Seven Hoosiers to be honored at education convention

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In this week’s issue of The Criterion, we are including a special B section welcoming the thousands who are attending the annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention on March 25-27. It’s the first time in the 105-year history of the association that the convention will be held in Indianapolis. This year’s convention theme is “At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity.”

More than 400 workshops and 500 educational exhibits will be available at the convention, which will be held at the Indiana Convention Center. The convention is open to anyone who works in or is interested in Catholic education, including teachers, clergy, administrators, parents and students.

(Details for all local events can be found at archindy.org or at the local hospitality booth at the convention.)

Welcome, Catholic educators!

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Welcome, Catholic educators!

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Archbishop Buechlein says cancer treatment prognosis is positive

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I can’t tell you how much I miss being out in our parishes and at the Catholic Center, especially at this holy time. I pray that you all may enjoy God’s blessings for the Holy Triduum and the great Easter Sollemnity!

I want to provide you with an update on the status of my treatment for Hodgkin’s lymphoma now that my medical treatment is well under way.

The fourth of six chemotherapy treatments was completed on March 14. The side effects of the chemo have resulted in the current state of my public pastoral ministry. This is largely due to the fact that my white blood cell count is extremely low and my immune system has been weakened. The oncology staff urges me to avoid public interaction for the time being because of the danger of serious infection. I was told that infection would mean hospitalization.

After two more chemotherapy treatments, concluding in April or early May, there will follow a month of daily radiation treatments. In summary, according to my oncologist and staff, my prognosis is completely positive. If there are no unforeseen developments, I should be back “full force” in August or September. I plan to celebrate the priesthood ordination on June 7 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, and I hope to attend the upcoming Priest Convocation at Saint Meinrad.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all of you for your understanding and for carrying on for our Mission for Christ so well that pastoral life seems to go on as usual. The cancer and accompanying consequences have, in fact, given me a wholesome spiritual pause and a time of special grace in this Lenten season. Your response and that of so many others has been overwhelming and humbling. Thank you so much for your prayerful support and encouragement.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein
Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
March 15, 2008

Archdiocese to purchase Carmelite monastery property for college seminary

By Sean Gallagher

For the past three and a half years, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary has been based on the campus of Marian College in Indianapolis. But at the start of the next academic year in August, the archdiocesan college seminary and its missionaries will have a new home just a mile away. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has agreed to purchase the Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection, a community of Carmelite nuns who have lived in their monastery at 2500 Cold Spring Road in Indianapolis since 1932.

In recent years, the community, currently numbering 10 nuns, has found it increasingly difficult to manage the upkeep of their monastery and decided to move to the archdiocese of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg, where they will have their own building.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, sees the upcoming transition in the use of the facilities as fitting into its long history.

"These sisters have been a powerhouse of prayer, and for the local Church in the archdiocese," he said. "Every day, they have been praying for the archdiocese. And I know good and well every day they pray for priests. "And so this kind of fits right in that this space will continue to be part of the life of the archdiocese. It will continue to be a place of prayer and study and formation for future ministers—in this case, for priests.

In a letter sent to supporters of her community, Carmelite Sister Jean Alice McGoff, pastor of the Carmel of the Resurrection, said that "this use of the property fulfills our dream that the monastery be used for a religious purpose and the building left intact." Terms of the sale are pending, but they are expected to be finalized in the next two months.

The seminarians will continue to take classes at Marian College.

A work of Providence

Msgr. Schaedel sees the emergence of the opportunity to purchase the monastery in a providential light. "I pray that all may enjoy God’s blessings for the Holy Triduum and the great Easter Sollemnity!"

All agreed that the college seminary had been successful in its first three years in forming future priests, but archdiocesan leaders felt that the seminary needs to have a facility of its own, which would be a priority in the years to come. Currently, 18 seminarians from the archdiocese and three other dioceses reside and receive formation within a larger dormitory on Marian’s campus, where other students also live.

At the same time that discussions were happening about how this separate facility could become a reality, Sister Jean Alice met with Msgr. Schaedel to talk with him about her community’s desire to move.

An agreement between the archdiocese and the Carmelites regarding the sale was made in the months that followed. "I think Providence was definitely at work in it," Msgr. Schaedel said. "It just came at the perfect time."

Msgr. Schaedel said that other options to establish a separate facility for Bishop Bruté College Seminary would have involved a greater financial investment by the archdiocese than purchasing and renovating the Carmelite monastery.

"Whatever we need to do to bring this building up to snuff for a seminary is certainly going to be less than what we would have spent otherwise," he said.

A place of their own

Father Robert Robeson, rector of the Bishop Bruté College Seminary, said that having a place of their own is going to be more vibrant and will foster a greater sense of community among the seminarians. "Community life is going to be much more vibrant within the seminary," he said. "The seminarians are going to have more responsibility for their property and their time. "They’re not going to be living in a rented space owned by somebody else. They’re going to be living in their own home.

The additional space in the new facilities will also allow formation conferences to be given in a manner that is geared more for individual classes rather than for the entire community as a whole, which has been happening, in part, because of space constraints.

Father Robeson also said that the separate facilities for the seminary will help increase the role that it has served in the life of the archdiocese.

"The Church of central and southern Indiana will be much more instrumental in playing a part in the formation of our seminarians," he said. "And they have already. People know the seminarians."

Archdiocese of Indianapolis has agreed to purchase the Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection, the home of a community of 10 Carmelite nuns in Indianapolis. The monastery will become the new home of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary. The seminarians will continue to take classes at Marian College, which is one mile north of the monastery.

Preserving a tradition of prayer

Father Robeson respects the tradition of prayer that has been carried on at the monastery for more than 75 years. "We’re inheriting an environment that’s steeped in the Carmelite tradition," he said. "And that’s something that I certainly want to honor. [I’ll] do my best to make sure that we appreciate and continue to advance the Carmelite charism."

Father Robeson said that relocating the seminary from Marian’s campus to a place designed to foster prayer will aid the spiritual formation and vocational discernment of the seminarians.

"When you’re in the middle of a campus, there’s always something going on," he said. "There will be benefits from being away from the center of activity. "There will be times when we can maintain an environment of contemplative prayer in the seminary that you can’t really do while you’re on the college campus."

Msgr. Schaedel recalled how, in past decades, hundreds of archdiocesan Catholics would gather on the grounds of the Carmelite monastery to pray a novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the days leading up to her feast day on July 16.

"We were invoking her guidance and protection on the archdiocese," he said. "And this is one more example that she is still at it."

(For more information about the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, log on to www.archindy.org/bsb. For more information about the Carmel of the Resurrection, log on to www.praythenews.org.)
Why didn’t Jesus escape?

When Jesus knew that he was about to be arrested and condemned to what Cicero called “the most cruel and disgusting penalty” of crucifixion, why didn’t he escape? Wouldn’t you try to get away if you were in that garden of Gethsemane? Earlier, after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and the Sadducees decided to get the Romans to kill Jesus, he hid in a village called Ephraim, about 12 miles from Jerusalem at the edge of the Judean Desert. Why didn’t he go there again? It would have taken him only about 15 minutes to climb the Mount of Olives from Gethsemane and be on his way on a road that ran from there to the Judean Desert. He didn’t do that because he chose to be crucified, because he chose to die for our sins. A less generous view of God’s plan was carried out. It’s not that he wasn’t tempted to run when the time came. In his agony in the garden, he wanted to get out of it. But then he quickly added, “Still, not my will but yours be done” (Lk 22:42). He explained it to his Apostles many times, even though they refused to accept it.

Of course, he could have gotten away. He said, “Do you think that I cannot pray to my Father, who would at once send me more than 12 legions of angels?” (Mt 26:53). But he didn’t do that. He was determined to follow his Father’s will. It’s not that he was tempted to run when the time came. Just as any human would do, he wanted to get out of it. In his agony in the garden, knowing full well what was soon to happen, he prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me.” But then he quickly added, “Still, not my will but yours be done” (Lk 22:42). He explained it to his Apostles many times, even though they refused to accept it.

God and man.

That is why God the Father sent his eternally begotten Son to earth, to restore the harmony with God that had existed before sin disrupted it. In that way, he showed his love for us. As St. Paul wrote, “Jesus shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8).

And St. John’s Gospel tells us that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (Jn 3:16). Jesus sacrificed himself for us. “I lay down my life of my own accord,” he said (Jn 10:17). He is called “the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:29) because he was sacrificed, not just killed, like the lambs the Jews offered to God in their temple in expiation for their sins. And the Letter to the Hebrews says that Jesus was also the priest who surrenders himself (Heb 2:14).

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults says, “His sacrifice was an act of atonement, that is, it makes us one again with God by the power of divine mercy extending to us the Father’s forgiveness of our sins. His sacrifice is also called an act of satisfaction or reparation because he lives out fully the Father’s call to human beings to be faithful to his plan for them, thus overcoming the power of sin.”

“It is also an expiation for our sins, which in the understanding of Scripture means that God takes the initiative in bringing about reconciliation to himself. In the words of Christian tradition, Jesus’ sacrifice merits salvation for us because it retains forever the power to draw us to him and to the Father” (p. 92).

By dying by crucifixion, Jesus obeyed the will of God, demonstrated his love for us, and accomplished our redemption.

While hanging on the cross, he said, “It is finished” (Jn 19:30). God’s plan was carried out.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense of Bioethics

Do embryos have souls?

People are sometimes surprised to hear that the wrongness of destroying a human embryo does not ultimately depend on when that embryo might become a person, or when he or she might receive a soul from God.

They often suppose that the Catholic Church teaches that destroying human embryos is unacceptable because such embryos are persons (or are “ensouled”). While it is true that the Church teaches that the intentional and direct destruction of human embryos is always immoral, it would be incorrect to conclude that the Church teaches that embryos that are not “ensouled” are acceptable because the Church does not teach that.

Hence, it is not necessary to know exactly when God ensouls the embryo, because, as I sometimes point out in half-jest, if even that were true that an embryo did not receive her soul until she graduated from law school, that would not make it OK to kill her by forcibly extracting tissues or organs prior to graduation.

Human embryos are already beings that are both human (not zebra or plant). And in fact, the newest and most recent additions to the human family. They are integral beings, created for manatees and porpoises at their precise time. Any destructive action against them as they move along the continuum of their development disrupts the entire future time line of that person.

In other words, the embryo exists as a whole, is unique among the host of animal species, and when destroyed, that particular individual has perished. Every human embryo, regardless of stage, is a privileged sanctuary of one meant to develop as a human person.

Why then does human embryo actually, is even at its earliest and most undeveloped stage, already makes it the only kind of entity capable of experiencing an immortal soul from the hand of God. No other animal or plant embryo can receive this gift.

Therefore, if we were to allow the entire universe in the campus to receive this gift.

Hence, the early human embryo is never merely an organism. It is unique among the host of animal species, and when destroyed, that particular individual has perished. But it would actually be the reverse, that is to say, it would be more immoral to destroy an embryo that had not yet received an immortal soul than to destroy an ensouled embryo.

Why? Because the immortal soul is the principle by which that person could come to an eternal destiny with God in heaven, so the one who destroyed the embryo, in this scenario, would preclude that young human from ever receiving an immortal soul (or becoming a person) and making his or her way to God.

This would be the gravest of evils, as the stem cell researcher would forthwith derive the lifetime of God between immediate and delayed ensonlement.

In the 1200s, Thomas Aquinas held that delayed ensonlement occurs at the right in the first instant, but at a time-point removed from the beginning. This, he argued, would enable one to destroy the embryo to undergo development and become “aip” for the reception of an immortal soul from God (by passing through simpler initial stages involving “vegetative” and “animative” souls).

Even today in various quarters, the discussions continue, with new embryological details like twinning and chimerization impinging upon the debate, and new conceptual questions arising from the intricate biology surrounding totipotency and pluripotency.

The Church, of course, recognizes that it is God’s business as to precisely when he ensouls embryos. We do not need an answer to this fascinating and speculative theoretical question, like counting angels on the head of a pin, in order to grasp the fundamental truth. We know that embryos are irredeemable and deserving of unconditional respect at every stage of their existence.

