**Their roots go deep**

By John Shaughnessy

As soon as he received the invitation, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke knew he was in a world far removed from the suburban Indianapolis area where he grew up. "The invitation to a 'hog slaughter' came from a southern Indiana family that belonged to one of the rural parishes where Father Adrian served as an associate pastor at the time.

"It was one of the great moments of facing the fact that I wasn't brought up on a farm," Father Adrian recalls with a smile. "It was a Saturday after Thanksgiving, a cold day. They slaughtered nine hogs. And they taught me every step of the way. I'm standing around with this huge, extended farm family—five to six families in all—telling stories and sipping homemade wine.

"I'm watching the women in the kitchen mixing the sausage with their secret recipes, and I'm watching the men in the barn cutting up the hams, the pork chops and the shoulder roasts. It was incredible for me, growing up as a person in the suburbs who thought food comes from a grocery store. Instead, it comes from farms and families. It changes a person when you realize that fact. I have a deeper appreciation for the land, the farmers and the people I serve.

It was one of Father Adrian's first lessons in the differences between rural parishes and urban parishes. Both may be part of the same archdiocese, and they undoubtedly share the same Catholic faith, but there are noticeable differences in the way that their respective members live their life and their faith.

**Their roots go deep**

Rural parishes and their members are distinctive, whether it is St. Mary Parish in Lanevile, St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County, Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Cedar Grove, Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown or any of the other "country" parishes in the archdiocese.

"What I like about living in the country is the rural mentality is a lot less 'Type A,'" says Father Adrian, who

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**Fabric of rural parishes includes deep connection to faith and family**

By John Shaughnessy

Joseph Therber faced two appealing choices recently when he considered his future and the future of one of the proud, tradition-rich Catholic high schools in Indianapolis. He could continue his fulfilling efforts as the executive director of stewardship and development for the archdiocese—efforts that helped lead to pledges of $114 million for the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future capital campaign. Or he could apply for the position of president of Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis—a school where he has taught, coached and served as the athletic director and a member of the board of directors during the past 22 years.

As he struggled with the two choices that both pulled at his heart, Therber met with Archbishop Daniel M. Bechlein to talk about the different paths. When the meeting in the archbishop's office neared its end, the archbishop told Therber that he would support either choice and encouraged him to pray about it.

Then came the moment that changed everything for Therber. "We were talking in the waiting area outside his office when I noticed a wooden statue of St. Theodora [Guérin]," Therber recalled. "One of us said I should pray to her. We chuckled and I said, 'That might take me into the wilderness like she was.'

"That was a pivotal part of the whole thing for me. In faith and hope, she stepped into a tremendous ministry. That cast everything into a broader light for me."

It also led the 46-year-old Therber to accept the position as Seccina's president, starting on Oct. 27.
Fr. Harold Ripperger also appreciates the community in the parish, says Father Adrian, who grew up in St. Barbara Parish in Indianapolis. “You see that approach in the suburbs and urban parishes. In any rural parish, that’s not the task. The people already know each other, and they pride themselves on being connected. Many are blood relatives. Their roots go deep. For them, the parish community is a faith expression of being connected to each other.”

“A self-proclaimed ‘farm boy,’ Father Harold Ripperger also appreciates faith communities in rural areas. “My preference is for an agricultural type of existence where you have grandmom and grandpop and their families living in the same area,” says Father Ripperger, the longtime pastor of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville in the New Albany Deanery. “I grew up on a 40-acre farm in Franklin County in the Brookville area. Almost everyone in St. Peter Parish there is my relative. People in rural parishes tend to help each other out more because they’re probably related to each other. In a small town like Lanesville, if something happens down the street—good or bad—people respond.” That attitude also extends to helping the parishes in rural areas, says Father Bill Williams. “Many of the people in my parishes are farmers. They work with their hands, and they use those gifts to help the parish,” says Father Williams, the administrator of St. Michael Parish in Brookville and Holy Guardian Angel’s Parish in Cedar Grove, both in the Connersville Deanery. “In many of these smaller communities, the parish is the hub of social life as well as the spiritual center. They recognize that they need to come together to make it strong because if they don’t no one else will take care of it. It’s done for the deep love of God and the Church.”

Benedictine Father Guy Mansini has noticed that same quality as the pastor of St. Isidore Parish in Perry County. In his six years as the spiritual leader of that Tell City Parish, he has learned a lot about ministry in rural faith communities. “If a pastor wants to change things, he’d have to move slowly,” Father Guy says. “They’re small places, but they’re rooted and change is gradual.”

Challenges and connections

There are also challenges that seem inherent to rural parishes. As an example, Father Arian mentions the Tell City Deanery, where most of the parishes are rural and small in membership numbers. “The challenge is to make ends meet, to keep the parish going, to pay the bills,” he says. “The parish populations and demographics have gotten so it’s hard to financially support the parishes. The parish festivals really make a difference. They help us get through the budget year.”

The other close-knit, blood-connected roots of rural parishes can also present a challenge for new people who are just moving into the area. Considered as “outsiders,” new parishioners can be viewed with a certain wariness, at least at first. The focus on family connections can even occasionally have a less-than-desired impact on faith development, Father Arian says.

“They feel their faith is very much rooted in the family,” he says. “Their Catholicism is cultural. They are deeply rooted in their Catholic faith and they identify with it in the same way they identify with their family. They take it for granted sometimes. Some of them just might come to Mass as Christmas or Easter or to have their child baptized. I talk about it in my homilies. I preach to these cultural Catholics that to be Catholic means to practice your faith.”

