumenical representatives, Mass in St. Patrick’s Cathedral, an encounter with seminarians, a visit to Ground Zero and Mass in Yankee Stadium.

In late July, the pope will travel to Australia—by far the longest trip of his pontificate—to preside over World Youth Day celebrations. Sometime during the year, the pope is expected to visit Lourdes, France, to mark the 150th anniversary of Marian apparitions there.

Meanwhile, the pope also has made plans for several major trips inside Italy, beginning with the Ligurian seaports of Genoa and Savona in mid-May. In Savona, which hasn’t hosted a pope since 1815, the announcement of the pope’s visit was front-page news.

In mid-June, the pope will visit the southern Italian region of Puglia, and in early September will make a one-day stop on the island of Sardinia.

On June 28, Pope Benedict plans to inaugurate the “Year of St. Paul,” which will feature liturgies, conferences and ecumenical encounters in Rome and around the world. The pope wants modern Christians to draw inspiration from the Apostle’s missionary energy, and that’s a theme he’ll be talking about in coming months.

The Synod of Bishops runs Oct. 5-26 on the theme, “The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church.” The pope chose the topic of Scripture, and he is expected to follow the proceedings closely. The synod’s working document is due out earliest in the year.

The pope is himself working on at least one document, a new encyclical that addresses social issues. There’s no target date, but officials expect it during the first half of 2008.

And sources said the pope is continuing to work on another project dear to his heart: the second volume on the life of Jesus, following publication of his 2006 book “Of Good and Nazareth last spring.

Day to day in 2008, much of the pope’s time will be taken up by rounds of “ad limina” visits made by heads of dioceses, audiences with world leaders and speeches to ambassadors. He will welcome Mary Ann Glendon as the new ambassador of the United States, as well as new representatives from Israel and Iran.

In early January, the Jesuits are gathering to elect a new superior general. The pope will meet with delegates of the order and their new leader in February.

In ecumenical affairs, 2008 marks the 100th anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and the pope is expected to preside over a prayer service marking the centenary.

Muslim representatives are coming to the Vatican early in 2008 to lay the groundwork for a potentially important dialogue with the Vatican. The pope had invited a group of Muslim scholars to meet with him and with the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

Other Vatican agencies will be hosting important meetings during the year. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace has proposed a series of international conferences on social development issues, such as poverty, corruption, disarmament, prisons and the ethics of taxation.

Sometime early in the year, the Pontifical Commission “Ecclesia Dei” plans to issue a document clarifying questions that have arisen regarding the pope’s 2007 document relaxing restrictions on use of the traditional Latin Mass. Sources said the pope personally is interested in removing ambiguities, and will sign off on the new document.

In April, Pope Benedict’s pontificate enters its fourth year. He gradually has replaced top aides, and that’s bound to continue. Six Roman Curia heads are already at the normal retirement age of 75 or will reach it in 2008.


Pope, marking new year, reiterates support for traditional family

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Ushering in the new year, Pope Benedict XVI said attempts to weaken the traditional family inevitably undermine social harmony and world peace.

“The natural family, founded on marriage between a man and a woman, is the cradle of life and love and the first and indispensable teacher of peace,” the pope said in his World Peace Day message on the theme “The Foundations of Peace.”

In political agreements. Above all, he said, “merely the result of human efforts or will reach it in 2008.

The family thus constitutes the primary agency of peace, and attempts to deny or restrict family rights “threaten the very foundations of peace,” he said.

Later, at a noon blessing, the pope returned to the theme of the family and what he called its “strict connection” to social peace. He quoted from his World Peace Day message on the theme “The Human Family, a Community of Peace.”

“Whoever, even unknowingly, circumvents the institution of the family undermines peace in the entire world, national and international, since he weakens what is in effect the primary agency of peace,” he said.

The pope was not specific about efforts to weaken the family, but in the past he has spoken out against gay marriage and laws that give full legal recognition to cohabiting couples.

Thousands of people filled St. Peter’s Basilica for the New Year’s liturgy. Among the crowd was a group of children wearing cardboard crowns in memory of the three kings who traveled to Bethlehem.

Prayers for peace were offered in five languages; in Arabic, the prayer asked that the world’s populations would “overcome suggestions of violence and war and commit all their energy and resources to building a stable peace.”

In his homily, the pope said people should recognize that true peace is not merely the result of human efforts or political agreements. Above all, he said, peace is a divine gift that people need to continually implore.

The pope also noted that Jan. 1 marked the feast of Mary, Mother of God. He said Mary can serve as a guide to modern Christians who have trouble believing that Jesus is both God and man.

“At the ‘school’ of Mary, we can accept with the heart that which the eyes and the mind cannot perceive by themselves,” he said.

The mystery of the Incarnation and Mary’s divine maternity should be welcomed in faith “even without understanding everything,” he said.

In his talk to pilgrims after the Mass, the pope expressed the hope for a “serene and productive” 2008 and extended New Year’s greetings in seven languages.

“May the peace proclaimed by the angels at Bethlehem take ever deeper root in men’s hearts and inspire the whole human family to live in harmony, justice and fraternal solidarity,” he said in English. †
Soccer gifts are a big hit with Haitian children

By Lisa Wilson-Cotteller

CARMEL—After soccer season ends, many parents wonder what to do with the used soccer jerseys and soccer balls.

Haiti Ministry volunteers at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish decided to collect them for soccer-crazy Haitian children who are too poor to afford new equipment. Dozens of donated balls and shirts were collected in December and will be delivered in February.

The venture began humbly, said Haiti Ministry chair and project organizer Laza Moehling.

“Last December [2006], I led a group of nine to Haiti and a volunteer took a small bag of jerseys down to give to children waiting for medical care,” she said. “They were just ecstatic to have them, and very thankful. It was really something that touched all of our hearts.”

The project began with a simple question: What do we have to give?

Moehling volunteered Kathy Lazzara posed that question to her three sons—all soccer players—before she left on the mission trip. Their old jerseys came to mind.

She “was a way to allow children to participate in the mission, even though they wouldn’t be with me,” she said. “It turned out to be a very special thing.”

And, her collection sites were set up for more soccer donations.

“The response that I have received from friends, family and the Church has been wonderful,” Lazzara said. “Everyone has been so willing to be able to give this equipment that they have just laying around, and they are happy to know that it’s going to other children who will cherish it.”

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Karen Jung is serving there in February, and will take the donated equipment with her.

“Things we take for granted here—all of the activities and teams that we have as far as the fact that we can access clean water and that we have lodging—you gain a greater appreciation for after visiting there,” she said.

“Soccer jerseys are a big hit.”

The children are happy to receive even the smallest gifts, Jung said, adding that, “They are just so appreciative of anything they get. Even if it’s something material or just spending time with them kicking around a soccer ball, and they’re so open with people, so willing to share their culture and invite you into their world.”

“The gift of a soccer ball or a jersey is something so simple, but it’s something the children always remember,” Jung said.

More than 50 soccer balls and at least 12 bags of soccer jerseys have been donated by individuals, groups and athletic teams. 

Recently the Raleigh Rotary Club and St. Theodore Guerin High School in Noblesville “The support for this has been overwhelming,” Moehling said. “Soccer is big down there, and we’ve seen kids get old plastic bags and tie them up to make a ball to play. It’s just a way of connecting with the people down there. We try very hard to connect with them on a more personal level, and this offers an opportunity for us to have a greater connection with them.”

“It’s human nature that you want to help. Jung said, “You want to play, you want to allow them to play and you want to make friendships. Whether you can speak in words is irrelevant, when you find a common activity—in this case it’s soccer—you have a friend and a connection.”

“I think it’s an outstanding way for us to build a connection . . . through soccer, a bond that could not have been built otherwise.”

Southern Catholic leaders called helpful in ending segregation

WASHINGTON (CNS)—More than 50 years ago, Catholics were a distinct minority in the South’s religious landscape. Still, there were some Catholic leaders who were among the first to help another minority—african-Americans—overcome the burdens of Jim Crow and society in the name of Christ,” Moore said. Their efforts, she added, were a combination of high-profile visibility and subterfuge.

When Hazel Carter, a black woman and the only Catholic in her Baptist family, started attending Sacred Heart Parish in Danville—the only Catholic church in a 35-mile radius, Moore estimated—she took on the custom of sitting in the back of the congregation.

The sisters were immediately recognizable—helped in part by a habit redesign that made the pages of Time magazine.

Churches demand access to help victims in India’s troubled Kandhamal region

BHUBANESWAR, India (CNS)—Churches in India have demanded access to the troubled Kandhamal region to distribute relief and visit the families affected by the recent violence in eastern Orissa state.