In fact, our moral affirmation follows directly on the heels of the scientific data regarding early human development, which affirms that every person on the face of the planet is, so to speak, an “overgrown embryo.”
En la Pascua experimentamos el misterio de la conquista de la vida sobre la muerte.

Ninguna celebración litúrgica es más hermosa que la Vigilia Pasqual. El gran fuego pascual y el manido crucifijo son rituales ricos en simbolismo. Se nos hace un recordatorio por la historia de nuestra salvación en una maravillosa serie de lecturas. «¿Cuál es el don de la catecumenación y la confirmación de los candidatos? En efecto, toda la Vigilia y la Eucaristía son conmemoraciones de la Pasión y Resurrección del Redentor.»

El crucifijo es la gran celebración de la Esperanza. Es la victoria de la vida sobre la muerte, de la salvación del pecado. Cantamos con entusiasmo “la lucha ha terminado y se ha obtenido la victoria.”

Sin embargo, parece indicar el lunes después de la Pascua, que es el sufrimiento y muerte que Dios le pidió a su propio Hijo que pasara, nos da la clave para darle sentido a toda la tragedia humana que nos rodea.

Una vez más nos hacemos recordar el sendero de la Pasión de Cristo, el sendero de un hombre inocente que fue traicionado por un amigo y luego obligado a morir por la muerte humillante de un criminal. Una vez más salimos del traidor con gran alegría porque hemos sido salvados del pecado y de la muerte. ¡Alérgicos a la muerte!

Me gusta recordar por qué nuestra Iglesia se aferra a la tradición de exhibir el crucifijo, la cruz es el camino a la salvación. Cristo cayó el Viernes Santo, pero se levantó a la vida gloriosa el Domingo de Pascua.

La Pascua es una festividad especial para aquellos de nosotros que llevan más que su propia cuota de sufrimiento humano. Jesús nos demostró que la vida no termina con la muerte. Podemos experimentar la solidaridad con él en la muerte, tanto solos como acuciados.

Por lo tanto, ¿la Pascua es la máxima celebración de esperanza? Para los que enfrentan la muerte con temor, Jesús demostró de una vez por todas que en la vida, la vida cambia y no es esclavizada al fin de la muerte. En una de nuestras oraciones eucarísticas se nos recuerda que hemos sido llamados “al Reino en el que toda lágrima será enmascarada.” Ese es el verdadero hogar al que todos estamos peregrinando. Y así, la Pascua eleva nuestros espíritus en el camino. ¡Gracias a Dios por el obsequio de nuestra fe pascual! ¡Gracias a Dios por su victoria en la Pascua! Que Dios lo bendiga a usted y a los suyos con la Pascua más feliz. ¡Ofrezco una oración de júbilo por todos ustedes! 😊

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

Listado de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein
Arzobispado de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Tradicado por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.
March 26
Knights of Columbus Hall, 225 E. Market St., Jeffersonville. Daughters of Isabella Circle #95, annual card party, 7 p.m. Information: 812-382-3659.

March 27
Riverwalk Banquet Center and Lodge, 6729 Westfield Blvd., Indianapolis. Catholic Radio 96.1, fourth annual reception and dinner, Dr. Ray Guarnd, guest speaker. 6 p.m., $55 per person. Information: www.catholicradioindy.com.

Saint Meinrad School of Theology, Newman Theater, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad.

March 30
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Pre Cana Program” for engaged couples. Information: 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1521.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

April 6

April 13
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Evensong,” 4:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 17
Benedictinum Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Third annual “Caregivers and Hospice Retreat,” registration due April 3, $50. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinum@benedictinum.edu.

April 18-20
Benedictinum Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Healing the Healer,” with Benedictine Father Noel Meuller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@benedictinum.edu.

April 19
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstock Road, Camul, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). “Gabriel Project of Indiana “Day of Reflection,” Servants of the Gospel of Life, St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, presenter. Mass, 9 a.m. program concludes at 12:15 p.m. Information: 317-844-5658 or thobraclch@melcom.net.

April 20

April 21-13
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Reflections on St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@benedictinum.edu.

April 3-13
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Monastic Practices: Drawing Everyday Wisdom from the Monastic Life,” Benedictine Brother John Mark, Falkenhahn, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@benedictinum.edu.

April 4-6

April 6

April 14

April 16

April 25

April 27
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Divine Mercy services are scheduled in archdiocese

Divine Mercy Sunday services are scheduled on March 30 at various parishes in the archdiocese. All the prayer services are open to the public. Prayer services reported to The Criterion are as follows:

- St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3334 W. 30th St., Indianapolis, 2-3 p.m. eucharistic adoration; 3 p.m. Divine Mercy chapel, sermon, eucharistic procession and adoration. Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, presider, with guest speaker.
- Holy Family Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond—1 p.m. Divine Mercy prayer service.

Saint Meinrad School of Theology, Newman Theater, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad.

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Knights of Columbus Hall, 225 E. Market St., Jeffersonville. Daughters of Isabella Circle #95, annual card party, 7 p.m., $55 per person. Information: 812-382-3659.

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Center staff report

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- Holy Family Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond—1 p.m. Divine Mercy prayer service.

VIPs

Jack and Mary (Sullivan) Olding, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 30.

The couple was married on March 15, 1958, at Holy Cross Church in Covington, Ky. They have six children: Beverly Gainea, Terri Roodauck, Colleen Serket, Jack Olding Jr., Jason Olding Sr. and the late Lisa Oding. They have 11 grandchildren.


- Mary’s Kingdom Village School, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center. Reville, located on 925 South, 8 miles east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Confessions 1 p.m., Mass, 2 p.m., on third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Emler Brunwick, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.


service, reconciliation and eucharistic adoration. Information: 765-886-5503.

- Mary’s Kingdom Village School, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center. Reville, located on 925 South, 8 miles east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles—2 p.m. Mass followed by Eucharistic adoration, Divine Mercy chapel and pitch-in, Father Emler Brunwick, presider. Information: 812-689-3551.

- St. Vincent de Paul Church, 4218 E. Michigan Road, Shelbyville—2-3 p.m. eucharistic adoration, benediction and Divine Mercy chapel. Information: 317-398-4028.

- St. Barbara Church, 1306 27th Ave., Columbus—3 p.m. eucharistic adoration followed by Divine Mercy chapel and Benediction. Information: 812-379-9353.


- Holy Family Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond—1 p.m. Divine Mercy prayer service.
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All vehicles have been inspected and their titles have been certified cleared for transfer to prospective new owners. Over 100 lien-free vehicles will be available. The majority of these vehicles come with factory warranty and all come with limited warranty.

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All prospective buyers are required to register at the gate prior to previewing the vehicles. Must be 18 years or older and possess a valid driver’s license. Vehicles are sold on a first come, first served basis. All registration times punched. In the event of multiple offers, priority will be given to the earliest registrant. (In-State Auto Dealers permitted with proof of current state license and Tax ID No.)

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HOST LOCATION
609 State Road 44
Shelbyville, IN
1-74 at Exit 116
877-392-2388

Wed., Mar. 26, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Thurs., Mar. 27, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Fri., Mar. 28, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Sat., Mar. 29, 10 a.m.–7 p.m.

MEDIEVAL & RENAISSANCE TREASURES
from the Victoria and Albert Museum
JANUARY 22–APRIL 20, 2008

This once-in-a-lifetime exhibition presents 35 rare masterpieces including a Leonardo da Vinci notebook. These intimate treasures are drawn from one of the greatest collections of medieval and Renaissance works in existence. Tickets are $10.

The exhibition is organized by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The Speed Art Museum
2035 SOUTH THIRD ST, LOUISVILLE, KY 40208
(502) 634-3700 www.speedmuseum.org

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The power that Jesus demonstrated was the power of love, which heals and reconciles, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“Do we perhaps let idols enter into our faith in various ways? Are we always open to letting the Lord purify us, allowing him to throw out of us and of the Church all that is contrary to him?” he asked.

The pope said it is important to know that in the Gospel of St. Matthew the story of Jesus purifying the Temple is followed by stories of Jesus healing the sick.

In healing the sick, Jesus reaches out to those whose lives have been reduced by illness or infirmity and who often are pushed to the margins of society, the pope said.

“Jesus shows God as the one who loves and demonstrates his power as the power of love,” he said.

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FRI., MAR. 28, 10 A.M.–8 P.M.
SAT., MAR. 29, 10 A.M.–7 P.M.

Above, priests hold olive branches while leading a procession ahead of Pope Benedict XVI at the start of a Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on March 16.

Right, Pope Benedict XVI holds a woven palm frond while celebrating a Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on March 16. In his homily, the pope called on Catholics to examine whether worldly desires have weakened their faith.

The pope’s homily at the Palm Sunday Mass focused on the Gospel story of Jesus throwing the animal sellers and the money-changers out of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The animals were sold for Temple sacrifices and people needed to change money to make donations to the Temple, he said, but “all of this could have taken place elsewhere,” outside the Temple, which should have been a place of prayer.

The space occupied by the sellers and money-changers, the pope said, was supposed to be the atrium where the pagans, who could not enter the Temple, could still go “to associate themselves with the prayer to the one God.”

The God of Israel, the God of all people, was waiting for their prayers as well,” he said.

Pope Benedict said the story should lead Catholics of us and of the Church all that is contrary to faith in various ways. Are we always open to letting the Lord purify us, allowing him to throw out of us and of the Church all that is contrary to him?” he asked.

The pope said it is important to know that in the Gospel of St. Matthew the story of Jesus purifying the Temple is followed by stories of Jesus healing the sick.

In healing the sick, Jesus reaches out to those whose lives have been reduced by illness or infirmity and who often are pushed to the margins of society, the pope said.

“Jesus shows God as the one who loves and demonstrates his power as the power of love,” he said. 

Jesus’ power was the power of love, pope says on Palm Sunday
Major property tax relief plan offers mixed blessing

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Indiana lawmakers reached a property tax relief agreement on March 14 which delivers a mixed blessing of property tax relief to homeowners, help for seniors and tax credits for lower income families, but opponents question the plan’s impact on local governments and schools.

While property tax and immigration reform were among the top priorities of the Indiana Catholic Conference, the ICC followed these issues with an eye on how the proposals might hurt lower income or immigrant families and children, and how these reforms would affect the common good of all Hoosier families.

The property tax relief plan contained in the conference committee report on House Bill 1001 received bipartisan support, and passed the House 82-7 and the Senate 41-6.

Rep. Jeff Espich (R-Unionsdale), one of the chief negotiators of the proposal, called the bill “a solution to one of the toughest issues we’ve ever dealt with in the General Assembly.”

Rep. Espich said the bill gives tax relief and tools for local communities to deal with the tax caps. He called the plan “taxpayer friendly” and “community friendly.”

Rep. Brian Bosma (R-Indianapolis), House minority leader, called the plan “the strongest property tax relief measure in two generations.”

Rep. Russell Stilwell (D-Boonville), summed up the proposal this way: “There is pain and there is gain for Hoosiers across the state.”

He then asked, “Is there more pain or more gain?”

Rep. David Orentlicher (D-Indianapolis), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and also chief negotiator of the House Ways and Means Committee executive director, who serves as official spokesman on public policy matters for Indiana’s bishops, said, “In the areas of property tax relief and immigration reform, we tried to accomplish a ‘do no harm’ policy.”

“Putting hundreds of people out of work will only add to the social concerns in the community,” Tebbe said. “Presently, those working are caring for their family needs and contributing to the common good.”

He noted that similar laws enacted in Arizona and Oklahoma are having “detrimental effects” on Indiana’s economy, and harm to immigrant families and children—both legal and illegal.

During the 2008 session of the Indiana General Assembly, the Indiana Catholic Conference testified in opposition to the proposal.

Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director, “The Catholic Church does not support illegal immigration, and respects the right of nations to control their borders.”