So, like the Church itself, there are strengths, imperfections and challenges that are part of the fabric of rural parishes. Yet even as Father Arian tries to objectively offer his assessment of rural parishes, he leaves no doubt that leading those kinds of parishes is what he wants to do. Rural parishes and their parishioners have won a place in his heart. After serving his three parishes for most of the past decade, he has been taken in as family, sharing in experiences that have included “working at a turkey farm, putting up hay and watching a calf being pulled out of her mother, who was having a hard time giving birth.” Indeed, Father Arian says that if you were looking for the perfect way to capture a rural parish, it would be in its parish picnic—a time when people join together, eat and talk, everyone savoring the bonds of faith, family and fellowship that connect them. That life has left its mark on him. "When I go home to see my parents now, I get anxious being in the suburbs," he says. "They’ve turned me into a country boy."
The Archdiocese of Indianapolis wants to hear your voice! We want to hear your thoughts and feelings regarding the Called to Serve: Parish Stewardship and United Catholic Appeal. Please take a moment to complete our confidential survey at www.archindy.org/survey and let us know how you feel. Thank you in advance for your help and know that we value your input!

www.archindy.org/survey

If you do not have internet access, please call (800) 382-9836, ext. 1407 for a copy of the survey.

Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future

Hopes were high when the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future archdiocesan capital campaign was launched four years ago. As Catholics across central and southern Indiana learned about Legacy for Our Mission, they considered with hope how the campaign could further the mission of their parishes and the archdiocese as a whole.

Over the course of the four years of Legacy for Our Mission, many of those hopes have been fulfilled as more than 33,000 archdiocesan Catholics pledged $104 million and more than 14,000 volunteered their time and talent to see the campaign be a success. Corporations and foundations pledged an additional $10.4 million.

Parishes across the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries have constructed new activity centers, made extensive renovations to their current facilities and established new endowments or grown already established ones. Other parishes are still looking forward to seeing dramatic changes in the future.

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish

One is the archdiocese’s oldest existing faith community, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County in the New Albany Deanery, which was founded in 1823. In recent years, many families have moved into the area around the parish. Now its facilities are far too small to accommodate them. As a result, in 2005 the parish purchased 33 acres of land adjoining its current campus.

“If you connect that with what we already have, I think we’re only six acres short of the size of Vatican City,” joked Father John Geis, pastor of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish.

On the new land, the parish plans to construct a church that will seat up to 1,000 people (its current church seats 350) and a new parish activity center.

“We’re just outgrowing everything here, not only the church,” Father Geis said. “We’re outgrowing all of our facilities. We’re standing over the top of each other and shifting on the same day from one activity to the other.”

In order to make this hoped for growth a reality, the parish of a little more than 1,000 households used its participation in Legacy for Our Mission in 2007 to raise $8.5 million.

So the future is very much on the minds of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs parishioners, even those who wouldn’t be blamed for remaining tied to the past.

At 73, Father Geis is three years past the time when he could have retired from active ministry.

But he values the vision that his parishioners have for their future and prayerfully discerned that God was asking him to continue his ministry.

“He’s blessed me with good health,” Father Geis said. “And I feel that, with the response that the people gave, they trust me as their leader to move this forward.”

Parishioner Pat Byrne is the great-great grandchild of Thomas Piers, who, some 185 years ago, donated the original land for St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish.

But, like Father Geis, he is looking forward to the future.

“To me, what his will was for us last year or 10 years ago or 185 years ago is something you can read about. But where he wants us to be in the next 10 to 15 years is what we need to focus on.”

Holy Family Shelter

It is not just parishes that are planning for the future through Legacy for Our Mission.

Archdiocesan agencies that oversee the parishes’ shared ministries are looking ahead, too.

Holy Family Shelter is not just parishes that are planning for the future through Legacy for Our Mission.

A archdiocesan agencies that oversee the parishes’ shared ministries are looking ahead, too.

Holy Family Shelter, a program of See CAMPAIGN, page 8
If you are really observant, you might have noticed that an election campaign is taking place. We are being bombarded incessantly by campaign materials. You are going to be reminded frequently of your right, and your obligation, to vote on Nov. 4—or earlier if you do it absentee ball. We agree with that, but we would also like to emphasize your obligation to be a well-informed voter.

The U.S. bishops’ document “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” agrees that the Catholic tradition, responsibility, and participation in political life is a moral obligation.

The key words are “responsible citizenship” as an earlier document issued by the bishops, “Living the Gospel of Life,” stressed that voting is a responsibility beyond party politics, to analyze campaign rhetoric critically, and to choose political leaders according to principle, not party affiliation or mere self-interest.

Like the U.S. bishops, we are not going to tell you how to vote. But, also like the bishops, we are going to tell you that each individual should vote in accordance with his or her properly formed conscience.

The Church recognizes its obligation to help shape the moral character of society. It enhances our nation’s freedom by bringing to the political dialogue a consistent moral framework.

We help you as a well-informed voter with a properly formed conscience, we have been publishing a series of essays, written by experts at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, on various topics included in the document “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.” We see these essays as a blueprint on how Catholic social teaching should affect political participation by Catholics.

We have observed in this space before, and the bishops’ statement repeats it, that no party and few candidates share the Catholic Church’s comprehensive commitment to human life and dignity. It would be easy for us to decide whom to vote for if some of the candidates held the same views as the Church, but that is not the case.