We demand that credible national organizations such as the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India and [the] National Council of Churches be permitted to send their team of people to meet with the affected people to express solidarity and provide relief materials for all people, irrespective of caste and creed,” said the Churches in an appeal.

Representatives of various denominations read the appeal at a Jan. 7 news conference at the Sacred Heart Church in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa state. The Kandhamal district is about 210 miles southwest of Bhubaneswar.

“The hapless [Christian] victims of violence had to take shelter in forests for many days without proper food and sanitation. As of now, few have turned either to relief camps or to their relatives, but the situation is far from satisfactory” the Churches said in the statement.

They said “that those in [refugee] camps are receiving an inadequate supply of quality food and clothing, and the living conditions are less than hygienic.”

At the press conference, Archbishop Raphael Cheenath of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar said, “I was cautioned [by the government] not to visit my people.”

He said “I was told Cardinal Telegraph Toppo of Ranchi, president of the bishops’ conference, travelled to Bhubaneswar in early January to meet those hiding in the jungles, but Archbishop Cheenath told Catholic News Service on Jan. 7 that the government advised him against taking the cardinal to the region.”

“I feel sad that I am helpless to reach out to my people in a situation like this,” the archbishop added.

Meanwhile, he said, “Any government in its senses could have anticipated this orgy of violence.”

But after they participated en masse in a civil rights demonstration, Moore said, they were told by Bishop John Russell of Richmond that all clergy and religious were forbidden from taking part in public demonstrations.

The sisters could help the civil rights movement from their convent, he added.

That they did. At the convent, they hosted teach-ins by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, one of the many civil rights groups springing up in the civil rights era in the South. Committee members stayed in a convent when participating in a civil rights march in Danville, the last capital of the Confederate States of America. Later, Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, also gave a teach-in at the convent and spent the night there prior to a march.

Moore said the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. stopped by the convent late one night to thank the sisters for all their efforts.

“The story cannot be verified; only the mother superior was awake at the time,” she said. “I wish I could have gone with the sisters to meet with Rev. King. Moore said.”

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Southern Catholic leaders called helpful in ending segregation

WASHINGTON (CNS)—More than 50 years ago, Catholics were a distinct minority in the South’s religious landscape. Still, there were some Catholic leaders who were among the first to help another minority—african-Americans—overcome the burdens of Jim Crow and society in the name of Christ,” Moore said. Their efforts, she added, were a combination of high-profile visibility and subterfuge.

When Hazel Carter, a black woman and the only Catholic in her Baptist family, started attending Sacred Heart Parish in Danville—the only Catholic church in a 35-mile radius, Moore estimated—she took on the custom of sitting in the back of the congregation.

The sisters were immediately recognizable—helped in part by a habit redesign that made the pages of Time magazine.

Churches demand access to help victims in India’s troubled Kandhamal region

BHUBANESWAR, India (CNS)—Churches in India have demanded access to the troubled Kandhamal region to distribute relief and visit the families affected by the recent violence in eastern Orissa state.

We demand that credible national organizations such as the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India and [the] National Council of Churches be permitted to send their team of people to meet with the affected people to express solidarity and provide relief materials for all people, irrespective of caste and creed,” said the Churches in an appeal.

Representatives of various denominations read the appeal at a Jan. 7 news conference at the Sacred Heart Church in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa state. The Kandhamal district is about 210 miles southwest of Bhubaneswar.

“The hapless [Christian] victims of violence had to take shelter in forests for many days without proper food and sanitation. As of now, few have turned either to relief camps or to their relatives, but the situation is far from satisfactory” the Churches said in the statement.

They said “that those in [refugee] camps are receiving an inadequate supply of quality food and clothing, and the living conditions are less than hygienic.”

At the press conference, Archbishop Raphael Cheenath of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar said, “I was cautioned [by the government] not to visit my people.”

He said “I was told Cardinal Telegraph Toppo of Ranchi, president of the bishops’ conference, travelled to Bhubaneswar in early January to meet those hiding in the jungles, but Archbishop Cheenath told Catholic News Service on Jan. 7 that the government advised him against taking the cardinal to the region.”

“I feel sad that I am helpless to reach out to my people in a situation like this,” the archbishop added.

Meanwhile, he said, “Any government in its senses could have anticipated this orgy of violence.”

But after they participated en masse in a civil rights demonstration, Moore said, they were told by Bishop John Russell of Richmond that all clergy and religious were forbidden from taking part in public demonstrations.

The sisters could help the civil rights movement from their convent, he added.

That they did. At the convent, they hosted teach-ins by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, one of the many civil rights groups springing up in the civil rights era in the South. Committee members stayed in a convent when participating in a civil rights march in Danville, the last capital of the Confederate States of America. Later, Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, also gave a teach-in at the convent and spent the night there prior to a march.

Moore said the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. stopped by the convent late one night to thank the sisters for all their efforts.

“The story cannot be verified; only the mother superior was awake at the time,” she said. “I wish I could have gone with the sisters to meet with Rev. King. Moore said.”

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**Kenyan bishop says his appeals for aid have been met quickly**

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS)—A Kenyan bishop said his appeals for humanitarian assistance for the Diocese of Eldoret have been met quickly following the violence sparked by the country’s disputed Dec. 27 general elections.

Bishop Cornelius Arap Korir of Eldoret told Catholic News Service things gradually were taking shape as agencies such as the United Nations, the Kenyan government, the Red Cross and other Churches were joining Catholic relief agencies in sending financial and material assistance.

“Just as I speak to you, the people are being fed; those sick are being treated and make-shift [are] being constructed. This for me is very pleasing and hope-giving,” he added.

Bishop Korir said on Jan. 7 that “shops now have opened, [and] banks are operational as closed roads are now open.”

Catholic relief agencies were among the first to respond to the humanitarian crisis.

Ken MacLean, country representative for Catholic Relief Services, said his Nairobi-based office had moved three of its emergency response officers to the worst-hit area of Eldoret, about 1.25 miles northwest of the Kenyan capital.

CRS is the U.S. bishops’ international development and relief agency.

MacLean told CNS on Jan. 7 that CRS has committed $10,000 to the crisis through the Diocese of Eldoret and S5,000 through the Diocese of Bongoma in western Kenya.

The local affiliates of Caritas Internationalis, the international Catholic umbrella aid agency, and the English and Welsh bishops’ Catholic Agency for Overseas Development have made similar financial commitments, said MacLean.

He said aid agencies were challenged to quickly make available food, medicine, mosquito nets and tents for the heavy concentration of needy people.

Tens of thousands of people were scattered throughout Eldoret and an estimated 42,000 were outside the city, MacLean said. The people are camped in schools, church compounds and police stations in the heat, he said, adding that Sacred Heart Cathedral is housing an estimated 8,000 people.

Janet Mangera, national executive secretary of Caritas Kenya, told CNS that her office has been mandated to coordinate humanitarian and emergency activities on behalf of the Kenya Episcopal Conference.

“We have already sent out appeals [to] our partners, and we expect positive responses,” she said.

Human rights organizations said more than 300 people have died since the Dec. 27 presidential election in which President Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner.

Thousands of ethnic Kikuyus, who have dominated Kenya’s political and economic life since independence from Britain in 1963, have been forced to flee rampaging gangs.

Bikabi is a Kikuyu.†

**Christians, Muslims pray at memorial services for Benazir Bhutto**

LAHORE, Pakistan (CNS)—Christians and Muslims joined in memorial services for Benazir Bhutto in churches around the country as they called for an independent inquiry into her assassination.

More than 300 people—including nuns, human rights activists and political leaders from Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party—gathered at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Lahore for a special Mass on Jan. 6, reported UCA News, an Asian Church news agency. They placed garlands, bouquets and candles near large portraits of Bhutto in front of the altar and at the entrance of the cathedral.

Banners read: “We salute Benazir Bhutto for struggling for the restoration of minorities’ rights and prosperity for the poor.” “We were a hope for minorities” and “We demand immediate arrest of the killers of Bhutto.”

The All Pakistan Minority Alliance, a Christian political party, had called for a National Prayer Day on Jan. 6 to honor Bhutto, 54, who was killed in Rawalpindi, northwest of Nairobi, the Kenyan capital.

Archbishop Lawrence Saldanha of Lahore, president of the Pakistan Catholic Bishops’ Conference, and Father Andrew Nisari, vicar general of the Lahore Archdiocese, concelebrated the memorial Mass at the cathedral.

Similar gatherings took place in other churches, where Catholic and Protestant leaders as well as political workers—as both Christians and Muslims—prayed together.

Father Nisari said the killing of a woman of Bhutto’s caliber was the worst example of social illiteracy and ignorance. He urged all present to pray for change in the minds of terrorists.