However, Tebbe explained to lawmakers that the Church is concerned about the effects that the proposal would have on employers, immigrant families and children.

“Putting hundreds of people out of work will only add to the social concerns in the community,” Tebbe said. “Presently, those working are caring for their family needs and contributing to the common good.”

He noted that similar laws enacted in Arizona and Oklahoma are having “detrimental effects” on the economy, and on the families of both legal and illegal immigrants.

In addition to the ICC, members of the Hispanic community, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and the Indiana Manufacturers Association opposed the bill.

The bill passed the House with 92 votes but would have only added to the hardship of those knowingly hire undocumented workers by suspension their business license or revoking it after three violations.

The immigration reform proposal died when two of the conference, Sen. Thomas K. WeATHERSPOON (R-Logansport) and Rep. Scott Pelath (D-Michigan City), failed to sign off on the final conference committee agreement.

The tax bill passed by Indiana lawmakers gives homeowners an average cut in property tax of close to 30 percent this year.

It includes caps on property taxes at 1.5 percent of a home’s assessed valuation in 2009. In 2010 and beyond, it caps property tax at 1 percent of a home’s assessed valuation.

It eliminates many of the state’s township assessors, calls for public referendums on capital spending projects and places controls on local government spending.

It adds $120 million to help schools offset the property tax caps.

The plan increases the earned income tax credit from 6 percent to 9 percent for lower to moderate income families, and makes it permanent. It increases the renter’s deduction from the current $2,500 to $3,000, and places additional caps for senior citizen homeowners on fixed incomes.

To provide property tax relief, the bill increases the state sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent effective on April 1.

Local option income taxes are expected to be increased to make up for the shortfall caused by the property tax caps. The plan shifts the costs of child welfare, juvenile incarceration, health care for the indigent, and police and fire pensions, and some school costs from local governments to the state.

Concerning immigration reform, a bill to punish employers who hire undocumented individuals failed. A proposal to penalize employers who knowingly hire undocumented immigrants failed when a compromise between House and Senate versions of the proposal could not be reconciled.

Some of the concerns of the bill included the possibility of racial profiling, the detrimental effects on Indiana’s economy, and harm to immigrant families and children—both legal and illegal.

Rep. Dennis Avery (D-Indianapolis), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and also chief negotiator of the plan, defended the many pluses of the bill.

“Lower income families pay more in sales tax [proportionally] than do higher income families. For example, a family with an income of $20,000 will pay twice as much in sales tax as a family earning $60,000. There is an issue of tax fairness here for lower to moderate income families.”

“One the other hand, the earned income tax credit is gold. It’s fair,” Rep. Day said. “Talk about family values; this is the way to go.”

Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director, said, “The Catholic Church does not support illegal immigration, and respects the right of nations to control their borders.”

However, Tebbe explained to lawmakers that the Church is concerned about the effects that the proposal would have on employers, immigrant families and children.

“We need your help, but thank you for helping us do Christ’s work.”

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www.svpindy.org
Christ is Risen!

The Resurrection is depicted in a painting by Marie Romero Cash at St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe, N.M. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, is on March 23 in the Latin rite this year.
By Sr. Genevieve Glen, O.S.B.

The Gospel offers us a preview of Easter in the baptism of Jesus.

That event suggests the work that lies ahead of us if we are truly to live the Easter life we have been given in Jesus, either through baptism or the renewal of our baptismal vows.

Through the resurrection of Christ, says God, “I make all things new!”

Living the new Easter life, though, is none too comfortable, as we see in the Acts of the Apostles.

We, like the first Christians, have a lot to learn about what it means to abandon our old self for the new, the unfamiliar, the untried.

Fortunately, we have the whole 50 days of the Easter season ahead of us to practice. And the Easter season is really a rehearsal for our whole life!

At baptism, Jesus came out of the water of the Jordan River. In Scripture, water is an image of the original chaos when “the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters” (Gn 1:2).

Since creation, chaos continues to eat at the edges of our world and our lives.

The psalms often use chaos as an image of that final disintegration we most fear: death.

Ancient Christian writers tell us that Jesus emerged from the baptismal water as the beginning of a new creation. The dove is the new creation.

In Genesis 8, Noah sent a dove out three different times to see if the flood had subsided and land had appeared. The first time, the dove “could find no place to alight and perch.” The second time, the dove returned with an olive leaf in its bill. The third time, the dove never returned (Gn 9-12).

At the Jordan River, the Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of that dove, marking him as the new creation in whom all living things can now find a home.

The flood, an image of chaos, will no longer be able to destroy the Earth.

Jesus’ resurrection marked the beginning of the end of chaos in all its disguises: “There shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away” (Rv 21:4).

What does that mean for us, incorporated into the new creation through baptism and now living for its final completion? Does it mean that we won’t have to suffer any more?

No. It means that, as members of Christ’s body, we share in his work of making new all creation, including ourselves.

Look around: What could you do to drive the destructive chaos caused by selfishness, anger or greed out of your home, your workplace or your neighborhood? What could you do to establish in its place the order that is the new creation?

Remember, the heart of that new creation is Jesus himself. What could you do to make life within you and around you look like the life that Jesus himself led and now wants to lead in us?

What changes would you have to make in your own priorities, values, attitudes and behaviors in order to have an impact on your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors?

How could you make the newness of Easter real in your world?

The underlying challenge here is not just to our own willingness to become new people, enlivened by God’s Spirit to live Christ’s own life. The real challenge is to our faith. Do we believe that new life is really possible?

In other words, do we believe that Easter is real? Do we believe that our participation in Jesus’ death and resurrection through baptism, penance and the Eucharist can really change us as individuals, families and communities so we can change the world a little bit at a time?

Can “new” happen?

Yes, says our Easter Lord. It can.

It has.

(Benedictine Sister Genevieve Glen is a member of the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colo.)
This Easter, we Christians reflect on one of the basic doctrines of Christianity—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It’s such a basic belief that St. Paul told the Christians of Corinth, Greece, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain” (1 Cor 15:17).

But this is more than religious belief. We Catholics are convinced that the Resurrection is historical fact. Christianity is based on that historical fact. It’s easy to understand how people without faith cannot doubt the Resurrection. It just isn’t within our modern sphere of experience. Well, it wasn’t within the Apostles’ sphere of experience either.

Our belief in the Resurrection is helped by the fact that the Apostles doubted it. They weren’t gullible men who easily accepted something like a man coming back from the dead.

As often as Jesus predicted that he would rise from the dead, the Gospels make it clear that the Apostles didn’t understand what he was talking about.

They didn’t even believe the women who went to the tomb and returned with the news that they had seen the risen Lord. Surely, they thought, the women were delusional. It took Jesus’ appearance to them, coming into a locked room and eating with them, before they believed.

People today who don’t believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead must think either that the first Christians were awfully naive to believe such a thing or that they were extremely clever to be able to concoct such a story and then sell it, not only to their fellow Jews, but also to Gentiles all over the world.

Gospel accounts of the Apostles, though, show clearly that they were simple and uneducated men, hardly the type who could plan and successfully carry out a gigantic fraud.

The news about Jesus’ resurrection from the dead spread by word of mouth for decades before it was put down on paper. It was St. Paul who first did that, in that letter he wrote in the year 56 from Ephesus, in modern Turkey, to the community he started in Corinth.

This letter was written about 26 years after Jesus’ resurrection, and before any of the Gospels had been written. If there were earlier written accounts, they have not survived. (Near Community Hospital East)

In other words, many people saw Jesus after his resurrection and could attest to it. Christians are generally familiar with most of the appearances that Paul enumerates, plus a few others written about in the Gospels of John and Luke—to Mary Magdalene, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and the seven Apostles who were fishing in the Sea of Galilee. John’s Gospel gives us details about his appearances to the Apostles, first when Thomas was absent and again, eight days later, when he was present.

We assume that Jesus’ appearance to 500 brothers is the same account that Matthew gives at the very end of his Gospel when he says that the 11 disciples made their way to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had summoned them. Apparently about 500 people assembled there with the Apostles.

We are less familiar, though, with the appearance to James. This is not James, the brother of John. That James was among the Twelve when Jesus appeared to them. This James was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem when Paul was writing to the Corinthians. He was well known among the early Christians, which is apparently why Paul referred specifically to him.

Surprisingly, though, we are not sure of James’ precise relationship to Jesus. He might have been a cousin, but Paul referred to James as “the brother of the Lord” (Gal 1:19).

According to an early Christian document, the Protoevangelium of James, James was the eldest of four sons and two daughters of Joseph by an earlier marriage. Joseph was a widower, older than Mary, whom he married so he could help raise his children. He considered himself Mary’s protector and was willing to honor her vow of virginity. The other three sons, named by both Mark and Matthew, were Joseph, Judas and Simon. (Simon succeeded James as bishop of Jerusalem after James was martyred in the year 62.)

St. Jerome, in the fifth century, wrote about Jesus’ appearance to James in his book De Viris Illustribus. He wrote that he had recently translated into Greek and Latin the early Christian document titled “The Gospel according to the Hebrews,” which still exists today but is not included in the New Testament.

It says that James “had made an oath to eat no bread after he had drunk the cup of the Lord until he saw him risen from those who sleep.” It then says that Jesus appeared to James, took some bread, spoke a blessing, and gave the bread to James with the words: “My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man is risen from those who are asleep.”

Up to that time, James had been skeptical of his younger half-brother John’s Gospel stated, “Not even his brothers had much confidence in him” (Jn 7:5), and Mark’s Gospel reports that Jesus’ family at one point thought he was out of his mind (Mk 3:21) and went to take him home.

After Jesus’ appearance to James, though, James devoted himself to preaching the Gospel to his fellow apostles and countrymen, the Jews, and was the acknowledged leader of the Church in Jerusalem. He is mentioned prominently throughout the Acts of the Apostles. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians was then, and is now, the basic teaching of Christianity about Christ’s resurrection.

Paul was insistently concerned about it when he wrote to the Corinthians, saying that our very salvation depends upon the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Christians are not given a chance in deciding whether or not to believe in the Resurrection.

Some people confuse resurrection with resuscitation. Christians do not believe that Jesus was only resuscitated as he himself resuscitated Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain and the daughter of Jairus.

Jesus rose from the dead with a glorified body, one that could pass through the locked doors where the Apostles stayed, one that could appear to the disciples on the road to Emmaus and could just as quickly disappear. And yet it was Jesus’ body, one that Thomas could touch when he was invited to examine Jesus’ wounds. Christians believe in the Resurrection has met with incomprehension and opposition from the beginning.

In the early fifth century, St. Augustine wrote, “On no point does the Christian faith encounter more opposition than on the resurrection of the body.”

Yet it has always been, and remains today, the cornerstone of the Christian faith.
Our Easter Vigil: A very different and dramatic night

By Fr. David K. O’Rourke, O.P.

Catholic News Service

Holy Week and Easter are my favorite time of the year. The rites for these days are so concrete, so physically engaging. The blessing of the palms and procession into the church on Palm Sunday, the removal of the Eucharist and stripping of the altar on Holy Thursday, and the adoration of the cross on Good Friday all involve many people in the retelling of the origins of their faith.

But one rite more than others proves compelling, not just for me but also for our Church family, and that is the baptism of adult catechumens during the Holy Saturday Vigil.

I am the pastor of a tiny, small-town parish, which is home to many people on the move. The turnover in the local housing units is large. The mobility is not just geographic, with folks following job opportunities from place to place. For many people, the mobility is personal. They are trying to figure out where they are going in life, who they want to go with and what they want to do.

For some, these questions are also spiritual. Their search for direction helps turn wanderers into pilgrims. For many people, the mobility is personal. They are trying to figure out where they are going in life, who they want to go with and what they want to do.

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The adults preparing for baptism dress in white robes. After a ceremony that begins in darkness, they stand out from everyone else along with their sponsors. The difference is very visual, very dramatic.

The ceremony leads up to the actual act of baptism when the celebrant pours newly blessed water from the font over the catechumens’ heads as he repeats the words of baptism taken right out of Scripture.