That is why we must exercise the virtue of prudence. The bishops’ statement says, “Prudence teaches and informs our ability to deliberate over available alternatives, to determine what is most convenient to a specific context; and to act.”

Each Catholic should respond to our country’s or our state’s problems in a different way, but we must do it within the context of protecting human life and dignity, and in building up a more just and peaceful society.

The bishops emphasize that

—John F. Fink

ENDORSING CANDIDATES

Should religious leaders be permitted to endorse political candidates from the pulpit without risking their organization’s tax-exempt status?

Disagree 54%  Strongly disagree 12%

Strongly agree 40%  Agree 5%  Strongly agree 40%  Agree 5%  Strongly agree 40%  Agree 5%

Don’t know/ refusal to answer 6%

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible.

The editors reserve the right to reject the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary to maintain the limits of space, postal and technical considerations, and for spelling and punctuation. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Comments (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters intended for the Editor should be sent to: The Criterion, 2525 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46208. [criterion@archindy.org]

The national telephone toll-free number of the American Red Cross is 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or email at: info@redcross.org. In Canada, call 1-800-418-1176.

The editors welcome letters to the Editor. The Criterion, 2525 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46208-1717.

Readers with access to the Internet may send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, c/o Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405-7117.

On deciding how to vote

A crucialc and the U.S. flag are seen in this photo illustration. The U.S. bishops’ document “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” seeks to provide a blueprint on how Catholic social teaching should affect political participation by Catholics.

Catholics are not single-issue voters. Nevertheless, they also teach clearly that intrinsically evil acts must always be rejected and that “a candidate’s position on a single issue that involves an intrinsic evil, such as support for legal abortion or the promotion of racism, may legitimize, in effect, a vote for disqualify a candidate from receiving support.”

Other intrinsic evils listed by the bishops include euthanasia, human cloning, destructive research on human embryos, genocide, torture, unjust war and the targeting of noncombatants in acts of terror or war.

Not all candidates, of course, are running for public offices that are directly involved in support for, or opposition to, intrinsically evil acts. For example, in the governor’s race in which jobs have become a major issue, voters must determine for themselves which candidate can attract the most jobs with no help from the Church.

Similarly, when it comes to most economic issues, the Church doesn’t take a position except to say that those who are in greatest need deserve preferential concern. We must not, though, vote for those who support intrinsically evil acts because we agree with their positions on economic issues.

Other issues that include a moral component include marriage only between a man and a woman, human rights and dignity, the rights of workers to a living wage, opportunities for legal status for immigrants, and care for God’s creation.

Indeed, when becoming well-informed voters, we must try to determine the candidates’ positions on a large range of issues, figure out which of those issues they will be most involved in, seriously consider the position of the Church on those issues, and then vote prudently.

John F. Fink

The economic crisis and the cause of freedom

This has been a difficult time for those of us who extol the merits of a free market system. The current housing crisis and the strain it is putting on our banking system has nearly call the financial system to collapse.

If unfortunately, those who advocate for a larger role for government in our daily lives will be able to point to the Crisis of 2008 as “Exhibit A” for why we should not be left alone to pursue our own best interests.

However, this criticism misses a critical assumption that we make when advocating a free-market economy—it requires a virtuous people who are willing to assume personal responsibility for their actions. Without right behavior, liberty quickly descends into license.

For some time now, even a casual observer would have to be concerned about increasingly broad-based imprudent or immoral behavior in the economic life of our society.

While the increased incidence of this poor behavior has been a topic of late, those of us who are troubled by it have taken solace in the fact that the free-market is pretty efficient at recognizing mistakes in judgment or dishonest behavior.

If you cheat your customers, employees or shareholders, your market will eventually lose confidence in you.

This current crisis is different. Instead of a situation where individuals exercising poor judgment committed on a case-by-case basis, this crisis has evolved into a situation where poor judgment by a sizable minority is at risk of shifting down the financial system. And as you might expect with a crisis of this magnitude, there is plenty of blame to be around.

Wall Street is the obvious and almost too easy place to start. The managers of these institutions, the stewards of our financial system, have a profound responsibility to maintain the public’s trust and confidence. Collectively, they have simply failed.

For years, it has been obvious to all, even those far removed from Wall Street, that unfair compensation and irresponsible risk-taking have been devastating to the market and the economy.

The collapse in the real estate market triggered this crisis, but the behavior of market participants that laid the groundwork.

A people working to advance the cause of freedom, we have to continue our efforts to explain the merits of a free economy. But we also have to think more creatively and work a little harder to emphasize the importance of virtuous behavior.

RIGHT AMOUNT

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The Criterion, 2525 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46208-1717.
Seeking the Face of the Lord
Buscando la Cara del Señor

Homeland Mission experience helps youths grow in faith and hope

F or years, I have been trying to help us realize that we have many poor people, homeless and dreadfully lonely elderly folks here in our midst. I’ve been trying to help us realize that we have mission needs right here at home. Many folks have no idea how grave the situation is. And some people don’t understand that we share a responsibility to help the poor and the forgotten among us. It occurred to me several years ago that we would do well to provide hands-on experience for our young people to serve in our home missions here at home. Our archdiocesan director of youth ministry, Father Jonathan M. eye, picked up the idea and developed a weeklong summer program, Homeland Mission, geared to engage high school age youths. Toward the end of the 2008 version of the program, he invited the participating youths to write letters to me about their experience. The content of these messages is enlightening. I share some of them with you.