Jehangeer Badar, general secretary of the Pakistan People’s Party, said: “We vow, in this holy assembly, to continue the mission of our courageous leader, who respected the Christian community and considered them equal citizens.”

He reiterated his party’s demand for a U.N. commission to investigate the murder.

Pakistan’s Interior Ministry first reported that Bhutto died from a bullet or shrapnel wound, but later announced the cause of death was a skull fracture suffered when she hit her head on a sunroof latch inside her vehicle after shots were fired or an explosive device was detonated.

A visiting team of British detectives from Scotland Yard in London is helping Pakistani police with the investigation.

The Associated Press reported on Jan. 8 that Interior Ministry spokesman Javed Iqbal Cheema said that President Pervez Musharraf had said British detectives “will totally free to conduct their probe, and no one will interfere in their affairs.”

At a news conference in Islamabad on Jan. 3, Musharraf expressed his dissatisfaction with the investigation.

What are the Sacraments?

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and Saint Meinrad School of Theology are offering a ten week presenting an overview of sacramental theology and the development of the sacramental life of the church.

This course is one of the required classes for the Ecclesial Lay Ministry program (ELM). All interested persons are invited to participate, subject to class size limitation.

Instructor: Father Rick Ginther

Where: Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis
When: Thursdays from 9:00–12:00 a.m.
January 24 — April 10, 2008
Cost: $25,500 subsidy for parish lay ministers may be available through the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Contact: Suzanne Yakimchick
Director of Lay Ministry Formation
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The Criterion Friday, January 11, 2008

Page 11
How well do people in the pews sing? It depends where you sit.

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholics in the pews sing fairly well, in the judgment of music ministers at U.S. parishes.

The Catholics in the pews themselves, though, hold a less favorable view of their own singing ability.

In an online survey conducted in 2007 by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 72 percent of music ministers said that the singing in the assembly was either “very strong” or “somewhat strong.”

By contrast, only 39 percent of those not involved in music ministry believed that congregational singing in their parish was strong.

Despite the difference of opinion, both groups participating in the survey said the singing in their own parish is better than the general state of congregational singing in the United States.

Among musicians, 39 percent of music ministers gave a positive rating to U.S. Catholic singing overall, and only 27 percent of nonmusicians did the same. In both categories of respondents, 53 percent rated congregational singing in the U.S. as “somewhat weak.”

About 1,400 people took part in the survey, with musicians making up about three-fourths of all respondents, according to J. Michael McMahon, the musicians’ association president. The poll was taken in the fall, and results were announced on Dec. 21.

Asked by Catholic News Service in a Jan. 2 telephone interview which side he tends to believe more, McMahon replied, “Both.”

An organist and music director—McMahon plays at St. Agnes Parish in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Va.—he said, “When I sit on the [organ] bench sometimes I think, ‘Wow, they’re singing really well today.’ ”

But as someone who “sat in the pews most Sundays” for about five years while taking his current organist job, McMahon said, “It takes only a quarter of the people to sensing the strength of the singing.

One reason suggested by McMahon was that music ministers can often hear the full sound of the assembly, while congregants can hear only themselves and those ministers can often hear the full sound of the assembly, singing so that it sounds like a pretty good choir.”

One reason that McMahon offered was church acoustics. The use of sound-absorbing materials deadens the sound and prevents people in the pews from sensing the strength of the singing.

“One of the things I learned” from the survey, McMahon told CNS, “was to pay more attention to what it’s like to be in the congregation, ... and I think that’s really hard to do.”

This was the third online poll conducted by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians in as many years.

While the number of respondents was lower this time than in the first two years, McMahon said, “we’ve had such a good response to it, it will probably become an annual thing.”

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Serving the poorest of the poor overseas.
By Fr. Eric Johnson
Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Priestly and Religious Vocations

"As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.'" (Mt 4:18-19).

At this invitation, the two brothers immediately dropped their nets and followed him. Thus began a relationship in which these first disciples came to know Jesus. They learned from his teaching, witnessed his miracles, participated in his ministry and came to recognize him as the Messiah, the Son of the living God. This relationship led the disciples through the experience of Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection, and reached its culmination when he commissioned them to go forth and make disciples of all nations.

At the center of this relationship was the promise of that first invitation. Just as Christ had called the disciples that day on the shore, so they were to call others to Christ. They were to become fishers of a different sort, casting their nets for people, drawing all people to Christ.

The call to fish for people continues to lie at the center of the Church’s mission. It stands behind the Church’s proclamation of the Gospel, gives substance to its prayer, informs its teaching, and shapes its life and ministry.

The following pages are filled with stories of men and women who have embraced the call to priesthood, the permanent diaconate and the religious life. They, too, are stories of a relationship, stories of learning from Christ, witnessing his miracles, participating in his ministry and coming to recognize him as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. Though each story is different, all are united in the desire and commitment to draw others to the love of Christ.

To some degree, the purpose of this supplement is to celebrate the unique ways in which the vocational call to fish for people is lived out by priests, permanent deacons, and religious brothers and sisters. But these stories also afford us an opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the gift their response to God’s call is to us as the Church. They provide us with an occasion to remember with gratitude those men and women who helped us to listen, to see Christ’s miracles, to share our gifts in ministry, to acknowledge God’s presence and to encounter his saving love.

It is important that we do this. Through their celebration of the sacraments, countless prayers, preaching, counseling, teaching, works of charity, ministry, community, presence, and joyful witness to faith and hope, priests, religious brothers and sisters and permanent deacons draw us closer to the love of God offered to us in Christ Jesus. They cast their nets, and we and the Church are richer for it.

Perhaps most of all, priest, deacons and religious remind us of our own call to be fishers of people. In the ways we seek to love others, forgive, nourish, challenge, support and witness to our faith with joy, all of us are called to draw others into a relationship with God.

Such a call begins with an invitation, and I have come to believe that part of this call involves personally inviting men and women to consider embracing a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. We need their witness. Such an invitation nourishes their gifts, and affirms the importance of these gifts to the life of the Church so that all of us can more faithfully cast our nets.
Community, service mark seminarian’s vocation

By Sean Gallagher

Whether they are near or far away, seminarian Chris Wadelton loves to give of himself to help people in need. His family has known that for a long time through his regular phone calls to check in with them, and the one-on-one time he makes for dozens of nieces and nephews. The children of Pedro Atzala orphanage in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, have also experienced Wadelton’s love firsthand in his mission trips there to improve their living conditions and show them Christ’s love.

This heartfelt family, faith and serving others was instilled in Wadelton in a dramatic way in 1974 when he was only 8. That was when his father Tom died suddenly at the age of 47 of a heart attack.

“My father’s death definitely brought our family together,” said Wadelton, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis. “Everybody kind of pulled together after that.”

He also learned that his parish, which was across the street from his home, was there for him, too.

“Kind of like the family being a very secure place, the Church probably was too,” Wadelton said. “It was comfortable to go to school and to church over there. We were well-known in the parish. It was just part of the family.”

His mother also helped him learn the connection between faith and service. As a child, Wadelton spent many years serving on the parish’s peace and justice committee. For 11 years, she was the communications director for the Indiana Catholic Conference, which serves as an advocate for the Church and Church-related causes in state government.

Volunteering in the Church to build a better community has been important to Wadelton. “There are missionary opportunities right here in central and southern Indiana,” he said.

Seminarian Chris Wadelton holds a boy who is a resident of the Pedro Atzala orphanage in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, during a mission trip he took in the summer of 2006.

By John Shaughnessy

The story of a young woman who overcame hatred, fear and her own doubts before she finally found peace in her life is not one that Benedictine Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner tells too often.

Still, the story of her own life helps Sister Jennifer when she counsels college students who come to her seeking advice and comfort from their stresses and challenges.

Sister Jennifer knows the necessity of making every day in life count after she was nearly killed in a traffic accident.

She personally knows the difficulty of trying to tell your parents what you really want to do with your life—even when you believe it will cause them deep heartache.

She knows the struggles of searching for a purpose in the world and wanting to be closer to God—longings that she believes define many young people today.

“The students who come to me are searching for God and they are really hungry for ‘community,’” says Sister Jennifer, a chaplain and the director of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations and Formation at the University of Indianapolis. “For the most part, I see students who have a desire to change the world and be part of a community that serves God and one another.”

That desire has marked her own life ever since she almost died when she was in college.

“I knew it was home for me”

“In the spring of my junior year, I was in a horrible traffic accident and I was almost killed,” she recalls. “I was in the hospital for five weeks. I was in a wheelchair and on crutches for a couple of months so I had a lot of time to think. I realized then we only have today to live. I was 21 at that point, but I realized I needed to live my life today as God is calling me to do.”