The words of the creed are turned into a series of questions addressed to the white-robed adults. “We believe” becomes “Do you believe?”

The ceremony is powerful and engaging. The blessing of the palms and procession into the church on Palm Sunday, the removal of the Eucharist and stripping of the altar on Holy Thursday, and the adoration of the cross on Good Friday all involve many people in the retelling of the origins of their faith.

The interns for baptism of adult catechumens during the Holy Saturday Vigil.

Some become Catholics through baptism. For adults, the search for direction helps turn wanderers into pilgrims. For some, these questions are also spiritual. Their search for direction helps turn wanderers into pilgrims. For many people, the mobility is personal. They are trying to figure out where they are going in life, who they want to go with and what they want to do.

These lifelong Catholics are there to witness the newly baptized make that choice during a dramatic and powerful public ceremony.

(Dominican Father David K. O’Rourke is pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Pont Redmond, Calif., and a senior fellow at Santa Fe Institute in Berkeley, Calif.)
Dear Catholic Educators:

I extend to you the warmest of welcomes to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and its See City. We are excited and proud that you have chosen to hold the 105th Annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention here at the “Crossroads of America.” I also welcome all the parish catechetical leaders who are here to take part in the National Parish Catechetical Directors Convocation.

Educators all, you are key to the future of our Church, and the future of our society. You have the privilege—and the serious responsibility—of shaping future generations.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

Welcome educators to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Due to chemotherapy treatments I will be unable to attend the convention, but I will pray that your time in Indianapolis will be inspiring and that you will return to your local parishes energized in your commitment to be good stewards of our most precious resource: our children, youth and young adults.

I hope during your convention that you will draw inspiration from St. Theodora Guérin, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. Tours of historic St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis will also be available. March 26 will also feature a tour of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis for 40 delegates, and a free “Teachers’ Night Out” at the Marriott Hotel Ballroom with music and dancing sponsored by QIP/Reader’s Digest.

College Day is March 27 and features a special “Catechists’ Track.” College students and volunteer parish religious educators may attend all sessions, including special offerings for catechists for only $25 (registered in advance). A reception for 300 will be held that evening at the}


Attracting the NCEA annual convention to Indianapolis is important and exciting, said Bob Desautels, a senior manager of convention services for the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association. “This is a very prestigious convention,” Desautels said. “You can’t overstate the importance of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and specifically the Office of Catholic Education, in successfully conducting this convention.”

Many local events are planned for convention week co-sponsored by the archdiocese and various partners. On March 24, up to 50 delegates may travel to St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, the home of St. Theodora Guérin, Indiana’s first saint, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. Tours of historic St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis will also be available. On March 25, a reception will be held for 500 guests at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway sponsored by Catapult Learning, and a Sacred Sounds Concert will be held at St. John the Evangelist Church, featuring the musical talents of archdiocesan students.

Health Day will be held on March 26. Delegates will be able to “travel” through a model heart and learn how to be more heart-healthy courtesy of St. Vincent and St. Francis hospitals of Indianapolis. Free health screenings will be offered, and participants will also be invited to donate blood on site for the Indiana Blood Center.

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Archdiocese of Indianapolis schools set Blue Ribbon record

By G. Joseph Peters

When U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced the 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon awards in September 2005, Archdiocese of Indianapolis schools received the award. Five of those were Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

An awards ceremony was held in Washington, D.C., in November. Two representatives from each school—typically the principal and a teacher—participated in the ceremony, and received a plaque and a flag signifying their school’s Blue Ribbon status. Only 295 schools nationwide were honored for 2005, including 50 private and religious schools.

The story has been similar each fall for five years. Four schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received Blue Ribbon awards in 2003, six schools in 2004, five schools in 2005, six schools in 2006, and one in 2007 for a total of 22 awards in the past five years. Before 2003, eight schools had received Blue Ribbons under the former Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence (BRSE) program.

Since the first Blue Ribbon was awarded in 1985, 24 Catholic schools in the archdiocese have earned one national Blue Ribbon. There are 71 Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

Holy Family School in New Albany, Ind., received its second Blue Ribbon award in 2005. St. Jude School and St. Lawrence School, both in Indianapolis, and Cathedral High School, a private school in Indianapolis (2004), also have been honored twice. Roncalli High School in Indianapolis has earned the honor three times.

Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received more Blue Ribbons during the last five years than any other diocese. We believe that no other diocese in the nation has more Blue Ribbons than the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for the Blue Ribbon Schools program.

The 2005-06 Blue Ribbon award to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is the first school in the history of the national Blue Ribbon Schools program.

In 2005-06, she gave four regional presentations in the archdiocese to potential Blue Ribbon applicants and helped two schools with their applications. She also served as a Blue Ribbon School visitor under the Blue Ribbon Blue School study. Her belief is that helping others by sharing what she learned on those visits. As a longtime administrator, she said that the Blue Ribbon process has energized her, and she hopes to apply for St. Jude to receive a third Blue Ribbon.

Jerry Ernstberger is another two-time Blue Ribbon School principal at Holy Family School in New Albany.

He noted that Holy Family has earned the award under the two sets of criteria.

The award recognizes schools with high quality in several components of school life; the second is based on our students’ high achievement on standardized tests.

Ernstberger added, “I think there is an expectation of higher standards that comes with receiving the honor, especially the second time. Parents, teachers and even students realize that we have to be more accountable than ever before because of the recognition we have received.

“So, we expect to work even harder and we hope to be more accountable in our collaborative. I think that attitude and commitment will promote continued success for our students,” he said. Parents make many sacrifices to provide the highest quality Catholic education and faith formation for our students, and a Blue Ribbon is a huge public recognition for them.”

Joe Hollowell is the longtime president and former principal of Roncalli High School, and Chuck Weisenbach is the principal. They and the Roncalli team have sought and earned three Blue Ribbons, a record in Indiana.

“I believe that being selected as a Blue Ribbon School adds a level of credibility to any school’s claims of excellence in academic and co-curricular programming,” Hollowell said. “It is a credible third party—the U.S. Department of Education—confidence that a school has met a certain standard of excellence.

“The designation can’t be purchased or won through glossy advertising. When parents are looking at today’s tuition costs, there is a new degree of scrutiny as to whether or not their child will pay dividends in the life of their children,” Hollowell said. “The Blue Ribbon designation helps the school’s public relations claims to detect the potential of a real return on investment for their children.”

Hollowell added, “In 1993, the first year we received the Blue Ribbon recognition, we graduated 724 students. This fall, 15 years and three Blue Ribbons later, we began with an enrollment of 1,147.”

Department of Education visits schools the past five years by Kristine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education regional representative, has visited each of the 22 schools in the archdiocese that earned a Blue Ribbon award.

She meets with administrators and teachers, visits classrooms and speaks to the student body at an assembly, affirming their Blue Ribbon status with a special certificate. She always stays to observe student prayers, performances and cheers.

This has been no small undertaking on her part with so many schools to visit and distances between schools that are 100 miles or more apart in the archdiocese.

The special events are an opportunity for the children to celebrate their achievement. It helps students to “… see themselves as part of a larger picture, and it recognizes them” according to Lentz, who has accompanied Coln on the many of the school visits.

Cohn told students and teachers at St. Michael School in Greenfield, Ind., that there are four things that make up a good school: “… committed community, excellent teachers, involved parents and great students. You are one of 11 schools in the state to be honored as a Blue Ribbon school, which means that all those involved with the school have taken a leadership role to do what is right.”

Former Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, proclaimed July 7, 2005, as “St. Thomas Aquinas School Day” in the city in recognition of that school’s Blue Ribbon.

In presenting the proclamation, the mayor said, “This means you’re the best of the best. … You not just to a few great involved parents … the school is well-run. (and) each of you students works really hard every day to do your best.”

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has experienced great success in having a large number of schools to participate in the Blue Ribbon Schools over the years. This has not been because of a formal program, but through subtle encouragement, support in a demanding process.

Archdiocesan officials like to think that our archdiocesan curriculum improvement efforts have also contributed significantly to student performance. The new NCLB criteria for the Blue Ribbon start with a “gateway.”

Schools must pass through the “gateway” with high standardized test scores before any other criteria are considered. Schools need to know when they are eligible through good management and sharing of test data.

The Blue Ribbon brings public recognition, but also accountability and even higher expectations for performance. It places the school’s achievements in a larger context — on a bigger stage. It is a great public “thank you” to parents who pay the bills, and it affirms their investment in Catholic education.

Archdiocese’s national Blue Ribbon schools

Christine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education official, celebrates with St. Christopher students in Indianapolis after their school was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

2007

St. Pius X, Indianapolis

2006

Christ the King, Indianapolis

St. Bartholomew, Columbus

St. Lawrence, Indianapolis

St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg

St. Monica, Indianapolis

St. Monica Memorial High School, Madison

2005

Holy Family, New Albany

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis

St. Michael, Greenfield

St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis

St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis

2004

St. Barnabas, Indianapolis

St. Christopher, Indianapolis

St. Luke, Indianapolis

St. Mary, New Albany

St. Mary, North Vernon

Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

2003

St. Jude, Indianapolis

St. Louis, Indianapolis

St. Paul, Sellersburg

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

2001

Holy Family, New Albany

2000

St. Charles, Bloomington

1999

Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School, Clarksville

1997

St. Jude, Indianapolis

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1994

St. Lawrence School, Indianapolis

1993

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1991

Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

1985

St. Mark School, Indianapolis

Annie “Mickey” Lenz

The 2008 Recipient of the F. Sadlier Dinger Award

This award recognizes Mickey’s outstanding leadership and contribution to Catholic education in Indiana for nearly five decades as classroom teacher, principal, archdiocesan administrator and, since 1998, as executive director of Catholic Education and Faith Formation. Mickey, the recipient of the 2008 F. Sadlier Dinger Award for Catholic Education and Faith Formation, has had a significant and long-lasting impact.

Congratulations and Thank You

Mickey, and thank you for your dedication to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Office of Catholic Education!
Archbishop of Indianapolis guides nation at crossroads

By Ken Ogorek

Catholic education, in particular religious education, is at a crossroads of sorts.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis continues to help guide the authentic renewal of faith formation in schools, parish catechetical programs and various other settings for education in religion nationwide.

Ken Ogorek

A national leader

When the Catechism of the Catholic Church became available in the mid-1990s, our American bishops sprang in to action establishing their “Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.”

Simply put, this committee’s work has greatly improved the doctrinal content of textbooks and other resources used to teach religion in various settings.

Archbishop Buechlein was instrumental in this effort and continues to fill a major role in spearheading efforts to provide reliable materials for truly excellent religious education.

Our own Catechism

Archbishop Buechlein was deeply involved with the process that gives us our own United States Catechism for Adults.

Why do we need an official American catechism?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church suggests that groups of bishops throughout the world produce local catechisms—articulations of the Catholic faith that accurately express the doctrines in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, yet communicate them in ways that speak directly to people of specific regions, cultures and nations.

With Archbishop Buechlein’s involvement, our U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has blessed us with a great resource for adult religious education—a very important area of faith formation.

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, then, will guide teacher training, catechetical certification and overall adult religious education for decades to come.

Local leadership, national impact

In southern and central Indiana, Archbishop Buechlein has overseen the implementation of strategies for religious education that are in turn used by several dioceses throughout the U.S.

For example:

• The Ad Hoc Committee to Catechesis—another document that Archbishop Buechlein helped to bring about—guides all of our Catholic education efforts from curriculum and assessment through approval of textbooks to teacher and catechist formation and certification.

Decisions at a crossroads

From the late 1960s through the early 1990s, some methodological gains were made in religious education even if its doctrinal content wasn’t as clear as it could have been.

Without losing those gains, we have an exciting opportunity to bring greater clarity to Catholic education in light of documents like the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (USCCA) and earlier crafting of the USCCA and earlier crafting of the United States Catholic Catechism (USCCB) and earlier crafting of the United States Catholic Catechism (USCCB).