Sarah wrote: “Thank you so much for making us realize how it is important to not only serve those distant from us, but also those in our own community. The joy we bring to other people’s lives is so apparent, and I love the feeling I get when I can see that I have made a difference in their lives. From working with small children, disabled adults, [and] the homeless, to helping just clean up around town or assisting the flood victims with their repairs, I’ve learned even the smallest acts of kindness do so much in one life.”

Sean wrote: “This week I have cared for elderly, homeless, damaged and poor alike. My favorite moment was when he told a joke at the Caring Place and told us his life story.”

Laura wrote: “Instead of dreadfully mangy like used to, I now look forward to it. I have also met some awesome people… I have nothing but compassion for the sick, the elderly, the homeless. Helping them gives me more confidence in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Isaac wrote: “It helped me get closer to God by helping people in need and seeing that it is just not about me.”

Brackett wrote: “Thank you for helping create this chance to mature and to find ways to serve others. You have no idea what this means to some of us. This mission trip showed me what small things can do and to not take things for granted.”

Shelby wrote: “I cannot thank you enough for giving me this chance to grow in my faith. This week has really opened my eyes to what is going on in my own backyard.”

A anonymous youth wrote: “Two weeks from today, I lost someone really close to me. He was 26, my family, my friend and my role model. This week has been hard because I have lost my faith, in part, because of what happened. I didn’t even leave my house before then. This week has given me a home where I was whom I was before. I have also received hope and my faith back. Thank you.”

Nicholas wrote: “Thank you for taking the time to help and think of this great mission… I know people say they grow in faith, but I really did grow in faith. It really helped me get closer to God.”

Stephen wrote: “This opportunity helped me realize how fortunate I am and how desperate so many men and women are in our own city. Due to this mission, I feel I took a step toward God. I saw the face of Jesus in many of the needy.”

Sarah wrote: “Not only was it fun, but also very spiritual. I believe I became closer to God. My favorite thing our group did was going to St. Mary’s Child Center. I love kids.”

Matthew wrote: “Thank you for making our week here at Homeland Mission good and possible. This was a life-changing experience for me.”

Patrick wrote: “How can we expect to help others if we need the help? It is for that reason that I am ever so grateful for the chance—to do something to help the community that I call home. Home is where the heart is. I’d like to demonstrate my heart’s place through my service.”

Laura wrote: “When we volunteer around Indianapolis, we can return and help the poor even more during the school year.”

Clearly, our youths learned that it is in giving that we receive. And we grow stronger in faith and hope.

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein’s prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein’s Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

The La experiencia de Homeland Mission ayuda a los jóvenes a creer en la fe y la esperanza

D urante años he intentado ayudar a que nos demos cuenta de que tenemos la necesidad de misiones aquí mismo, en casa. Nos ha tocado el entender el de que tenemos la necesidad de misiones aquí mismo, en casa. M muchas personas no tienen idea de lo grave que es la situación. Y algunos no comprenden que compartimos la responsabilidad de ayudar a los pobres y a los reeligados que se encuentran entre nosotros.

Hace ya varios años me se ocurrió que sería oportuno proporcionar a nuestros jóvenes la experiencia práctica de servir en nuestras misiones patrias, aquí en casa. Nuestro director arquidiocesano de ministerios para jóvenes, el padre Jonathan M. eye, adoptó la idea y desarrolló un programa de verano llamado Homeland Mission, orientado a grupos de voluntarios de una semana, con el fin de ayudar a jóvenes a entender la importancia de ayudar a los demás.

En el año escolar, a los jóvenes participantes se les pedía que escribieran cartas contando sus experiencias. El contenido de estos mensajes resultaba esclarecedor. Comparto algunos de ellos con ustedes.

Sara escribió: “Tal día como hoy, hace dos semanas, perdí a alguien muy cercano a mí. Tenía 26 años y era mi familia, mi amigo y mi modelo a seguir. Esta semana ha sido difícil porque he perdido mi fe, en parte, debido a lo que sucedió. Ni siquiera había salido de la casa desde entonces. Esta semana me ha traído un nuevo hogar donde pude ser quien era antes. También he recibido esperanza y vuélvo mi fe. Gracias.”

Nicole escribió: “Gracias por dedicar tiempo para ayudar y conocer esta gran misión. Sí, para que la gente que dice que su fe crece, pero mi fe realmente creció. Realmente me ayudó a acercarme más a Dios.”

Stephen escribió: “Esta oportunidad me ayudó a darme cuenta de lo afortunado que soy y de lo desesperados que están muchos hombres y mujeres en mi propia ciudad. Gracias a esta misión sentí que avancé un paso hacia Dios y que me protegía con sus manos.”

Sara escribió: “No sólo fue divertido sino también muy espiritual. Creo que me acercé más a Dios. Lo que más me gustó hacer en el grupo fue ir al centro infantil de Santa María. Me encantaron los niños.”

Matthew escribió: “Gracias por hacer que nuestra semana aquí en Homeland Mission fuera posible y positiva. Fue una experiencia que me cambió la vida.”

Patrick escribió: “¿Cómo podemos esperar ayudar a los demás si nosotros necesitamos ayuda? Por esta razón es que estoy eternamente agradecido por la oportunidad, mejor dicho, el privilegio de hacer algo para ayudar a la comunidad que llamo hogar. El hogar en el que estoy es el hogar de Dios. Quisiera demostrar dónde está mi corazón por medio de mis servicios.”

Laura escribió: “Cuando hacemos trabajo voluntario en Indianápolis podemos regresar y ayudar todavía más a las personas durante el año escolar.”