Before the accident, she was struggling to deepen her relationship with God. She grew up in South Africa, the daughter of a Presbyterian minister who stood and spoke against that country’s system of apartheid which discriminated against non-whites. Her father’s stance led him to be hated by many people, which created difficulty for the family. They eventually moved to Idaho when she was 15.

When she entered Boise State University, she started attending different churches, searching for a spiritual home. Her college roommate, a Catholic, invited her to Mass. At first, she declined, but she finally decided to give it a try.

“When I knelt down, I knew it was home for me,” she recalls. “It was just a feeling within me of a sense of comfort.”

Still, she dreaded the discomfort of telling her parents that she wanted to become a Catholic. She had always admired her parents for standing against apartheid even though that resulted in hatred toward them. Besides, she loved them and didn’t want to disappoint them.

Yet the accident convinced her to follow her desire to join the Church.

“When I told my parents, it was very, very hard for them,” she says. “They initially tried to talk me out of it, but I knew it was what I needed to do. I joined the Catholic Church on my birthday in 1986—March 21.”

Later that year, she attended Christmas services with her parents at a Presbyterian church. Following the service, she told her mother she was going to a Catholic church for midnight Mass. Her mother asked to come with her. The close bond with her parents had endured. It was tested again three years later when she joined a community of Benedictine sisters in Idaho.

Finding a home for others

“I felt I was definitely called to the Benedictines, that prayer and community and seeking God in every part of my life is what brings me joy and lets me serve others,” Sister Jennifer says. “At first, my parents felt they were losing me. Then they joked that they didn’t lose a daughter, they gained so much!”

Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner, left, helps sort boxes with University of Indianapolis student Michelle Stephens during a community service project at Gleaners Food Bank in Indianapolis. Submitted photo

Ann Wadelton for a long time. “Once you see the poverty and the hurting that’s going on, it just kind of comes naturally,” she said. “I always have been involved in that kind of thing.”

It was that love of community that first led Chris Wadelton to consider a call to the priesthood when he was a student at Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) and was active in its close-knit Newman Center community.

Wadelton majored in electrical engineering technology and graduated in 1990. For the next 12 years, he worked in research and for companies related to the computer industry and through it all, faith and service was a constant. As exciting as the computer industry was during its rapid growth in the 1990s, Ann Wadelton recalled that her son wasn’t satisfied.

“Chris had interesting jobs and traveled a lot,” Ann Wadelton said. “But he always said, ‘It’s just a job.’”

This perspective on his career had an impact on Wadelton’s prayer life.

“My prayer was generally, ‘Give me clarity on what direction you want my life to go in,’” he said.

Wadelton eventually worked through exercises common in the business world that help people determine what career would best suit their talents and desires.

“The priesthood was always there on the short list,” he said.

In 2002, Wadelton went on a vocations retreat sponsored by the Archdiocese of Portland, Ore., where he lived at the time.

At first, he was anxious because he thought he would soon have to make a decision that would change his life forever. He learned, however, that the choice to enter the seminary wasn’t as looming as he had once thought.

“I kept waiting for some huge decision where I would have to make this lifetime commitment,” he said, “and what it’s actually been has been a bunch of little bitty decisions here and there, opening little doors.”

“Eventually, I was in the seminary. That retreat would have been one of those small doors.”

A few years into his priestly formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Wadelton felt that he was being called to the religious life as a Franciscan.

Wadelton had come to admire many Franciscans, including his uncle, Franciscan Father Jeremy Harrington.

Wadelton entered the novitiate of a Franciscan province based in California that does mission work in Central America and ministers to Hispanic Catholics in the United States. Two forms of ministry that attracted him.

But after nearly two years with the Franciscans, Wadelton knew that God was calling him to serve where he grew up. And he also realized that mission work was always right around the corner.

“There are missionary opportunities right here in central and southern Indiana,” he said.

Wadelton’s ordination as a diocesan priest is about a year and a half away. He said remaining close to his nieces and nephews will continue to be important to him once his priestly ministry begins.

“Hopefully, I will model for people good family relations in that they’ll see that my family is very important to me,” Wadelton said.

Wadelton is also trying to shape the consciences of his nieces and nephews. At his suggestion, his family put aside their...
By Sr. Mary Grace Melcher, O.C.D.

TERRE HAUTE—The first years of our foundation resembled the journey with Jesus up Mount Tabor. The climb was steep as we labored to build our monastery, answering a call to be alone with the Lord in prayer and sacrifice at the heart of his Church.

Yet, at the same time, we were always in his company—for Jesus, who summoned us up the mountain, climbed it at our side as he once climbed with Peter, James and John.

With the marvelous help of his Providence and the loving assistance of many friends whom he inspired to support us, the goal was reached at last.

Peter’s dream of erecting three tents on the mountain to honor Jesus and his prophets was realized on the hill of St. Joseph Monastery in Terre Haute on Oct. 7, 1947, the feast of the Holy Rosary.

We rejoiced in all that God had done for us.

A colonial style house served as our temporary monastery while our new monastery was slowly built in those first 25 years of our foundation. The cornerstone laid on Feb. 19, 1970, read, “Carmel of St. Joseph—the Gift of Friends” and “Lord, it is good for us to be here!”

The monastery seems to be frozen at the moment of the Apostles’ first passing glimpse into the Lord’s glory on Mount Tabor, but behind the walls, as the years marched on, our community has been called forward into other stages of the journey. We have tried to follow the Lord faithfully into the dusty life of the plain, into our unique encounters with the full range of his human experience.

With all our brothers and sisters in the mystery of the Church, we have found one reality to be constant. On the mountain, as in the valley, in light as in the darkness, on Tabor as on Calvary, the reality is a person: Jesus.

Our cloistered life is rooted in silence, solitude, generous work, reliance on God alone, unceasing prayer for the needs of the Church, a spirit of joy, sisterly love and cooperation in community as we continue to build our foundation in love from shared experiences of the passing years together.

(For more information about the Discalced Carmelite nuns of the Monastery of St. Joseph in Terre Haute, log on to www.heartsawake.org.)
The beauty of seeking God

By Sean Gallagher

ST. MEINRAD—Surrounded by the stillness and beauty that one often finds in the wooded hills of southern Indiana, Benedictine Brother Martin Erspamer works quietly in an art studio just down the hill from Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

He seeks to make beautiful works of art that will lead others closer to God. Brother Martin has created stained-glass windows for churches across the country, using methods and tools that have largely remained the same as those used in the Middle Ages. He has also sketched thousands of drawings in a largely medieval style that have made their way into missal art and worship aids used by millions of Catholic Americans.

How he came to join Saint Meinrad

Brother Martin was attracted to the life of the church and other monastic buildings, promoting beauty in its liturgical music, the beauty of the people, the beauty of the liturgy, the beauty of the music. It just really, really spoke to me,” said Brother Martin, who acknowledged that he is still a work in progress.

Archabbey is, in a sense, itself a work of art. Brother Martin joined the Marist order in 1971 when he was 17. At the time, he was drawn to artistic work and liked the fact that the Marists had brothers who dedicated themselves to art.

For periods, he studied art in Boston, worked as an artist in St. Louis and helped extend his order into India, where he also took in some of the fine points of traditional Indian art styles.

In the mid-1980s, Brother Martin found himself back in St. Louis. As he was trying to establish himself as an artist for the general public, a studio turned down a group of his works for a showing because the art was “too religious.”

“I got really angry and brought it home and put it all in a dumpster,” he said. “At that point, I decided to start working exclusively for the Church.”

He soon began to work with Emil Frei Associates, the St. Louis-based stained-glass studio that, decades earlier, had created the stained-glass windows in Saint Meinrad’s Archabbey Church.

Brother Martin also continued to create pottery and liturgical furniture.

Renovations

In the mid-1990s, the monks of Saint Meinrad were planning the renovation of their church and Brother Martin, still a member of the Maristians, agreed to create a triptych—or three panels of paintings—about the life of their holy patron.

He came to Saint Meinrad for meetings on a nearly monthly basis in 1995. It was during that time that he started to consider that God might be calling him to live out more fully a contemplative and monastic impulse that had kept re-emerging within him for years.

Although the attractive power of beauty

Although Saint Meinrad Archabbey stands in a long Benedictine tradition of promoting beauty in its liturgical music, churches and other monastic buildings, Brother Martin was attracted to the community by seeing beauty there in a much wider scope.

“It was the beauty of this place that attracted me,” he said. “And not just the physical surroundings—in terms of nature—but the beauty of the people, the beauty of the liturgy, the beauty of the music. It just really, really spoke to me.”