Youth ministry in action: ‘Ding Dong, Ditch and Run’ builds community

By Rose Lehman

Several years ago, our youth team at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind., was looking for a way to show our appreciation to some elderly parishioners who had been very involved in the life and growth of our parish.

This was born the “Nativity Set Delivery” program or what is now referred to as “Ding Dong, Ditch and Run”—3DR for short.

For 10 days in the middle of December, one figure from a Nativity set is delivered to parishioners’ homes one at a time. With each delivery, the Nativity story grows.

Each day, a group of youth and family members stop at the houses of the parishioners. They ring the doorbell and run back to the car—“ding-dong, ditch and run.”

“IT’s been such a joy when the doorbell rings to see what unfolds in the little packages,” said 3DR recipients Betty Jo and Gene Murphy.

“Initially, I heard people wondering what was going on,” commented Father Sonny Day, pastor of Holy Family. “People like the mystery of it.”

The youths have fun trying not to get caught, and the recipients have fun trying to catch them.

“It was really funny to see how all the senior citizens tried to catch us each night,” said youth participant Katherine Finn. “I think they enjoyed it as much as we did.”

On the last day, the youths and families deliver the stable and the Baby Jesus, along with cookies, and sing Christmas carols to those to whom they have served.

The first year, Holy Family delivered Nativity sets to the homes of two parishioners. Last Christmas, the program’s sixth year of existence, six sets were delivered.

Recipients say it brings both joy and meaning to the Christmas season.

(Rose Lehman is youth minister at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind. For more information on youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, contact Father Jonathan Meyers, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, at jmeyers@archindy.org.)

Archdiocese of Indianapolis reflects the NCEA’s commitment to faith-filled education. The archdiocese has 151 parishes serving more than 230,000 Catholics. Its 60 elementary and 11 high schools educate more than 23,000 students. Another 17,000 students are in parish religious education programs in 39 counties of southern and central Indiana.

Catholic schools in the archdiocese have also earned 31 national Blue Ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education, including 22 in the past five years, more than any other diocese.†
22 schools received state-of-the-art technology, including new computer labs and classroom PCs. The full Project EXCEED has successfully moved to 13 schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis through Project E. The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) calls for pay for performance as one of its major elements. The TAP program has been implemented in 13 schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis through Project EXCEED. Goal One: Implementing value-added assessment model in all 67 archdiocesan schools. Achieved a 20 percent increase in the number of students served with special needs—those who have advanced capabilities, who struggle with traditional modes of teaching and learning, who use English as a second language or who fight to overcome the challenges of poverty.

The second recommendation called for strategies that would assist them to become better teachers. Teachers who participate in Project EXCEED have learned from the TAP experience that can be applied to their classroom, where they often are most needed. As one teacher put it, "By implementing TAP, we have been able to provide a common way for good teachers to increase their salaries is to become administrators. Through Project EXCEED, Goal Two: Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) assists teachers in multiple career paths. TAP provides the opportunity for good teachers and administrators to move to the teaching profession—and keep them there—by making it rewarding to be a good teacher. TAP teachers are evaluated and promoted for how well they perform their jobs.

As teachers move through the ranks, their special needs—those who have advanced capabilities, who struggle with traditional modes of teaching and learning, who use English as a second language or who fight to overcome the challenges of poverty. In the archdiocese, archdiocesan educators, extensive training opportunities and resources to implement change at the classroom level have helped to create a community of exceptional teachers and administrators. TheCriterion Friday, March 21, 2008, the Official Journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, November/December 2006. Used with permission.)

At the heart of this new attitude is what we mean by "value-added." Teaching is not just a profession, but a calling. The review team also cited the interrelated nature of the innovative programs and approaches. TheCriterion Friday, March 21, 2008, the Official Journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, November/December 2006. Used with permission.)

Most people agree that the best teachers have learned from the TAP experience that can be applied to their classroom, where they often are most needed. As one teacher put it, "By implementing TAP, we have been able to provide a common way for good teachers to increase their salaries is to become administrators. Through Project EXCEED, Goal Two: Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) assists teachers in multiple career paths. TAP provides the opportunity for good teachers and administrators to move to the teaching profession—and keep them there—by making it rewarding to be a good teacher. TAP teachers are evaluated and promoted for how well they perform their jobs. TheCriterion Friday, March 21, 2008, the Official Journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, November/December 2006. Used with permission.)

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One of the most important aspects of TAP is the value-added assessment model. This model measures student achievement and growth over time, allowing teachers to identify areas where students are making progress and areas where they need improvement. The model is designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of individual students and classrooms.

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Mother Theodore Catholic Academies vital to center-city education

“We carry out the mission of educating center-city school children not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic.”

—Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

Special to The Criterion

As Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein’s words resonate, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has realized the vital importance of the ministry of Catholic education in the center-city.

In 2004, Archbishop Buechlein formed a consortium of center-city schools that were not economically viable to remain operating on their own. The result is the now-named Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA).

This consortium approach assists the schools in operating more efficiently by consolidating and coordinating such areas as finance, maintenance, school improvement, Catholic identity and marketing.

“It’s not just [a sharing of] financial resources, but human resources,” said Tony Watt, MTCA chairman of the board.

One of the goals of the MTCA is to extract the principal from non-academic tasks. There is now a team of three principals for the six schools with campus directors at each site. This change in governance has brought about great efficiencies, good stewardship of resources and the empowerment of educators to do what they do best.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, named for Indiana’s first saint, St. Theodora Guérin, are Holy Angels Catholic School, Holy Cross Central School, Central Catholic School, St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy, St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Philip Neri School, all in Indianapolis.

St. Theodora was known for her dedication and selflessness in administering to the needs of others. Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are open to children of all religions, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Our schools remain anchors to the neighborhoods they serve.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are committed to closing the achievement gap for low-income and minority students. Our focus is to provide rigorous academic programs that will lead students to secondary and post-secondary education.

Our programs provide the foundation for ongoing academic achievement to students of diverse backgrounds:

• One-third of our families have annual household incomes below $13,000.
• 75 percent of our students are of minority culture.
• 72 percent of our students are low-income and qualify for the lunch program.
• 47 percent of our students are non-Catholic.

Although our center-city schools have widened the gap in long-term performance growth compared to their public school counterparts, the archdiocese is committed to value-added assessment to bring even higher levels of accountability and performance into the academies. This method measures both achievement and the child’s growth from one year to the next.

Several programs have been added to the MTCA’s educational model to ensure the best education for our students.

• The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) provides our schools with a systematic approach to professional staff restructuring and evaluates the impact of instruction on student achievement. (See the story on Teacher Impact on Student Proficiency and Growth on page 4B.)
• WIC-R Strategies (grades 1–8) enables students to become competitive academically through learning activities that build mastery in writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading.
• Reading Mastery teaches literacy skills to students in pre-school through grade 2.
• Creeer class addresses non-English speaking students, grades 3-8, who are new to the U.S.
• Latino Support Services are available at three of our schools.
• 21st Century Community Learning Grant (Project RELATES) with focus on reading, enrichment in after-school and summer programs for the MTCA Schools.
• GATTE (Gaining Access to Tomorrow’s Education).

Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education set for March 28

If you are interested in learning more about the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and other urban elementary school models from around the United States, please join us for the “Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education” from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 28.

The symposium will be held at the Indiana Convention Center, following the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) Convention, which runs from March 24 through March 27.

The symposium fee is $125 which includes the conference, continental breakfast and lunch.

(For registration information call Sarah Ley at 317-236-1513 or 800-382-9836 ext. 1513 or e-mail her at dev@archindy.org. You can also go to our Web site at www.archindy.org/ncea/symposium.html.)

• Provides tutoring and development of organizational skills.
• Helps middle school families and students transition to high school.
• Offers high school and post-secondary education site tours.
• Provides information regarding post-secondary education and career opportunities.

“Our approach is about providing a high-quality education with a strong moral base, which will lead students of all faiths and economic levels to secondary and post-secondary education,” explained Connie Zitzman, director of MTCA.

“We want our students to be leaders in the community and role models for those who come after them.”

Financial aid for the MTCA schools has come from the archdiocese through the generosity of corporations, foundations and individuals.

(For more information about Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, please call Heidi Nightingale at 317-592-4067 or 800-382-9836, ext. 4067. E-mail her at hnightingale@archindy.org.)

St. Theodora Guérin: A saint for Indiana and a role model for educators

Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born on Oct. 2, 1798, in France.

She was 24 when she entered the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir, France, a community that served as teachers and cared for the sick and poor.

The young sister was asked to head a small missionary band of sisters to America to establish a motherhouse in the frontier Diocese of Vincennes in western Indiana.

Mother Theodore and five sisters arrived at their mission, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, on Oct. 22, 1840.

Mother Theodore would establish a motherhouse, an academy (now Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College), Catholic schools and a legacy of love, mercy and justice that continues to this day.

She urged her Sisters of Providence to: “Put yourself gently into the hands of Providence.”

By the time of her death on May 14, 1856, Mother Theodore had opened schools in towns throughout Indiana and Illinois. And the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence was strong, viable and respected.

She was beatified in 1998 and was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006, in a Vatican ceremony witnessed by hundreds of Hoosier Catholics.

St. Theodore is interred in the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods near Terre Haute, Ind.†

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A marble statue of St. Theodore Guérin, the founder of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, stands outside of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The statue was sculpted by Teresa Clark of Terre Haute and carved by Nicholas Fairplay of Oberlin, Ohio. The statue will be dedicated on May 10.
Hispanic outreach program serves needs of families

By Mary Ann Wyand

Educating Hispanic children also means helping their Spanish-speaking parents and other family members with English as a New Language (ENL) instruction.

Margarita Solis Deal, program coordinator of Hispanic outreach for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, has created a series of bilingual classes to help Latino adults acclimate themselves to a new language and culture.

These evening classes held at Catholic schools with a large number of Hispanic students involve the parents in their children’s learning environment and help build community among Latino adults who are newcomers in the parish.

“They want to learn English,” Solis Deal said. “Although there are other [English language] courses available throughout the city, they feel much more comfortable coming to the school to get that resource.”

This family support is especially important for student performance. Many Spanish-speaking parents express concern about not being able to help their children with homework assignments.

Serr Rodriguez, the principal at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, said the school’s ISTEP (Indiana Standard Testing for Educational Progress) test results last year indicated that students who did not achieve Level Four or Level Five in English proficiency on the Woodcock Mutir language scale also did not pass the ISTEP test.

Elizabeth Berkshire, the Catholic Charities Indianapolis social worker assigned to St. Philip Neri School, also works with Latino parents to help them understand the benefits of computers and dangers of the Internet as well as other cultural issues of concern.

Solis Deal began her bilingual ministry five years ago at center city grade schools in Indianapolis, which are now called the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—with initial program funding through Project EXCEED.

At the time, she coordinated English as a New Language instruction for Latino students in the schools.

Now that many archdiocesan schools with a significant number of Hispanic students have added an ENL teacher to their staff as well as bilingual teachers, Solis Deal has been able to network more with school staff members throughout the archdiocese as an administrative resource.

“That was the time in which we were getting more and more Hispanic families into the Catholic schools,” she explained. “So the archdiocese started this position to look at how we respond to the needs of the families. That essentially was my task.”

Five years ago, she said, St. Philip Neri School’s enrollment was about 25 percent Hispanic and St. Anthony School’s enrollment was about 40 percent Hispanic.

“Currently, those school enrollments have exploded in terms of the percentage of Hispanic students,” Solis Deal said. “St. Philip Neri School is now 93 percent Hispanic, and St. Anthony School is now about 70 percent Hispanic.”

Recently, Solis Deal worked with student members at Holy Name School in Beech Grove, St. Ambrose School in Indianapolis, and St. Louis School in Batesville to help them with educational services for Hispanic students.

She also volunteers as the principal at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis about specific needs there.

Solis Deal presents a teacher orientation session titled “Welcoming the Latino Student into Your School: Things to Consider.”

“I will go out and work with parent groups and training sessions,” she said, “or work with the principals to see how they are getting their schools ready to support the Latino families.