Ciertamente nuestros jóvenes aprendieron que al dar es recíprocamente. Y creo más fuerte nuestra fe y nuestra esperanza.

* Tiene una intención que dese

** La intención del Archdiocesan de Indianápolis puede enviar su correspondencia a:

List of the Archdiocese of Indianápolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa, Language Training Center, Indianápolis.
Sisters of Providence oral history project is made available to the public

“Religious Life through the Generations” is oral history project of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods that is now being made available to the public.

The project involves interviews with four members of religious order who were born in different time periods.

Sister Providence M. Arlene M. St. John answered the 1901-1932 generation, and reflected upon her early desire to become a rock star. The interviews can be heard on the Sisters of Providence Web site at www.SistersofProvidence.org.

Transcriptions of the interviews can also be requested.

A new exhibit is now open in the congregation’s Heritage Museum located in Oldenburg, Indiana. The exhibit will dedicate space to each sister’s personal history to build help her connections to her mission and life in the congregation.

The Heritage Museum is open the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. There is no admission charge.
Garden of eating
Immaculate Heart of Mary ministry provides food for the needy

By Mike Krokos

Walk in the garden, and you see collard greens, broccoli and eggplant.

There are a variety of peppers coming to life, too. Around the corner, tomatoes growing in a separate area wait to be picked.

The volunteers, both young and old, smile and work quickly on this crisp fall morning as they use their gardening tools to harvest the produce that soon will be separated into groups of peppers coming to be sold. Around the corner, tomatoes growing in a separate area wait to be picked.

The volunteers, both young and old, smile and work quickly on this crisp fall morning as they use their gardening tools to harvest the produce that soon will be sold.

Rita Bowers and her daughter, Kimberly, volunteer together in the Community Garden on Oct. 4. Rita Bowers said the parish ministry is a family-friendly activity.

Rita Bowers, a parishioner who volunteers in the garden with her three daughters, ages 9, 7 and 4, said she is sharing an important life lesson with them.

"It's a true act of love, of giving," Baker said. "It teaches a good lesson," she said. "It shows our children there are needy out there, and [that] they are blessed."

Though the outreach to refugee families came to an end this summer, parishioners now donate the produce to Anna's House, a clinic and learning center near downtown Indianapolis that provides food, dental care, medical help and education services for people in need.

Rita Bowers, a parishioner who volunteers in the garden with her three daughters, ages 9, 7 and 4, said she is sharing an important life lesson with them.

"This is something we can do with our kids," Bowers added as she worked with her 7-year-old daughter, Kimberly. As Christians, we are stewards of the Earth, and something that has been lost on society in recent years is the watchful eye of the Blessed Mother?

Did we mention that all of this is being done under the watchful eye of the Blessed Mother?

Welcome to the Community Garden at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

Located in front of the Shrine of Mary on the parish grounds, parishioners have spent the better part of the last three summers and fall plants then harvesting the garden to generate quality produce for those in need.

"If we use a lot of plants that can produce a lot of food in a small space," explained Steve Rose, who coordinates the volunteer efforts for the garden project.

On this day, Rose and his two sons, Isaac, 8, and Nate, 7, are among a group of nine people harvesting the garden.

"It feels good to help other people," Isaac says in between gathering broccoli and collard greens.

Tending the garden has become a family activity for many of the 40 to 50 volunteers who take turns each Saturday from June through early November harvesting the produce. Parishioners water the plants throughout the week, too.

Reaching out in a new way to God's family was one of the reasons that parishioners decided to begin this ministry.

"The idea came out of discussions with [former pastor] Father Jeff [Godecker] to see how we could further help providing food [to others]," Rose said.

During the first two summers that the garden was planted and harvested, parishioners worked hand in hand with refugee families from Liberia, Somalia, Burma and other faraway lands.

Parishioners would ask the refugee families what they would like to have planted, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish family followed through by planting the crop that would best suit the needs of the refugee families, Rose said.

Parishioners and the refugee families would work side-by-side tending the garden, and the refugees would take the produce home with them, he added.

Living the Gospel mandate of helping brothers and sisters in need has had a powerful effect on the parish community, especially children, Rose noted.

"We can kind of see the outcome of what we're doing," Rose said, "and it was pretty impactful to see the refugee families."

Parishioner Christi Malasto, the mother of three children, ages 7, 4 and 2, agreed.

"This is something we can do with our kids," Bowers added as she worked with her 7-year-old daughter, Kimberly. As Christians, we are stewards of the Earth, and something that has been lost on society in recent years is the watchful eye of the Earth.

"It's a true act of love, of giving," Baker said. "It's a true act of love, of giving."
serve,” said Bill Bickel, the director of Holy Family Shelter. “It’s not only an expansion to serve more families, but to make the school even stronger for the future.”

The archbishop praised Therber’s contributions to the archdiocese and looked forward to the leadership he will give Scecina. The archbishop also announced that Kent Goffinet, director of stewardship and development, will serve in interim capacity until Therber arrives.

“Although it was difficult to let Joe go, I believe this move will greatly enhance the archdiocese’s efforts to continue providing an excellent Catholic high school education for students in the Indianapolis East Deanery,” the archbishop said.

“We will miss Joe’s passion and enthusiasm for stewardship. He has overseen the archdiocese’s annual Called to Serve appeal, and he has overseen our very successful Legacy for Our Mission capital stewardship campaign, which raised $114 million. He also played key leadership roles in past stewardship campaigns that raised millions of dollars for Catholic education and other archdiocesan charities and many of our other ministries.”