Benedictine Father Harry Hagan, Saint Meinrad’s novice and junior master, is Brother Martin’s superior. He also worked with him in 1995 on the renovation.

Father Harry thinks that beauty is an important way that people can be drawn closer to God.

“We ... know God by beauty, by things that are beautiful and that take us really beyond this present moment and give us some sense of that which transcends,” said Father Harry.

“Things that are beautiful are extremely important.”

For Brother Martin, the actual process of creating something that is beautiful can draw him close to God. “When you create something, I think it’s probably as close as a human being can get to being like God in some way,” he said.

Attracting others to God

Brother Martin sees his work as an artist as his apostolate, as his way of proclaiming the Gospel and attracting others to God. But he sees himself doing this evangelizing in an indirect way.

“It’s not me going out and preaching the Word,” he said. “It’s the work of my hands that’s doing it, and a lot of times, perhaps, in softer and more subtle ways than in actually using words.”

The work of Brother Martin’s hands may be evangelizing on a broader scale in the months and years to come. A collection of photos of his artwork has recently been published by Oregon Catholic Press.

Titled The Work of Our Hands: The Art of Martin Erspamer, O.S.B., the book includes photos of art that Brother Martin has created for books and other publications, stained-glass windows, liturgical furniture and pottery.

“I hope people enjoy looking at them,” Brother Martin said. “I hope they find them inspiring. I tend to look at my own artwork as once they leave me, they live or die on their own. I wish them well.

“But I guess my attitude toward art is that the best ones are still yet to come.”

(For more information about The Work of Our Hands or to purchase a copy, contact local Catholic bookstores, call Saint Meinrad’s Scholar Shop at 812-357-6571 or log on to www.saintmeinrad.edu/shop.)

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Benedictine Brother Martin Erspamer works on a stained-glass window at an art studio near Saint Meinrad Archabbey last October. He joined the monastery after spending 30 years in the Marist order and many years working as a religious artist.
Building up one body of Christ
Father Todd Goodson works to bring people together

By Sean Gallagher

SEYMOUR—Father Todd Goodson likes spending time with the people he serves.

On a recent Sunday morning in December, he welcomed newcomers to St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour—where he serves as pastor—by presiding over the Rite of Acceptance, a ritual in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

From there, he celebrated Mass in the packed church.

After Mass, Father Goodson chatted with parishioners as they browsed through Catholic books, videos and gift items that were on sale in the parish life center.

Later, he went to Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown, where he also serves as pastor, to celebrate Mass.

In the afternoon, Father Goodson was back at St. Ambrose to celebrate Mass in Spanish for the parish’s Hispanic community.

He said he enjoys “just seeing Christ in the people you serve. ‘There are some tremendously powerful ministerial experiences that you have in just being with your folks,’” Father Goodson said.

Just as he values being with his parishioners, Father Goodson is trying to persuade them to spend more time in prayer.

With parishioners as they browsed, he tried to draw in more and more of them to help him with some of the things that he has to do. He wants everybody involved.

One person that Father Goodson has gotten involved is Ana De Gante, who helps coordinate the Spanish-language liturgies at St. Ambrose Parish.

De Gante appreciates how her pastor is working to bring people together in the parish.

“He wants to have just one community, all together,” she said. “He works so hard for that. I think that’s one of his biggest dreams.”

Father Goodson saw the beginnings of that dream at a bilingual Mass on Ash Wednesday in 2007.

Laverne Carr, a lifelong member of St. Ambrose Parish who helps plan its liturgies, was in attendance.

“He came to tears on Ash Wednesday,” she said. “It was so touching to see him so touched. He brings us all together.”

Although he works to bring people together in all sorts of situations, Father Goodson said the unity is expressed at its best at Mass.

“This is where you see the power of the Eucharist to unite people who wouldn’t, perhaps, ordinarily be united,” he said. “You really see the grace of the Eucharist in moving us—pushing us, really—to come together as a community.”

Prayer anchors busy Seymour Deanery priest

By Sean Gallagher

SEYMOUR—Being the pastor of two parishes with members that come from a variety of cultural backgrounds takes a lot of time and effort.

Still, Father Todd Goodson, pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown, always makes time for prayer.

“I find it’s important to me to anchor myself in some sort of prayerful routine,” Father Goodson said. “I don’t necessarily have any sort of powerful experiences during that prayer time. But because I’m anchored in that, I see God in day-to-day events.”

Once, he had a free hour prior to a parish council meeting. Should he get some notes together for the meeting or sit down and seemingly do nothing in prayer? Father Goodson chose the latter.

“That parish council meeting was probably the most fruitful and productive parish council meeting we had had in the two years that I had been there,” he said.

All of the one-on-one ministry that Father Goodson does to nurture greater unity in his parishes can be challenging.

But it is prayer that gives him the strength to see his dream through to the end.

“Jesus never said that our way was going to perhaps, ordinarily be united,” he said. “You really see the grace of the Eucharist in moving us—pushing us, really—to come together as a community.”

Father Goodson preaches a homily during a Dec. 2 Mass at Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown. He is pastor of St. Ambrose Parish and Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown.
Little Sister of the Poor enjoys serving God and the elderly

By Mary Ann Wyand

Beatrice Spurgeon’s face lit up with joy as she showed family pictures to Sister Margaret Banar on Dec. 22 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

The 94-year-old resident moved to the St. Augustine Home in 2003 and enjoys visiting with the Little Sisters of the Poor, who are now part of her extended family.

The residents, happy family atmosphere and daily Mass at the home are among the reasons that Sister Margaret loves her ministry as a member of the international women’s religious order dedicated to serving the elderly poor.

“We care for the elderly is a very rewarding ministry,” Sister Margaret said on Dec. 22. “We prepare the residents for heaven. We prepare them to meet their Maker, and it’s a great grace to do that.”

She said the residents, staff members, volunteers, benefactors, friends and relatives of the residents all contribute to the family atmosphere at the home.

“We are extremely grateful to all the people who support our ministry,” Sister Margaret said. “Without their support—whether it’s financial, volunteer or prayers—we could not fulfill our mission as Little Sisters of the Poor. We’re a team and we all need one another. That’s how our foundress, Blessed Jeanne Jugan, wanted it to be—a family where the sisters are dedicated to caring for the elderly.”

Sister Margaret completed coursework as a licensed practical nurse, earned a bachelor’s degree in special studies in health care, and is licensed as a nursing home administrator in Indiana and several other states. She serves as the superior of the Little Sisters home in Pittsburgh for nine years during the 1990s.

In Indianapolis, she helps Sister Judith Meredith, the superior, with a variety of responsibilities at the 40-year-old home located at 2345 W. 86th St. The sisters currently serve 95 elderly residents who live in apartments, assisted living or the infirmary at the immaculately kept home.

Sister Margaret’s current ministry title is “begging sister” or “collections sister,” which encompasses public relations and development efforts as well as weekday outings in the sisters’ “begging van.”

She visits Indianapolis-area distribution warehouses, businesses and trucking companies to ask them to support the Little Sisters’ ministry by donating food, money and other supplies. She also discusses the sisters’ mission during Mass appeals at parishes in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and Diocese of Lafayette.

“My job is to keep in touch with people in the business world … to make our ministry known and make it possible for them to be part of our mission,” she said. “As I tell people during church collections, not everybody can be a Little Sister of the Poor, but by their donations or volunteer work they can be a part of the team—God’s team—with the Little Sisters.”

The congregation was founded by Blessed Jeanne Jugan in 1839 in St. Servan, France. The Little Sisters operate 32 homes in the U.S. and 205 homes in 31 countries throughout the world.

Every few years, each sister receives a new assignment, she said, and she has gotten to know sisters and residents at many homes throughout the U.S.

“That’s a grace,” she said of each ministry assignment, “because it’s abandonment to God’s Providence.”

When Hurricane Katrina decimated the Gulf Coast in August 2005, the mother provincial in Baltimore asked her and several sisters from other homes to help care for displaced residents of their New Orleans home who were evacuated to safe quarters at a nursing home in Baton Rouge, La., hours before the storm. She served in Louisiana for about three weeks.

The Little Sisters have a great devotion to God, Jesus, Mary and St. Joseph, who are their patron saint and special intercessor for prayer requests. They trust that God will provide for the residents’ needs each day, and do not have endowments.

“A native of Detroit and the second-oldest of five siblings, Sister Margaret felt called to religious life while attending the former Rosary High School and volunteering at the Little Sisters’ home there. She enjoyed helping the elderly.

“I think the roots of my vocation came early in my life,” Sister Margaret said. “I always had a calling and my love for God were probably the seeds of my vocation.”