“We’re finding that the size of religious education programs is tremendous in terms of working with the Hispanic population,” Solis Deal said, “but many of the schools are still limited in their resources.”

The center city schools [in Indianapolis] receive financial support, but many schools in outlying areas (six archdiocesan) are challenged by the needs of Hispanic families.”

The former English as a Second Language program was renamed a few years ago, she said, to reflect the fact that many newcomers who immigrate to the U.S. already speak two or more languages.

“Someone from Guatemala speaks Spanish and may also know their Mayan dialect, their native language,” she said. “Now they are learning a third language here.”

It’s also important to recognize cultural differences among Latinos who are English language learners, Solis Deal said. “We have people moving here from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. All these different people bring their own cultural traditions, and we need to be cognizant of that. We also work with the teachers on cultural awareness.”

Last year, she developed six workshops for administrators and educators about teaching strategies for English language learners that also address cultural issues experienced by Latino families.

She said Hispanic adults who know very little English struggle with the language barrier when raising their bilingual children and that creates stress in the home.

Many parents also are working two jobs and have very little time to participate in English classes.

“That’s a struggle that many [Latino] families face, especially when families come into the country with older students,” Solis Deal said. “Sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students come here and fit into their new culture quickly. They pick up the language and other new ways, and their parents don’t understand how they do that.”

Families who immigrate to the U.S. do not seek better opportunities, she said.

“They’re coming here to make a living and support their kids to give them a better life. They want to put food on the table.”

Because Latino cultures are very family-oriented, Solis Deal said, “when you accept an Hispanic student you also accept their family. It’s really important to connect with the parents so they feel included in their children’s education.”

(For more information contact Margarita Solis Deal at mdeal@archindy.org)†

St. Mary’s Child Care Center helps children reach their potential

Special to The Criterion

For more than 45 years, St. Mary’s Child Care Center in Indianapolis has been a leader in providing a full range of services for children who are desperately in need of special care.

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(For more information contact Margarita Solis Deal at mdeal@archindy.org)†

St. Mary’s Child Care Center offers professional development opportunities to its community and beyond.

The Seminar Series introduces the Reggio approach and its components, and one-to-one mentoring is offered to other programs serving children.

St. Mary’s Child Care Center provides financial support for educators working with children in poverty.

St. Mary’s is a member of the Indianapolis Reggio Collaborative (Butler University, Warren Township Early Childhood Program, Lawrence Township Early Childhood Family Education Center, and St. Mary’s Child Care Center) and participates in the Butler Summer Institute, drawing educators from all over the Midwest.

Significant, positive, lifelong outcomes are experienced by children who participate in a high quality early childhood program, particularly children who face extreme educational challenges.

Research studies show compelling evidence that children involved in these programs have higher IQs, achievement scores and graduation rates. They are less likely to be retained, enrolled in special education or incarcerated later in life.

No child has ever been denied services at St. Mary’s Child Care Center because a family is unable to pay. The clearly defined mission has the support of the entire community. Individual donors, foundations and the corporate community fund the programs.

Many of the largest companies in Indianapolis support St. Mary’s Child Care Center and its approach to educating the whole child. Through the collaboration of these businesses, the leadership of the center and the archdiocese, St. Mary’s is able to serve the neediest of children in the city.

These same businesses have extended their support to the nearby Theodore Catholic Academies in the center city that also work to provide educational opportunities to the economically disadvantaged children of Indianapolis.

(For more information contact Connie Sherman, St. Mary’s Child Care Center director, csherman@stmarieschildcenter.org)†
The merger of these three respected names—RCL, Benziger, and Silver Burdett Ginn Religion—is a significant moment in Catholic publishing. We want to share our enthusiasm and tell you a little bit about our new company.

Who owns RCL Benziger?
RCL Benziger is owned by CFM Religion Publishing Group, LLC. CFM also owns Standard Publishing in Cincinnati which is a non-denominational Christian publisher. However, the companies are independent and RCL Benziger continues to serve the Catholic market with Catholic materials. All our catechetical programs are submitted to the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the use of the Catechism for conformity review.

Why is Silver Burdett Ginn Religion not in the new company name?
We regret that we must phase out the use of the name Silver Burdett Ginn. Pearson Education publishes other academic products under the Silver Burdett Ginn imprint.

What products will continue to be available?
All the current product lines from RCL, Benziger, and Silver Burdett Ginn Religion are and will continue to be available. This includes all three K–8 series: Blest Are We; Faith First; and Christ Jesus, the Way.

Who is my local RCL Benziger sales representative?
You can find your local representative listed at RCLBenziger.com. Each sales representative is committed to providing you with the highest quality service.

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For your convenience, you can now order materials from all three product lines by calling one toll free number—1-877-275-4725. Our customer service representatives are eager to help you.

Visit us at the NCEA 105th Annual Convention & NPCD Convocation booths 617–624!
What can you do when you don’t feel the new life of Easter?

By Fr. John W. Crossin, O.S.F.S.

Gospel News Service

Sometimes we do not feel the new life of Easter. We can feel quite the opposite—distant and distracted. How might we deal with the ups and downs and the lethargy that is an inevitable part of the spiritual life? One response is to complain. We might tell others that Easter is much too early this year. Or we could say that the parish Lenten preparation was not as good as it normally is.

All this may be true even if it is not the underlying cause of our distance. We need to focus outward rather than inward. There are many forms of prayer in the Church. Our spiritual friends or our parish priest may have some good suggestions about forms of prayer.

Our lethargy may indicate our need for a new beginning. The virtues of others can raise us up when we are down. Yes, we are called to do for others, but sometimes we need to be on the receiving end of charity.

 Maybe it is time to move on to new forms of prayer. Maybe it is time to move on to new forms of prayer. There are many forms of prayer in the Church. Our spiritual friends or our parish priest may have some good suggestions about forms of prayer.

Our lethargy may indicate our need for a good example from others. Sometimes we need to be on the receiving end of charity. The virtues of others can raise us up when we are down.

At the Eucharist, we hear the inspired word of God. Though it may be familiar, it is deep and mysterious. We can begin to study the biblical word and listen for its deeper meaning. We all encounter the inevitable hills and valleys of the spiritual journey of life. Perseverance, charity, and a renewed life of prayer.

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Ultimately, we must ask the Spirit for new life—and be ready to go deeper into the mystery of the risen Christ.

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Call or e-mail Dana 236-1575 or ddanberry@archindy.org
By Jacob Allstott
Special to The Criterion

Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus died on the cross. As followers of Christ, we pray through the Stations of the Cross in an attempt to remember what Christ endured for our salvation, but it can be rather hard to meet Christ in his sufferings. Over the last 2,000 years, our society and lifestyles have changed dramatically so we forget what happened during the Passion of our Lord and the Crucifixion takes on more mythical proportion.

As a young man, this is how I viewed the Stations of the Cross and the Passion of Christ. I could not relate to biblical times or the spiritual significance, but on Dec. 26, 2004, all that changed. That is the day when I took on my own cross, and it was JESUS CHRIST who came and met me in my sufferings, giving me a different perspective on what Christ did for me during the Passion.

It was a normal winter day. My three brothers, Michael, Luke and Ezekiel, and I decided to go snow sledding on an inner tube. We were having a great time.

There had been 30 inches of snowfall that Christmas week, and we were making full use of it. Then it happened.

I was sledding down the hillside face-first and the inner tube got kicked out of the chute and into the side of a tree. (Station I—Jesus is Condemned to Die)

In a split second, everything in my life changed. My thoughts went from what movie should I watch that afternoon to am I going to die today?

Time seemed to stand still as I wrapped around the tree with my right side. I just wanted to hear the pop of breaking bones, while thinking that this is going to hurt.

To my surprise, I bounced back off the tree and was back on my feet trying to walk up the hill. (Station II—Jesus Carries His Cross)

I realized that all the air was trapped in my lungs. I forced it out with an excruciating cry of pain then I sunk to my knees and passed out face-first in the snow. (Station III—Jesus Falls the First Time)

My brothers must have thought that I had just died. Michael, quick to action, had Luke and Zeke go back to the house to get the car ready and call our Mom and Dad.

Michael then went down the hill on the four-wheeler to try to revive me. (Station V—Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross)

He nudged me a few times and called my name, but I did not respond. I was too heavy for him to pick me up and pack on the four-wheeler.

I was just about to ride up the hill for help when he heard me stir and say, “I’m OK, I’m OK!”

We rode up the hill and drove to the hospital. We walked straight into the emergency room, and I was so exhausted that I collapsed into a wheelchair. (Station VII—Jesus Falls the Second Time)

Michael and I were praying the whole time, but hope seemed to have left us. What we did not know was that I had ruptured my kidney on impact and pulled it away from my aorta and vena cava. (I should have bled to death in six minutes.)

I laid back on the gurney while all the doctors and nurses ran circles around me, and I prayed for God’s will to be done in my life. I knew that I could die, but I put my life in God’s hands. (Station IX—Jesus Falls the Third Time)

Then a sense of peace came over me that I had never known before. Jesus took over. It was as if I was a guest in my own body, just watching what was going on around me.

It was very sad to think about the family and loved ones I would leave behind. I had just married my girl and I had waited my whole life for it, but I was OK to go meet Jesus. I laid just there and rested in the peace of Christ. Even if I even had a moment ask me twice why I wasn’t scared to die. I could not answer her. I simply looked back at her and said “I don’t know.” (Station VI—Veronica Wipes Jesus’ Face)

Then I realized that my Mom had made it to the hospital. I looked up at her and saw tears in her eyes, and it broke my heart because she knew. I could tell she knew, but there was nothing I could do to console her. (Station IV—Jesus Meets His Mother)

They soon flew me to the University of Louisville Hospital’s Trauma Center, where I was prepared for surgery. They had to run a CAT scan to see what they were dealing with before they opened me up. The pain was unbearable as they stretched my arms over my head to send me through the machine. (Station XI—Jesus is Nailed to the Cross)

Then they were ready to operate. I remember being so exposed as they buried the operating table. I was completely naked, but did not care. (Station X—Jesus is Stripped)

I went through two life-or-death surgeries while my family and loved ones sat out in the waiting room, crying and praying. (Station VIII—Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem)

I nearly died several times that night as many doctors and nurses fought to save my life. (Station XIII—Jesus Dies on the Cross)

After hours of surgery, I was taken to the intensive care unit. (Station XVIII—Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross)

After spending the last 15 hours in torturous conversations with doctors and the agony of not knowing if they would ever see me again, my family was finally able to come in my room. It was not pretty, though.

They had given me 18 pints of blood, 20 units of platelets and 20 units of plasma to keep me alive, but it caused my entire body to swell up like a balloon.

I hardly even looked like the son that they knew. The doctors put me under sedation, and I spent the next few days in darkness. (Station XIV—Jesus is Laid in the Tomb)

I have few memories of meeting my family and loved ones as they poured into his hospital. I died many spiritual deaths during my recovery and the Lenten season that followed.

Every time I prayed the Stations of the Cross, I could see that Christ really took on all of our sins and sufferings, and he carried them with the cross to the top of Calvary.

It is a truth that has redefined my relationship with Jesus. It is the defining moment of my life and my miracle.

Every doctor I have spoken to about my accident has said that there is no medical explanation for why I am alive. The human body is not supposed to endure that kind of extreme stress, but I know that “Our sores He [Christ] carried … And by His scourging we are healed” (Is 53:4-5).

Therefore, during this Good Friday and Holy Week, I invite you to let Christ meet you in your own sufferings of loneliness, humiliation, illness and death.

Think about what pain and sufferings you have known in this life then remember the Good News of the Gospel and that JESUS CHRIST has already carried that to the cross.

So give it to Jesus: cry for those sufferings, cry for what he endured for us, pray to be healed, and may God bless you in your journey as he has blessed me and my family!

(Jacob Allstott is a teacher at St. Jude School in Indianapolis. He is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, and grew up in Our Lady of the Springs Parish in Greenfield.)