The archbishop also noted that becoming president of Scecina’s Indianapolis East Deanery interparochial high school “will be a homecoming of sorts for Joe, who was raised in the Diocese of Washington with the archdiocese at Scecina.”

Therber first joined the staff at Scecina in 1986 as a Christian studies teacher. He later served as the school’s facilities manager, assistant athletic director and athletic director. He also was an assistant coach in baseball, boys’ basketball and football. He helped coach Scecina’s state championship football teams in 1990 and 1991. He also served on the school’s board of directors.

His office at the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is marked with a picture of two footballs from the school’s championship teams have prominent spots. So do photos of several Scecina teams, both boys’ and girls’.

He also knows the history of the school’s namesake, a young Indianapolis archdiocesan priest who was killed in World War II. While he was with other American missionaries in 1944, Father Scecina was herded onto a ship by a Japanese, a ship that was mistakenly targeted by an American submarine. As the ship sank, Father Scecina spent hours hearing confessions and giving comfort and absolution to his men. He was one of the nearly 1,800 who died in the tragedy.

Nine years later, in 1953, the Indianapolis archdiocese formed his name opened. “Through the years, Scecina students have internalized the legacy of Father Thomas,” Therber said. “They know the message of that life—that my life is for others. For so many years, Scecina has been involved with the spirit and fueling and building that spirit is now one of Therber’s main goals. The father of five, including two daughters who attend Scecina, wants to help students reach their dreams and prepare for their futures while creating a school atmosphere focused on personal growth, success and enjoyment.

He has the skills to achieve those goals, admirers say. “Joe’s knowledge of development and his hard work ethic will be a real boost for Scecina,” said Annette “Mickey” Lentz, executive director of Catholic education and faith formation for the archdiocese. “I consider his appointment a real win-win for both the archdiocese and the high school.”

Therber has served the Church at the parish level as a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Indianapolis. He has been a member of the parish council, a Catholic Youth Organization football and basketball coach, and the chairperson of the School Commission and the Development Committee for the parish. He also has a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree from the University of Notre Dame.

“He’s the right selection,” said Father Joseph Riedman, the dean of the Indianapolis East Deanery and the administrator of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. “He can give some real support to the needs of Scecina. I think the alumni will be very pleased that he accepted the position. He appreciates the people of the east side, and they appreciate him. I think the people of the east side will be excited.”

That same reaction was shared by Phil Kenney, the chairman of the board of directors at Scecina.

“He’s a wonderful addition to the school,” Kenney said. “He’s a great leader who will be able to take all the different groups involved—students, staff, parents, alumni, donors—get them on board and lead us into a very successful future. When he talks about the students, the school and the alumni, his love for the place is evident.”

Scecina is a faith-filled community that has become like family to Therber, almost as close as the family that he has created with his wife of 20 years, Angie. It’s a faith-filled community where Therber sees a past marked by pride, a present touched by revival and a future that he views as promising.

Scecina is the school it is today because of everyone who has ever gone through it,” he said. “We owe a debt of gratitude to all those people. Now, we have to start to define the story of our future. I would love for Scecina to be, and be known as, one of the 10 best Catholic high schools in the country.”

He’s hoping that his hard work and the hard work that Bickel and his staff do to serve homeless families, they are always aware that the shelter exists because of the generosity of Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

“It’s the parishes’ shelter, really,” Bickel said. “When in families in the shelter thank us, we remind them that they may have aided them, but standing alongside of us is the entire archdiocese.”

As a member of Catholic Bishops’ advisory council, Mary A. nn Browning knows how Holy Family Shelter gives tangible aid to those families it serves.

“There were many years ago, in the 1970s, that we had a shelter that was there to help the poor,” Browning said. “And Holy Family [Shelter] is one of them. We felt really strongly that it was important and that it did something tangible.”

Browning has served as a policy advisor for the archdiocesan task force that helped establish the shelter. She is convinced that the next step in its development will be to expand and give to people in need.

“The shelter says something about the Catholic Church’s legacy to help those in need,” Bickel said. It’s a safe haven for people who are suffering. The other new saints included:

• Sister Maria Bernarda Butler, a Swiss missionary who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross of Notre Dame.

• St. Gaetano Errico, an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross.

• St. Alphonse Maria de' Liguori, an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross.

The others canonized were:

• St. Maria de’ Liguori, an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross.

• St. Alphonse Maria de’ Liguori, an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross.

• St. Alphonse Maria de’ Liguori, an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Holy Cross.
Church's Substance Addiction Ministry helps people find God

By Mary Ann Wyand

A director's distance from people can be a personal relationship with God. Fr. Lawrence Voelker explained after an archdiocesan Substance Addiction Ministry Mass on Sept. 14 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, that the archdiocese has a “sick” social problem. A lot of addiction people find God through recovery (in 12 Step programs) and then have trouble reconciling with the Church.

There is a critical need for substance abuse ministry in the archdiocese, he said, so the SAM program is now sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries.

National statistics indicate that one in four people are either afflicted with or affected by the disease of alcohol addiction and/or drugs.

Father Voelker is helping Deacon William Jones and his wife, May, who are members of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, with the Substance Addiction Ministry in the archdiocese.

“It is true that people put the addiction before God in a lot of places,” Deacon Jones explained after the Mass, “but a lot of times it's because they don't know how to find God. ... The Substance Addiction Ministry lets people find God back in the Catholic Church. And Catholics have fallen away from the Church because they don’t feel that people are there to help them with their addiction.”