Sister Margaret’s current ministry title is “begging sister” or “collections sister,” which encompasses public relations and development efforts as well as weekday outings in the sisters’ “begging van.”

“Caring for the elderly is a very rewarding ministry. We prepare the residents for heaven.”

—Sr. Margaret Banar, L.S.P.

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WADELTON

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usual gift exchange this past Christmas.

The family’s children and teenagers instead bought gifts for the children living at Pedro Atala. Wadelton and five family members then went to Honduras to deliver the gifts and do mission work.

His niece, Kellie Moore, a member of St. Pius X Parish and a senior at North Central High School, traveled to Honduras with him in 2006. She sees a connection between his love for her and her family and the love he gives to those in need in Central America.

When our family, he’ll call and go out to dinner with one cousin and then the next cousin. He makes a lot of personal time for every single person,” she said. “And then when he’s down there, it’s the same thing. He’s always the first to help. He’s just really generous with everything he has, and in reaching out and taking the extra step.

Father Todd Goodson had a chance to observe Wadelton last summer when the seminarian ministered at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown, where Father Goodson serves as pastor.

He thinks Wadelton will be a “tremendous asset” to the archdiocese in large part because of the way that he approaches caring for people, an approach whose roots go back to the early years of his childhood.

“Chris wants to minister to people, and the more the better,” Father Goodson said. “It’s a part of who he is. Chris likes to bring the Gospel to people. He likes to be the presence of Christ to people.”

Seminarian Chris Wadelton collects used computer parts on Oct. 20 in a parking lot at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, where he is a member. Wadelton helped organize the collection of the parts, which were to be transported to Honduras and used in a vocational school.

After graduating from high school, she joined the Little Sisters of the Poor more than 30 years ago and was a postulant then a novice for two years before deciding to discern her future. She worked at a hospital for a year as a licensed practical nurse before rejoining the order.

“I still had that feeling of a calling from God,” she recalled, “and I didn’t want to spend a lot of time out of the convent if that’s where God wanted me to be.”

A religious vocation is a calling from God, she said, but it is difficult for people to hear God’s call today because of the noise and distractions of popular culture.

“To hear this call from God, you have to listen,” Sister Margaret said. “I think today it’s very difficult for young or middle-aged persons to listen to God because of the noise and constant interruptions in our culture and the fear of being in silence. I think many people today turn the radio or TV on the minute they get home—even if it’s just for company—rather than really thinking about, ‘Is God calling me to a dedicated life?’

“I think faith is an atmosphere you have to live in every day,” she said. “It’s trusting in God. I think one of the most deterrents to a person really thinking about, ‘Is God calling me to a dedicated life?’ is that he approaches caring for people, an approach whose roots go back to the early years of his childhood.

“Chris wants to minister to people, and the more the better.” Father Goodson said. “It’s a part of who he is. Chris likes to bring the Gospel to people. He likes to be the presence of Christ to people.”

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Caring for the elderly is a very rewarding ministry. We prepare the residents for heaven.

—Sr. Margaret Banar, L.S.P.
Sisters of Providence use biomass energy to care for the Earth

By Dave Cox
Special to The Criterion

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS—St. Theodora Guérin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, came from France to a dense forest in western Indiana in 1840 to sow the seeds of hope; that a new congregation of women religious could flourish, hope that the congregation could spread among pioneers.

In 1854, in a letter to her daughters, she wrote, “Well, my dear, ours is a preparation for a generation that will succeed us, and eminent good will be done this way by you. You may not live to see it, but you will have sown the seed, and your Sisters will come to reap what you have sown.”

Many generations of St. Theodora’s daughters have continued to sow the seeds of hope through a variety of ministries in devotion to works of love, mercy and justice in service among God’s people.

Indeed, one of the congregation’s most prominent ministries today grew from roots literally planted by St. Theodora.

She and other founding sisters worked hard to maintain their version of organic gardens, which provided food for a variety of eco-justice and ministries in devotion to works of love, mercy and justice. Perhaps St. Theodora never envisioned the seeds of her lifestyle would be transformed into biodiesel fuel where it can be spread among pioneers, hope that children could be educated.

Biomass energy uses all plant and plant-derived materials, such as wood and other forest residues, grasses, hays and straw from crops, and some construction debris. The emission standards are the same as for natural gas.

The system will provide heat and electrical energy at significant, long-term cost savings.

Perhaps St. Theodora never envisioned this opportunity for the sisters of this generation, but for Sister Dana, it is a natural progression from her lifestyle before she joined the congregation.

“Recycling is something we have always done in my family. I have always had some consciousness of doing things in an eco-friendly way,” she said.

Her awareness increased as she progressed through her initial formation with the Sisters of Providence.

“The eco-justice piece comes up a lot during formation. It’s part of the postulancy training. It is part of our study of spirituality during our canonical novitiate,” she said.

Here are examples of how the Sisters of Providence biomass project is reusing materials:

• Pellets, crates and other materials from manufacturing companies are being gathered to use for fuel.

• Chopped wood from a grocery store fire is being saved. Larger pieces are being planed and used for lumber. Smaller pieces are being used for cabs-

• Nety and trim at two new hermitage houses being built with mostly recycled materials.

• Mineral oil is being accepted from manufacturers, cleaned and resold to them to reduce dumping the oil into the ground.

• Cooking oil is being collected and transformed into biodiesel fuel where it can be used without any kind of alteration to a standard diesel engine.

“I see this entire campus as a shrine to Mother Theodore, but also as a model of sustainability where we try to use all of our materials by recycling as much as we can.”

—Sr. Dana Augustin, S.P.

“Our recycling program is growing a lot. I see this entire campus as a shrine to Mother Theodore, but also as a model of sustainability where we try to use all of our materials by recycling as much as we can,” Sister Dana said.

“As far as moving in a direction for a sustainable Earth, we have to work with industry. We have to say, ‘There are different ways you can operate that are more beneficial for you and for our environment. Here are some things you might want to look at. I would hope the Sisters of Providence could be a model for that kind of work,’” she added.

And Sister Dana believes opportunities abound for women in all eco-justice endeavors.

“There are many needs to be met. What the Sisters of Providence have done for me through the years is open my eyes to opportunities in all kinds of places to work for justice. I think we’re going through a change right now in our world and I want to be part of that change,” Sister Dana said.

Thus, the seeds and renewable energy sowed by St. Theodora through her leadership and in her gardens during the congregation’s foundation years continue to harvest fruit for today’s Sisters of Providence who are sowing their own seeds for the future. †
Deacon candidate travels long road to ordination

By Sean Gallagher

In his native Puerto Rico, deacon candidate Emilio Ferrer-Soto grew up worshipping at a church named after St. Patrick that had been built by his grandfather.

After entering the U.S. Army in 1971, he went far away from his Caribbean home, serving for periods in Europe, Central America and South America.

After retiring from the military, Emilio’s travels eventually brought him to New York in 1999 where he began working for the Social Security Administration.

Near the end of that year, he was asked to work in Indianapolis as a bilingual claims representative.

Emilio had never set foot in the city before, and didn’t know where to go for Mass celebrated in Spanish, his native language.

“I called a taxi and told the taxi driver to take me to a Spanish-speaking church,” he said.

Where did he end up? At a church named after St. Patrick, a reminder of the one he worshipped at as a boy back in Puerto Rico.

When he got there, he asked the taxi driver to wait for him.

Franciscan Father Tom Fox celebrated the Mass and, at the end of the liturgy, asked if there were any newcomers.

Emilio introduced himself and, afterward, chatted with some of St. Patrick’s parishioners.

“I remember going back to the taxi and the bill was $84,” Emilio said with a laugh. “It wasn’t long before he got involved at his new parish.”

“I remember telling Father Tom, ‘I want a job,’” Emilio said.

He eventually became a member of the parish council and served as a lector.

A few years later, Emilio told his wife, Maria Torres-Gonzalez, that, if he were back in Puerto Rico, he would seek to become a permanent deacon.

Just a few weeks later, Father Tom approached Emilio and told him that the archdiocese was going to begin its first deacon formation program and that he would be a good candidate for it.

“I couldn’t speak,” Emilio said. “And Maria was looking at me. I told him that I needed to speak to Maria. Maria told him. Father, two weeks ago, he told me that he wanted to be a deacon.”

The rest, as they say, is history.

Ferrer-Soto applied to the deacon formation program and was accepted.

If all goes according to plan, he and 24 other men will be ordained to the diaconate on June 28 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. They will be the first group of men ordained as permanent deacons in the history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Emilio’s journey to that historic day began under the patronage of St. Patrick long ago and far away in Puerto Rico. It has continued under that same saint’s care in Indianapolis.