The printer of The Criterion Newspaper would like to wish you a Happy Easter.
Easter stories around the fire remind us who we are

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick
Catholic News Service

In the course of my life, I’ve spent many pleasant evenings sitting around a campfire. My earliest experiences of that pleasure were in my years in the Boy Scouts, and the campfire was often the occasion for telling stories passed on from older Scouts to younger ones through the years.

Telling stories around the fire is really an ancient practice, probably going back before recorded history. Something very similar happens when we celebrate the Easter Vigil. We gather around the Easter fire then go inside the church and tell stories that remind us of who we are.

The ancient texts we read on this most holy night recount the history of God’s dealings with humanity. Thus, they set the stage for our own experience of God’s actions in our midst today.

The Liturgy of the Word on that night begins with the Genesis account of creation. As we prepare to celebrate the new creation accomplished through the death and resurrection of the Lord, we recall the first creation where it all began.

The second reading, also from Genesis, recounts the story of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his only son to fulfill God’s will. That was not God’s will, but the story serves as a symbol of God’s love revealed in sending his only Son to save us.

The third reading is the central account in the Jewish tradition of God’s saving power, the story of the Exodus from Egypt. This night, we celebrate Christ’s “exodus” through death to new life, and we see the water of the sea as a symbol of the water of baptism through which we are saved.

The next four readings come from three of the prophets:
• Isaiah speaks of the restoration of the people of God, a promise fulfilled in our salvation through Christ Jesus. A second passage from Isaiah speaks of the banquet that God has prepared for us. It is a fitting anticipation of the Eucharist that we celebrate on this holy night.
• A passage from the prophet Baruch offers a poem in praise of divine wisdom. The Christian tradition has long seen Jesus as the incarnate wisdom of God, showing us the way to live and the way to the Father.
• The final prophetic passage comes from Ezekiel. It is another reading that promises the restoration of God’s people, but Ezekiel stresses the need for purification through water, an apt image of baptism’s power to set us free from sin.

After hearing several of these readings from the Jewish Scriptures, we turn to the New Testament and hear St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans, which describes baptism as a sharing in Christ’s death and resurrection.

The Gospel reading varies over a three-year cycle, but all three passages recount the discovery of Christ’s resurrection from the dead. This proclamation of the central truth of our faith brings our storytelling to its climax and leads us into the celebration of baptism, where new members of our community will experience in their own lives God’s power to save us and bring us to new life.

(Father Lawrence Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)

Father Sean Gann lights the paschal candle at the beginning of the Easter Vigil in 2007 at Christ the King Church in Commack, N.Y.
Ethnic customs for Easter are celebrated around the world

By Louise McNulty
Catholic News Service

When the members of some Cleveland parishes participate in “The Walk” on Good Friday, they are continuing a custom long practiced in Puerto Rico, Mexico and parts of South America.

But it is more than a Lenten practice essential for appreciating the full magnitude of Easter, said Deacon Miguel Figueroa, who serves at St. Michael the Archangel and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes on Cleveland’s lower west side.

It is part of the Easter celebration of the primarily Hispanic parishes. He explained that the walk “is important to people because it connects them to the suffering of Jesus just as it later connects them to the liberation of his resurrection.”

For the past 12 years, one walk has started at noon and covered the seven miles between St. Michael and La Sagrada Familia parishes. One man represents Christ and carries a cross. Other parishioners portray Mary, the mother of Jesus, as well as Veronica, the soldiers and others who figured prominently during Christ’s Passion.

Members of the two parishes take turns deciding where the walk will start and finish, stopping at a halfway point at a third parish, where they will take part in a service at St. Patrick Church on Bridge Avenue.

Deacon Figueroa estimates that around 300 people participate annually, including “people who join us on the way, some [of whom] aren’t even Catholic.”

“The Walk” at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was started two years ago and doesn’t include role playing.

St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Parish has strong cultural ties. It isn’t far from English. The parish also offers the Polish Lamentations, a devotion based on the psalms.

“The Walk” at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was started two years ago and doesn’t include role playing.

St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Parish is another community that sponsors a Good Friday walk on Cleveland’s near-east side.

Capuchin Franciscan Father Bob Marva, pastor of the predominantly African-American parish, said their walk doesn’t contain any special cultural features.

“We walk around the neighborhood and plant a cross for each station, giving witness to our faith in a neighborhood that has lots of crime, violence and drug problems,” he said, adding that their Palm Sunday procession and other church services incorporate African dance, drums and rhythmic traditions.

The parish also has a “Wisdom Council” comprised of members 65 or older who are recognized for wisdom and leadership in the community. They serve in an advisory capacity to the pastor, parish and parish council much like a council of elders advises the tribal leader in most African villages.

Their particular role in the Easter Vigil is one that they carry out for all parish baptisms.

“We baptize by full immersion,” Father Marva explained, “and after the newly baptized are led out to change into their Easter clothes, the council members carrying African leadership staffs lead them back into church.”

St. Stanislaus Parish in Cleveland also has strong cultural ties. It isn’t far from St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

St. Stanislaus administrator Rojdan Piernia said 75 percent to 80 percent of the parish’s 1,200 registered families are of Polish descent. The parish draws from all parts of Cleveland because of its emphasis on Polish traditions.

On Easter and throughout the rest of the year, the parish’s 10 a.m. Mass is said in Polish. During Lent, weekly Stations of the Cross are said on Fridays at 5:30 p.m. in Polish and at 7 p.m. in English. The parish also offers the blessing of baskets of food to be prepared for Easter dinner is a Polish custom.

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Society to suggest remedies. We have to know to look at some of the challenges in our
are various kinds of love. He also points out about charity,” Msgr. Schaedel told the
Philip Lawler of Greenwood, a Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat volunteer; and SS. Francis and
set by the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry and Catholic Project of Indiana.
St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) parishioner Anisa Moody of Indianapolis; Robert Rust of Greensburg,
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It's critically important to make wise and healthy choices in daily life. Lt. Gov. Skillman discussed the importance of making wise choices to reach success. The archbishop's body was recovered on March 17 after the kidnappers told Catholic officials there had been a single bullet wound, and he appeared to have been dead a week, reported the British news agency Reuters.

The archbishop's body was recovered on March 17 after the kidnappers told Catholic officials there had been a single bullet wound, and he appeared to have been dead a week, reported the British news agency Reuters. A native of Bedford, Skillman said she has been mentors to more than 5,000 middle school students during the 2007-08 school year. Their distinguished volunteer service was acknowledged by Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard, who said a proclamation honoring the peer mentors from Bishop Chatard High School, Father Theodore Jesuit Preparatory School, Roncalli High School, Cathedral Ritter High School, Catholic High School in Richmond, and Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis.

Chastity is about how I live my life on a daily basis, even when no one is watching. Talking with the younger generation about real love is always an adventure. We have come to see myself and other members of the [vocation] team as true leaders and role models to both the middle schoolers we teach and friends who have attended our programs. We are ready and well prepared to face whatever challenges we see and help our young people achieve their goals. We are always there for a sort of “refuge” from secular pressures. While the work can be challenging, God's message does not.

It's important to understand that the day-to-day decisions that you make can shape the course of your life. Just as we have the opportunity to make wise choices, so too do you. If you want to be successful, it's important that you make the right choices. If you want to be successful, it's important that you make the right choices.

My Promise to Keep is really about many, many things, but it's biggest emphasis in her message does not.

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New life for Christians takes a eucharistic form

At Easter, many parishes around the world are revitalized when newly baptized adults make their first holy Communion. Some communities may have grown lethargic, but they receive an injection of fresh life when a line of men and women step forward to receive the Eucharist for the first time and enjoy an intimate communion with their risen Lord.

New life for Christians, Pope Benedict XVI said, takes a eucharistic form. “Faith in Jesus enabled them to believe the Resurrection.”

David Copperfield feat that ‘proved’ to the disciples that he was the Messiah that enabled them to believe the Resurrection.”

When Jesus showed himself gloriously alive to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Thomas and the rest, he transformed their existence. He changed their attitudes from despair to radiant hope, and enlisted them in his mission of love and service to the whole world.

For us to experience the risen Jesus now in the Eucharist is to experience one who offers us dynamic life in abundance. He is the fullness of life—“Life” itself.

The promises made by commercials cannot be fulfilled. What we buy and own is not going to fill the emptiness of our hearts. Yet the commercials have the merit of reminding us vividly that we all yearn for life and the fullness of life. Real life comes through experiencing Jesus in the Eucharist, receiving from him some of the vitality of his risen life, and sharing that with others.

Years ago, Franco Zeffirelli directed the classic film Jesus of Nazareth. One of its masterly features was the way that Zeffirelli brought together for dramatic effect separate episodes from the life of Christ. He combined, for instance, the feeding of the 5,000 with Mary Magdalene finding Christ.

A memorable camera shot picked her out in the crowd as she sat on a heap of bread before bursting into tears of joy.

With her hands tightly gripping the bread and her moist eyes fixed on Jesus, she knew that she had found the one who is life itself. Her hungry heart had found the one who promises, “Whoever comes to me will never hunger. I am the bread of life” (Jn 6:35).

That scene from Zeffirelli’s film matched perfectly with infinite vitality and a spiritual energy that can sweep away our lethargy. “Yes, Jesus does satisfy our hearts fully and forever. When we come to him, we will never hunger. I am the bread of life” (Jn 6:35).

This is what Jesus promises us: eternal life. It is his to give because he is Life itself. With him and through him, we can truly “live beyond frontiers” and live forever!

(Rev 5:5; 14:13). Yes, Jesus does satisfy our hearts fully and forever. When we come to him, we will never hunger. I am the bread of life” (Jn 6:35).

When Jesus showed himself gloriously alive to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Thomas and the rest, he transformed their existence. He changed their attitudes from despair to radiant hope, and enlisted them in his mission of love and service to the whole world.
The fourth chapter of John’s Gospel tells us about Jesus’ meeting with a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well in Samaria. John talks about the woman’s lack of religious purity: she worshipped at a nearby synagogue, not at Jerusalem’s temple. Nevertheless, she engaged in conversation with Jesus. The story is significant because it counters the idea that Jewish purity laws should have prevented Jesus from associating with Samaritans, who were considered impure by Jews.

The animosity between Jews and Samaritans went all the way back to the time of Israel’s division into the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah, later Samaria. It is modern Nablus, and Jacob’s well is still there.

At noon, a Samaritan woman came to get water and Jesus asked her for a drink of water. This was surprising, to say the least, to an otherwise traditional Jew. Normally, Jews would take a route around the Jordan River to avoid walking through Samaria, but Jesus decided to take the more direct route. His disciples went into town to buy food while Jesus sat by the well.

At the well, the woman wasn’t the most savory of women because she had had five husbands and was then living with another man. Nevertheless, she engaged in a conversation about the differences in belief between the Jews and Samaritans. She said that her ancestors worshiped on Mount Gerizim in Samaria (in a temple they built in the fourth century B.C.) while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem.

Jesus replied that, although salvation is from the Jews, it is not only for the Jews, but for all who believe. The most startling part of the conversation happened when the woman said that she believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus replied, “I am,” which could also be translated “I am God,” name of the Old Testament. The woman had acknowledged to anyone that he was the Messiah. When Jesus’ disciples returned with food, they were shocked to find him talking with a Samaritan woman. While Jesus talked with her, the men turned around, for they could not see into the city and told her neighbors, “Come, see a man who told me everything I have done, even the thing I did not know.” Could he possibly be the Messiah? A footnote in John’s Gospel says the woman is thus presented as a missionary.

Some of the people returned to the well with the woman and asked Jesus to remain with them, which he did for two days. Thus did Jesus make his first non-Jewish convert as a result of his meeting with the woman at the well.

The little book’s message continued: “The woman at the well wasn’t the most savory of women because she had had five husbands and was then living with another man. Nevertheless, she engaged in a conversation about the differences in belief between the Jews and Samaritans. She said that her ancestors worshiped on Mount Gerizim in Samaria (in a temple they built in the fourth century B.C.) while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem.