The Church’s ministry complements and supports recovery programs like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) with Catholic spirituality, he said, but is not meant to replace these successful peer mentoring, self-help groups.

“You’ve got to take care of yourself, you have to heal yourself, before you can start making amends to other people,” Deacon Jones said. “I, and most of us, wouldn't be here (at the Mass) without the 12 Step programs.”

With 24 other men, he was ordained a permanent deacon for the archdiocese by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on June 28 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. As a deacon, he may preach homilies.

Discussing his recovery from alcohol addiction in his homily on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Deacon Jones told the gathering of men and women—many there with family members—that the crucifix is “a sign of God's unending and boundless love for all of us, ... a sign of our salvation made possible. ... God gave of himself in a completely unfailingly love for you and our salvation. ... Through the death of Christ on the cross, sinners are saved and God's saving mercy is truly realized.”

Christ’s suffering and death on the cross teaches us how to suffer, he explained. “God has never promised us that our lives would always be easy. We are challenged to carry many crosses in our lives. We face the death of loved ones and friends, sickness, family strife, loss of jobs and natural disasters. ... There are many challenges in our personal and public lives. What do we do with our sufferings, challenges or afflictions? How do we carry these crosses? Do we lift them up high to God?”

Deacon Jones said he “carried the cross of addiction to alcohol ... that caused anxiety and problems. I carried it around much darker earlier in my life. I almost lost everything—my family, my faith, my friends and my life. But because of the prayers and the help of many people, the 12 Step program of A.A. and the grace of God, he blessed me with the virtue of sobriety. It was a long and difficult battle. I struggled with turning my life over completely to Him.”

“I fought with carrying this cross,” he admitted. “It was heavy and weighing me down. I struggled with lifting my cross high to Him. I cried and pain and caused much pain. But once I learned that, with his help, I could carry this cross, it became much lighter. When I decided to turn it all over to Him, the burden of the cross became a blessing to me. It has helped me make myself who I am today. It has helped me understand who he created me to be. It has given meaning and purpose to my life and my call to the diaconate.”

Christians are called to help one another carry the crosses that we encounter in daily life, Deacon Jones explained. “Our Church community grows stronger when we help one another with the burden of our crosses, and our personal relationship with God becomes closer and more meaningful. This is one of the reasons that I have helped to bring the Substance Addiction Ministry to our archdiocese. It is a ministry to offer hope, healing and reconciliation to all members of the Body of Christ. ... So let us lift our crosses high. Let us look at the cross as a sign of hope, a sign of God's love, mercy and redemptive power. It is a sign of victory.”

For more information about the archdiocese’s Substance Addiction Ministry, log on to the archdiocese’s Office of Family Ministries Web site at www.archindy.org or call Deacon William Jones at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus at 317-379-9333 or Father Larry Voelker at Holy Cross Parish in Indianapolis at 317-837-2623.

Magazine honors archdiocesan director of risk management as innovator

By John Shaughnessy

The question about an unusual trick or treat event was unexpected for Mike Witka.

“The question about an unusual trick or treat event was unexpected for Mike Witka.

So was the national recognition he received for his work with 12 Step programs.

The question about the trick-or-treat event came from a group of mothers at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, a group that is planning “a tailgate trick-or-treat party” Oct. 31.

“The mothers are going to hand out candy from their cars in the parking lot of the parish,” Witka says, the director of risk management and parish financial services for the archdiocese. “Their question to me was, ‘What’s our liability?’ I asked them, ‘Is it a parish-sponsored event or an event sponsored by the mothers?’

When it comes to liability concerns and insurance questions, Witka is usually the point person for the Church administration.

It was the national recognition that came as a surprise.

Witka is the archdiocesan director of risk management and was recently honored with the National Safety Council’s SEALCOATING Excellence Award.

“Handling an insurance operation as large as ours, I don’t like to be bored,” Witka says with a laugh.

“I don’t like to be bored,” Witka says. “I don’t like to be bored,” Witka says. “I don’t like to be bored.”

Even with the demands of his archdiocesan responsibilities, Witka also finds time to serve as the director of business and development for his parish, Our Lady of Grace Parish. He is one of 44 permanent deacons in the archdiocese.

“My experience at the parish and school level helps him to truly understand the types of risks that we face, and to help us mitigate the risks through loss control and prevention,” says Jeffrey Stumpf, chief financial officer of the archdiocese. “He helps parishes to budget effectively, to communicate their finances with parish leaders and members, and to understand the importance of establishing scholarship funds and maintenance reserves.”

“I don’t like to be bored.”

He’s still flashing a smile when he talks about his work for the Church. “I think this is one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done. There’s a lot of pressure and a lot of work, but I enjoy it because I’m helping people.”

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BY JOHN SHAWNGESSY

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Impact of the economy on family life is a moral issue

American families face a changing workplace in a shifting economy. No doubt this fact is the cause of anxiety as we debate whether or not the economy is in recession. It probably will be one factor in how people vote this coming November. The impact of the economy on family life is a moral issue and a legitimate concern for voters. The decision of a man and woman to marry and raise a family is a significant way people directly interact with the economy. Work is the foundation, a necessary condition, for the formation of family life. The family shapes the social and ethical dimensions of human work. It is the starting point for establishing the conditions of the workplace.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (Editor’s note: In preparation for the 2008 U.S. elections, experts at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have drafted essays on several topics to guide voters in the decision-making process by using the bishops’ 2007 statement “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” as a blueprint on how Catholic social teaching should affect political participation by Catholics. The following is the eighth article in a 10-part series. For more information, log on to www.faithfulcitizenship.org.)