“I saw that connection as [a sign of] my calling,” Ferrer-Soto said.

Another confirmation of his calling to the diaconate has come over the four years of his formation in his ability to successfully balance a growing number of commitments.

Emilio and Maria are involved in the St. Vincent de Paul Society and assist in marriage preparation at St. Patrick Parish. He has ministered in the parish’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, made hospital visits and Communion calls, and helped lead people through the Church annullment process.

The deacon formation program requires several hours a week. But, in addition to that, Emilio is also pursuing an online master’s degree in religious education through Felician College in New Jersey.

He and his wife are also involved in the Third Order Franciscans.

To top it off, Ferrer-Soto is striving to be a good husband, father and Social Security employee.

Franciscan Father Arturo Ocampo, pastor of St. Patrick Parish, is amazed by Emilio’s balancing act.

“Emilio is really disciplined and dedicated.”

Father Arturo said. “He has a great love for ministry and for the Church.”

Emilio credited Maria’s presence in his life as making a big difference through the years of his formation.

“She’s been with me along every step of the path,” said Emilio. “I don’t know if I would have been able to do it without Maria. She is the power behind me.”

Maria, however, looks even deeper for the strength that has helped her and Emilio along the path to ordination.

“I think that the balance of all my involvement in Emilio’s formation is centered in Jesus as the center of our lives,” she said, “and that has helped us balance all these activities in a way that he can remain a good husband and father.”

Once he is ordained, Emilio hopes to have a positive impact on Hispanic Catholics in the archdiocese. He is already doing that through work when Hispanics come to the Social Security office for assistance.

“I am always asking them if they go to church,” he said. “I try to guide them to St. Patrick, and there I offer the services of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. A lot of these people are in need. As men who work in the marketplace and who are in a sense, embedded among the laity, permanent deacons are in a unique position. By virtue of their ordination, they are a special sign of Christ and can have a positive influence in ways that aren’t ordinarily available to priests and bishops.

For Emilio, that opportunity is a call to show Christ to others through humility.

“You have to humble yourself every day. You have to pick up your cross and carry it every day. That’s the way that I see portraying Jesus.”

—Deacon candidate Emilio Ferrer-Soto

Deacon candidate Emilio Ferrer-Soto, who works for the Social Security Administration, gives a presentation about Social Security to a group of people who will soon become U.S. citizens during a naturalization ceremony held on Dec. 6 at the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Indianapolis. Ferrer-Soto has found opportunities in his work to direct Hispanic Catholics in the Indianapolis area to St. Patrick Parish—where he is a member—and the services it can offer them.

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Franciscan sisters find fulfillment in leading parishes

By John Shaughnessy

many more because of all the sisters. I made my final vows in 1995."

She felt called again by God when a position opened in 1998 as the director of spirituality for the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove. During the next two years, she lived at Our Lady of Grace Monastery and fell in love with the community of religious sisters there. She asked to transfer her vows to Our Lady of Grace Monastery. She also served as a parish life coordinator at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greenwood before joining the staff at the Benedict Inn in 2001 and staying on until 2003. She’s found her home in helping college students find their place in the world.

"College is such an important time in their lives," Sister Jennifer says. "They’re figuring out who they are and their relationship with God. It’s not just, "What is their major?" It becomes larger: "How am I going to live my life? What values are important to me? What does it mean to be a Christian in today’s world? Those are tough questions. I feel called to be part of that journey with them.”

She is a great traveling partner in that journey with young people, says Michael Cartwright, the dean of ecumenical and interfaith programs at the University of Indianapolis. In working with students from different faith backgrounds, Sister Jennifer offers an approach that combines academic study with advice with a gracious respect for people, Cartwright says.

"It’s one thing to say you’ll accept someone ‘just the way they are, right there where they are.’ Cartwright notes. "It’s another thing to really do it. Jennifer does it with a listening heart. She points them back to the Gospel witness of Jesus, the disciples, and Mary.”

The daughter who learned to live a life of faith from watching her parents now provides her own example. "Sometimes, the college students even ask about how they can live their life in God and live that visibly is important for young people to see.”

Sometimes, the college students even ask about the choice she has made for her life, and whether they can do the same. "I tell them about the joy I have in the community here," Sister Jennifer says. "That’s an important part of living out our Christian vocation—that we have an inner joy. For me, that joy is living in community with other sisters who are seeking God in the same way I am. We can support each other on the journey. But for Sister Patty, all the questions from her 81 years of life lead her to one answer: "Calling others to Christ is the mission of every Christian.”

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‘Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.’

Mt. 4:19
On July 7, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued an apostolic letter giving permission directly to priests to celebrate Mass according to the Roman Missal published by Blessed Pope John XXIII in 1962. This Mass is often referred to as the traditional Latin Mass because it is celebrated according to the missal promulgated by Pope Pius V after the Council of Trent, which served as the base for the 1962 missal. While Pope Benedict’s action was not unexpected, it nonetheless raised questions about why he took this step. Based on a reading of his letter, three reasons stand out. First of all, for some time there had been a significant number of requests and “insistent prayers” from groups of the faithful for greater use of the 1962 missal. Pope John Paul II had already given serious consideration to these requests. Pope Benedict writes that “no small numbers of faithful adhered and continue to adhere with great love and affection to the earlier liturgical forms.” Pope John Paul II had already given permission for this form of celebration, and Pope Benedict extended it by allowing priests who are qualified to offer the traditional Latin Mass to respond to requests for it without first getting the approval of their bishop. But why is permission needed since the missal of 1962 was never withdrawn or denigrated and is still a valid form of the Mass? The answer lies in the pope’s distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the Mass. The ordinary form is the missal of 1970, promulgated by Pope Paul VI after the Second Vatican Council. This is the form of Mass that most Catholics are familiar with. It is the norm for celebrating Mass everywhere in the world. It is not to be replaced on a regular or permanent basis by the missal of 1962, and even when the latter is used there should be specific pastoral reasons for doing so. When these conditions are met, the 1962 missal may be used as an extraordinary expression of the Church’s liturgy. The term “extraordinary” should be taken literally. The 1962 form of the Mass is extra-ordinary in the sense that it is outside of or different from the ordinary way that Mass is celebrated. It is an exception, a special instance. It is not extraordinary in the sense that it is superior, more highly valued or more beneficial than the ordinary form. As the pope makes clear, these are two usages of the one Roman rite. The conditions for using the 1962 form lead to the second factor motivating the pope’s decision. People whose spiritual life was nurtured by the previous rite may not experience the same effect from the current rite. Perhaps they have not been adequately instructed about the ordinary form of Mass or perhaps of their culture makes it difficult for them to participate in certain ways that the 1970 missal does not. Whatever the reasons, the pope’s permission to use the 1962 missal is intended for “a stable group of faithful who adhere to the earlier liturgical tradition.” Such groups may request the extraordinary form and pastors should respond for the sake of their spiritual welfare. Celebrating Mass in the extraordinary form is not intended, therefore, to satisfy the curiosity of a new generation, and it certainly should not be a rallying point for competing preferences or opposing attitudes among members of the same parish or diocese. In fact, the pope makes clear that the use of the traditional Latin Mass must harmonize with the general pastoral care of the parish. It should not be a cause of division, but a source of diversity recognizing the special needs of certain people and responding to them. A third factor influencing the pope’s letter is the pope himself. As a scholar and traditionalist, he values the role which the extraordinary form of Mass played from the time of the Protestant Reformation to the modern, pre-Vatican II era. It is an important and irrereplaceable part of Catholic history, especially in Europe—one of the pope’s chief concerns. His appreciation for this part of Catholic history and his decision to make it more available to the faithful who desire it reminds everyone that the Catholic Church has a long tradition. The pope doesn’t want this form of Mass with its particular qualities and emphases to be forgotten, but rather given “due honor for its venerable and ancient usage.” The pope’s decision also affirms that Church unity does not require uniformity. There is more than one way to celebrate our common faith. Different usages reflect the multifaceted quality of the faith. Finally, by encouraging groups of lay faithful to request the extraordinary form of Mass, this document implicitly acknowledges the right of the laity to make their spiritual needs known and to take the initiative with regard to them as Vatican II affirmed in the Constitution on the Church (“Lumen Gentium”), #37. The pope intends his action to have the same effect as earlier liturgical reforms, namely to enrich both the faith and culture of many people and be a spur to their spiritual life.

By Fr. Robert L. Kinast

Faith Alive!

Traditional Latin Mass enriches faith and culture

Worship begins with hospitality

By Carole Norris Greene

Whether you prefer the Mass in Latin or in your own vernacular language, it is good to remember that ritual must never or in your own vernacular language, it is good to remember that ritual must never

Discussion Point

God is love and light in our lives

This Week’s Question

How would you respond if someone asked you what God is like?