Sometimes we become jaded about events like Easter. We know it’s the greatest event in the church year, but over time we may forget its real meaning and the astonishing importance for us.

Just imagine a world that is a place where children are routinely abused by adults with more authority, power or physical strength than they have. Imagine a world where women couple promiscuously, sometimes carelessly producing many of the children who are abused later on.

People use each other sexually, materially or emotionally. If they express feelings of disappointment or anger at these situations, they’re ignored or sent to expensive therapy and emotionally. If they express feelings of disappointment or anger at these situations, they’re ignored or sent to expensive therapy and emotionally. If they express feelings of disappointment or anger at these situations, they’re ignored or sent to expensive therapy and emotionally. When they express feelings of disappointment or anger at these situations, they’re ignored or sent to expensive therapy and emotionally. Many become sentimental “victims” of their own bad situations.

Victimhood, in fact, becomes a popular perception of the once abused later on.

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A few of the people returned to the well with the woman and asked Jesus to remain with them, which he did for two days. Thus did Jesus make his first non-Jewish convert as a result of his meeting with the woman at the well.

Diary of an Easter lover

An ‘Easterly’ understanding of ‘WWJD?’

Last week, I suggested that it’s prudent to ask ourselves “What would Jesus do?” in difficult or uncomfortable situations. I also called it a “cli...”

Right after writing that column, I read a daily Lenten message to my husband that challenged my perception of the once very popular saying.

My husband and I have been faithfully following The Little Black Book of Lenten Messages. It stresses the Passion of Christ according to John’s Gospel. We have done this every Lent since our pastor, Shirley Vogler Meister, sent us the booklet that comes from the Diocese of Saginaw, Mich. It is based on the writings of Bishop Kenneth Untener, who died in 2004.

In a February reading, based on the second denial that Simon Peter made after the arrest of Jesus, an excellent point is made: The question “What would Jesus do?” could be misleading because of the “would.” It could seem as though Jesus were not part of here-and-now situations. That is the opposite of saying “What would Jesus think I should do?” and “What does Jesus think I should do?”

In a column about a basketball injury to a spectator who is a friend, I suggested that—in such a situation and at different times of the week—when reacting to something bad that is happening to someone near us—we should at least ask what Jesus would do?

However, since Jesus should be part of the present moment in everything happening to Christians do, we should put our question in the now–moment, i.e., “What do you think I should do?” and “What does Jesus think I should do?”

After each reading in The Little Black Book is this note: “Spend some quiet time with the Lord.” I like to do that all year long, not just during Lent.

The little book’s message continued: “Asking ourselves what Jesus thinks about a given situation can change our perspective. Nicky Ashroyd--killing the unborn, using/stealing weapons of mass destruction, retaliation. … What does Jesus think right now? Waffling on those kinds of issues is the way we might be more likely to deny that we are a disciple of Jesus.”

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The Little Black Book is published by Little Books of the Diocese of Saginaw. For more information, call 989-779-6693 or log on to www.saginaw.org.

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

Go and Make Disciples/John Valenti

Are we happy yet?

It’s a part of our American culture to pursue happiness. Pursuing happiness is one of those inalienable rights secured in our Declaration of Independence. But herein lies the hedonistic, it is interesting to run across some statistics about what exactly makes people happy.

According to a report of a survey conducted in 2006, which can be accessed at http://pewresearch.org just out showed 32 percent of the people in our country say they are very happy. Another half say they are pretty happy and 15 percent consider themselves not too happy.

In this survey, several statistics stand out. People who went to religious services weekly or more are happier (43 percent are very happy) than those who attended more than once a month (32 percent) or seldom or never (26 percent).

This correlation between happiness and frequency of church attendance has been a consistent finding in the General Social Surveys taken over the years. The same pattern holds for reliability in all major religious denominations.

For example, 38 percent of all Catholics who attended weekly or more report being very happy, while just 28 percent of Catholics who attend church less often say they are very happy.

One reason that religious people turn to religion for support is the connection, one of the chief ingredients for happiness. They also live with the sense that there is a hope for an afterlife that religious faith provides in daily life. This helps people live meaningfully and in many surveys it shows up as well.

Married people (43 percent are very happy) are a good bit happier than unmarried people. In this survey, several statistics stand out. People who attend religious services weekly or more report being very happy, while also for the old as well as the young. Interestingly, people who have children are about as happy as unmarried people without children. And unmarried people with children are about as happy as unmarried people without pets.

There is virtually no difference in happiness by gender and only a bit of a variance in happiness by age. The age data runs counter to the prevailing ethos of the popular culture, which is forever extolling the blessings of youth. It turns out that the young are less happy than the middle-aged or old. There are many things in this world that can bring us temporary happiness—sufficient money, business success, being in a loving family, loyal friends. But no worldly thing can bring enduring joy and happiness. We might become poor, fail at business and lose our health, even our spouse or our friends. Even if we gain all these things and lose them later, we must leave them all behind.

God wants us to be happy. The good news is that Jesus loves us. Our Declaration assures us, “In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33).

John Valenti is the associate director of Evangelization and Faith Formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at jvalenti@archindy.org.

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From the Editor Emeritus/Cynthia Dewes

Biblical Women: The woman at the well

Thirty-second in a series

The animosity between Jews and Samaritans went all the way back to the year 722 B.C. Thousands of Jews were deported to Assyria and people from foreign nations were moved into the land to fill the void in Israel. The Jews who remained in Israel, now called Samaria, intermarried with the newcomers, resulting in a mixed religion. After the Jews—who later were exiled to Babylon after the fall of the Kingdom of Judah—returned to their homeland, they refused to accept the Samaritans.

The woman at the well wasn’t the most savory of women because she had had five husbands and was then living with another man. Nevertheless, she engaged in a conversation about the differences in belief between the Jews and Samaritans. She said that her ancestors worshiped on Mount Gerizim in Samaria (in a temple they built in the fourth century B.C.), while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem.

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**Daily Readings**

**Monday, March 24**
- Acts 2:14-23
- Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11
- Matthew 28:8-15

**Tuesday, March 25**
- Acts 2:36-41
- Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
- John 20:11-18

**Wednesday, March 26**
- Acts 3:1-10
- Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9

**Thursday, March 27**
- Acts 3:11-26
- Psalm 82:1b, 5-9

**Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen**

Stations of the Cross devotion dates back to late Middle Ages

Q **uestions have arisen in our parish this Lent concerning the Stations of the Cross. Obviously, some stations have no basis in the Bible. How did they originate? Is there a connection between them and the route our Lord took to Calvary on the way to be crucified?** (Missouri)

A **For those who are not familiar with the Catholic devotion, the Stations of the Cross is a series—today usually 14—of images depicting scenes from the Good Friday journey of Jesus from Pontius Pilate’s headquarters to the Crucifixion on Calvary. The person or group “making” the stations prays and reflects briefly on each incident. The practice originated with early pilgrims to the Holy Land, who desired to follow the way our Lord walked on the day he died. The devotion as we know it, however, developed during the very late Middle Ages, generally the 1200s and 1300s. These were tumultuous and painful times when most Christians found practicing and passing on their faith extremely difficult. Into this picture came religious figures that helped popularize a variety of expressions of prayer and faith, such as the rosary (the Dominicans) and the Christmas crèche (St. Francis of Assisi). The Stations of the Cross was one of these devotions, serving as both a prayer and a sort of catechism about the sufferings of Christ. Franciscan communities, who had already been given charge of the holy places in Jerusalem, introduced the devotion to the Latin-rite Catholics, helped popularize the Stations of the Cross devotion, which evolved into many forms over the years. At one time, they were numbered as many as 24 stations, including seven falls under the cross. The 14 stations as we know them became fairly stabilized by Pope Clement XI in 1731. In recent decades, some publications of prayers for the Stations of the Cross have carried a 15th station of meditation calling to mind the victory of Jesus over death in the resurrection. The city of Jerusalem was levied by the Roman armies about 40 years after Jesus’ death, making the precise locations of his falls, for example, on the way to his crucifixion impossible to determine. The markings along the Via Dolorosa (Sorrowful Way) in Jerusalem today are comparatively recent. As you note, some of these events are not found in Scripture. The fourth station, for example, commemorates a meeting of Jesus and his mother Luke notes that Jesus stopped along the way to speak to “many women who mourned and lamented him;” but he doesn’t say Mary was among them. John places Mary at the foot of the cross, not on the road. The eighth station where Veronica wipes the face of Jesus is also not described in the Gospel accounts. Thus, more than half of the stations are based more on ancient tradition than on Gospel accounts. Interestingly, beginning in 1991, Pope John Paul II was the first pope to employ a Bible-based format for the traditional papal commemoration of the Stations of the Cross in Rome’s Colonnades on Good Friday. Pope Benedict XVI used the same form in 2007. The biblical format used by Pope John Paul and Pope Benedict may be found on the Internet by typing in “biblical stations of the cross” on Google.com. In any of these formats, the Stations of the Cross are a means of prayer in Catholic tradition for reflection on our Lord’s suffering and death.**

(A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions that Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com.)

**Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column**

The Criterion invites readers to submit articles or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, telephone number with submissions. Send material for consideration to The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.

**Easter Sunday/Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord**

Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

**Sunday, March 23, 2008**

- Colossians 3:1-4
- John 20:1-9

Rejoicing and exalting its great faith and hope for humanity, the Church today celebrates Easter. The Easter, the feast of the Resurrection of the Lord.

The Church’s first celebration of the miracle over earthly death occurs in the marvelous liturgy of Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil, when most parishes receive new members into the Church. In this vigil liturgy, the symbols of fire, light and water magnificently reveal the mystery and the promise of the Resurrection.

The readings cited above are read in the Mass on Easter Sunday. The first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles. Scripture readings from Acts will occur again and again during the Easter Season. Acts is very interesting, giving us insight into the life of the first Christians.

Gathered in Jerusalem, around the Apostles, with Mary among them, they lived in charity, prayer and faith. Their lives are examples to us. Their reverence for the Apostles, and obvious submission to the Apostles, teach us reverence for the Apostles, and obvious attribution of Jesus in the world. The Apostles link us to the first Christians.

They are focused on our sins and ourselves. Continually we throw ashes on ourselves. We receive the living water that God provides through our prayers and the Scriptures. We are never alone on our journey. As I sat in the quiet at the St. Francis Hospital Chapel in Indianapolis, I looked up and saw that I was sitting by two very familiar Stations of the Cross.

The first station depicts Christ carrying the cross and the Roman soldier telling Simon to help Jesus with his burden. The other station portrays Jesus stopping for a moment on His journey and receiving water from a woman.

We often perceive Lent as a time of sadness, being gloomy and having to continually throw ashes on ourselves. We are focused on our sins and ourselves. As I sat in the quiet of the chapel, I saw that ever familiar story a little differently. A Stations of the Cross devotion.

We were given water for our journey. We do not carry our cross by ourselves. We never do our journey. Our Father has provided us with everything we need for our journey.

By Martha Ardis

*(Martha Ardis resides in New Palestine and is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. The hand of Christ is depicted by artist Lucas Turnbloom.)*
What is the difference between grieving and mourning? Grieving is a private, interior experience that follows the death of a loved one. Dr. Alan Wolfelt explained, and mourning is an external experience of sharing loss with others.

Both grieving and mourning are necessary for bereaved people to begin the difficult process of healing and start living in new ways, the nationally known author and grief counselor from Fort Collins, Colo., explained in a brief telephone interview on March 17. Wolfelt will present two programs titled “Finding Your Way” during a three-hour community seminar from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. on April 8 and “Living in the Shadow of the Ghosts” from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. on April 9. The registration fee of $30 includes lunch and handout materials.

Wolfelt’s community program is sponsored by Flanner and Buchanan Inc., the archdiocesan Catholic Cemeteries Association and the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries, as their sixth annual mission day. Both programs will be held at the Community Life Center at Washington Park Cemetery, 10612 E. Washington St., in Indianapolis. Registrations are required by March 28.

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