“Pretty wonderful, powerful, awesome. Nothing can explain [exactly] what God is like because we’re looking at him like [we would look at] a human being.” (Joe Collins, Lebanon, Tenn.)

“To me, God is love and light. I think of him as being a loving father who loves us unconditionally, like a good parent would do.” (Mary Beth Rauser, Shelton, Conn.)

“He’s like the sun, moon, stars, beautiful weather and all the good things in life all together, all the time.”

He’s everything and everywhere. We can’t know, but hope, [that] we’ll find out some day.” (Loraine Collins, Pottstown, Pa.)

“He’s my best friend in good times and in bad. He’s someone to rely on. Without him, I wouldn’t be who I am.” (Mary Louwen, Kenosha, Wis.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What is your favorite psalm? What does it express for you?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to creene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Biblical Woman: Jezebel—Aba’s wicked wife
(Twenty-second in a series)

Jezebel was evil. (Her story is told from Kgs 16:31 through 2 Kgs 9:37.) The daughter of the king of the kingdom of Sidom, Lebanon, she was the wife of Ahab, king of the northeastern part of the country of Israel, which included Samaria and Galilee. She wanted to bring the worship of Baal and Asherah to Mount Carmel. She enticed Ahab to buy the vineyard of his neighbor, Naboth, telling him that she would kill him. However, when Naboth refused to sell, she sent letters to the elders and nobles in Jezebel telling them to get two scoundrels to accuse Naboth of having cursed God. They obeyed, lied Naboth out of the city and stoned him to death. When Jezebel learned that Naboth was dead, she told Ahab to go to take possession of the vineyard. However, he met Elijah while he was on his way. Elijah told Ahab that God would punish him by having dogs lick his blood where they licked up the blood of Naboth. Furthermore, he predicted, dogs would devour Jezebel. Later, the prophet Elijah went to see Ahab; he succeeded Elijah, repeated the prediction.

Three years later, King Ahab of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah went to war against Aram, modern Syria. A lucky arrow struck Jezebel between the joints of his breech, and he fled to the kingdom of Judah. He told him that she would kill him. Elijahlicked up his blood.
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 13, 2008

• Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
• Acts of The Apostles 10:34-38
• Matthew 3:13-17

This weekend, the Church celebrates the third of its great feasts introducing us to the reality of God’s revelation in Christ Jesus. This weekend, we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The other two of these great feasts were Christmas and the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. Each of these feasts, through its Liturgy of the Word, introduces us to a vital dimension in the identity of Jesus and an important consideration for Christians as they seek to follow the Lord.

Supplying the first reading for this weekend is the Book of Isaiah. Isaiah writes about a loyal servant of God who is a servant who works with God’s faithfulness despite enduring the hostilities of others around him and the unhappy twists of his fortune. This servant is therefore the most perfect servant. Regardless of the injustices surrounding him and the temptation to forsake God, the servant never-falters. This reading—and three others that are quite similar in Isaiah—are called the “Songs of the Suffering Servant.” They form a major part not only of Scripture, but also of the liturgy because they are used in Holy Week when the faithfulness concentrate on the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary.

The second reading from the Acts of the Apostles reveals what life was like in the first generation of Christianity. It verifies the structure of the Church even as this structure exists today. Peter is central. He appears before Cornelius, whose name indicates Roman origins. Peter preaches in the very name of Jesus Christ. Peter’s preaching leads to one conclusion. Salvation is in Jesus alone. Jesus came as God’s representative. In God’s love, Jesus went about “doing good works” and healing the sick.

The Criterion Friday, January 11, 2008

The Holy Man’s Words

Some day, Right after one of your homilies, I’d like to distribute a pen and piece of paper To each and every parishioner. I would ask them to take a few moments To note a word or phrase, Maybe something more, Relate a personal story Of how the Holy Man’s words they just heard Spoke to them, touched them, In some way. Perhaps it was a solace, A greater sense of peace, A burden lifted, A new way of seeing, Faith strengthened, Hope renewed, An action to be taken, Gratitude, A forgiveness realized, Love experienced more deeply, (Cathy Dearing is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. She wrote this poem “after listening to a beautiful homily by Father Jim Farrell on the feast of the Holy Family.” She said her poem about her pastor also “expresses an appreciation and gratitude to all our priests, who preach to us each and every weekend and whose words inspire, heal and tell us about the love of God.”)

My Journey to God

Q

If one otherwise faithfully participates in a Catholic marriage, but the Church does not prohibit Catholics from

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

Fr. John Dietzen
jjdietzen@aol.com

Fr . John Dietzen
Thursday, Jan. 17

Couple’s marital status confuses their children as well as friends

My friend had her first marriage annulled after meeting a widowed man who became her second husband. The second marriage was at Mass. Both were practicing Catholics. She soon found it impossible to live with her new husband’s children and a civil divorce followed. Although they are keeping separate households, she plans that they will remarry when their children are grown. In the meantime, they spend a night or weekend together in her home whenever they feel the need. This upsets her teenage daughter, who has started to be a behavior problem. My friend says it is OK to sleep with her ex-husband since they are still married in the eyes of the Church. What is the Church’s view of this situation? (Illinois)

A

She is correct. According to Church teaching, they are still married. And they assume they still believe they are married in the eyes of God. They still apparently have a sexual, emotional and intimate sharing of their lives except that they don’t live together, which—under the circumstances—seems to be the only way that they can continue their relationship. I wonder, first of all, why they got divorced. If their present situation and future plans are as you describe them, there seems to be no need for civil action. They could have lived separately without that, and possibly avoided all the problems they’re encountering now.

So maybe there is something more involved that she hasn’t told you or perhaps that she herself does not understand.

Perhaps her daughter has a strained relationship with her new stepfather, and her acting out is her way of showing unhappiness with her mother for continuing that involvement. Or, maybe she is, as you indicate, unaware that her mother and the new husband are still in a sacramental marriage and, from that aspect at least, are acting in a morally permissible manner.

Whatever the reason, the problem that your friend faces is a human problem, not an explicitly religious one, and she needs to find out why her daughter is reacting the way she is and then deal with that. The daughter may need some counseling, maybe along with her mother, to help her work through her feelings about her stepfather.

It’s also possible that she needs to understand clearly the reasons why what her mother is doing is not morally wrong. Depending on where she is in the teenage years, she may not be able to assimilate the gray areas present here. You’re either married or you’re not, and if you’re not then you shouldn’t have this kind of intimacy. Period. In this case, she may be more ready to accept an explanation from someone other than her mother, like an adult friend or a priest whom she trusts.

Your friend surely realizes that she and her “ex-husband” are in a most unusual relationship arrangement. They need to deal patiently with anyone who is puzzled by it.

Q

I have opportunities to join bus tours where the schedule does not coincide with Sunday Mass times along the way. Is it permissible to go on these tours when that is the case? (North Carolina)

A

Participation in Sunday Mass is an essential part of Catholic life—as it has been throughout Christian history. If one otherwise faithfully participates in a Catholic marriage, but the Church law does not prohibit Catholics from occasionally missing Mass in the situation that you describe here.

(For a brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercession and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to an envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or e-mail to jjdietzen@aol.com)
Joanne Sottong, Jerry and Paul Birkenheuer. Mother of Teresa.

Birkenheuer.

St. Michael, Brookville, Dec. 27. Son of Raymond and Mary."}

two.

Dunbar.

Harold E. Hank.

Sister of Mary Wiltsee and Raulino Ortiz.


Sister of Vestina Rudolph.

Paula Britt, Mary Jane, Jerome and Anna Oakey. Great-grandfather of two.


Sister Max.

Gift of the Daughters of Charity.

Annie Crosser, Jane Noel, Mary Graves,


†


KLA VE, Marie


MURRAY, Dan, 92, St. Mary’s, Indianapolis, Dec. 13. Husband of Caroleyn (Lovell) Hendrix. Great-grandmother of one.

Randy Kalb. Brother of Suzanne Hall and Daniel, James, Jeff and Jerry Schulte. Great-grandfather of 22.


Sister of Mary Anthony of the Holy Family (Klohe) Schutt.


†

Sister of Mary Wiltsee and Raulino Ortiz.

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 Couple


†


†

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Louis Catholic Church on Feb. 15, 1934, in Indianapolis. She became administrator of the Daughters of Charity on Dec. 1, 1925. Sister Marillac also worked as an administrator at St. Louis Catholic Church on Dec. 1, 1925. Sister Marillac also worked as an administrator at St. Louis Catholic Church on Dec. 1, 1925.

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