By Thomas Shellabarger

American families face a changing workplace in a shifting economy. Whether the issue is unemployment or corporate relocation, part-time work, contracting work, declining wages, international competition, limited training resources for laid-off workers or dwindling low-skill job opportunities, all these changes to local economies diminish the prospects of good jobs for U.S. workers. For too many people, work puts added pressure on family life rather than strengthening it. Voters should ask candidates how their economic policies will enhance—rather than diminish—family life. Work is the most significant way people directly interact with the economy.

In “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” the bishops wrote “the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living. It is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation” (#52). Catholic social teaching points to the interconnection between family life and work. Work is the foundation, a necessary connection, for the formation of family life. The family shapes the social and ethical dimensions of human work. It is the starting point for establishing the conditions of the workplace.

Beginning in early 1970, family income, while still growing, started to favor those at the very top of the wage scale. Union membership began to level off. By the turn of the 21st century, workers at the very top on the earnings scale consumed all of the economic growth and most other workers just held on or fell behind. This present disparity is the greatest wage divide since the Great Depression.

The Catholic Church recognizes the incredible busyness of family life and the demands of work that overwhelm families. Many pressing problems confronting family life are due to broad social forces, particularly economic strife. The decision of a man and woman to marry and raise a family is a significant one with many considerations involved.

For example, employment policy affects housing. As of July 2008, the minimum wage was $6.55 an hour or $13,624 a year. For a family of two, the poverty line is $13,367. For a parent and two children, the poverty line is $16,079. The annual income needed to afford a national fair market rent for a studio apartment (zero-bedroom) is $19,320, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition publication Out of Reach; for a one-bedroom, $22,360, for a two-bedroom, $26,520.

The study concludes: “In no community in the U.S. today can someone who gets a full-time job at the minimum wage reasonably expect to find a modest rental unit he or she can afford. While planned increases in the minimum wage over the next two years may put affordable housing closer within reach for some households, they will not close the gap between full-time earnings at the federal minimum wage and the income needed to afford prevailing rents in most markets.”

Catholic voters need to test the policies of government and candidates’ positions with Catholic principles of Catholic teaching.

The bishops urge Catholic voters to focus not on political questions such as “Are you better off than you were two or four years ago?” Rather, each of us should enter the voting booth focusing on the ethical and moral dimensions of public policies that affect the entire community.

(Thomas Shellabarger is the policy advisor for Urban and Economic Issues in the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.)

My heart surgery at St. Francis was the difference between life and death.

At 33 years old, Chris knew he would eventually need surgery to replace a calcified heart valve. However, he had no idea how urgent it was until his wife encouraged him to attend an Ask the Doc program and to have a cardiac screening, sponsored by the St. Francis Heart Center. “Your symptoms begin so gradually, you think what you are feeling is normal,” he said. With only a small incision, Chris was able to make a quick recovery. Thanks to the work of the heart team at St. Francis, Chris can rest assured he will be there to watch his three small children grow up. “I told them Daddy’s heart had a bad boom-boom before, and has a rest assured he will be there to watch his three small children grow up.”

Chris participated in the first-of-its-kind innovative research study, which may allow more patients to avoid long-term use of blood thinners.

Chris, heart valve replacement patient

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The Midwest Heart Valve Center

Chris participated in the first-of-its-kind innovative research study, which may allow more patients to avoid long-term use of blood thinners.

St. Francis Heart Center
World Synod of Bishops continues dialogue of Vatican II

By Fr. Robert L. Kinast

During the Second Vatican Council, many of the bishops expressed their desire to continue the kind of international dialogue which the council made possible. Responding to the bishops’ request, Pope Paul VI established a world Synod of Bishops prior to the fourth session of the council.

The general purpose of this synod, mentioned in the “Decree on the Bishops’ Pastoral Office in the Church” (#40), is spelled out in the Code of Canon Law (#642). It states that the synod is comprised of bishops from different regions of the world, who meet to assist the pope with their counsel and to consider questions concerning the Church’s activity in the world.

This is the task of the ordinary, general synod, to address more urgent issues that may be discussed by an extraordinary synod, and matters concerning one region of the Church may be taken up in a special session of bishops from the affected region. Canon #343 goes on to clarify that the synod is a consultative body, not a deliberative one, unless the pope gives it that power. In that case, he still must ratify any decisions.

Because these synods were intended to be an ongoing part of the collaboration between the pope and bishops, a permanent secretariat for synods of bishops is now part of the structure of the Holy See. It handles the preparatory and organizational aspects of a synod. The secretariat ordinarily polls the bishops of the world for topics of concern. The pope reviews their feedback and announces (usually about a year in advance) the topic for the next synod. The secretariat then prepares an initial outline (or “advance”) the topic for the next synod. The pope issues an apostolic exhortation in which he shares his own thoughts, convictions and proposals for action.

The synod now meeting in Rome is the 12th ordinary, general synod since the end of Vatican II. It is addressing “The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church,” the theme of the concluding chapter of the council’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation and a natural sequel to the 2005 synod on “The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.”

What have previous synods achieved? Because they are consultative rather than deliberative and are at the service of the pope’s leadership of the Church, a synod is not likely to have direct, immediate impact on the lives of the faithful. However, a few synods stand out for the impetus and affirmation they have given to certain aspects of Church life.

The first synod to have this effect was the second ordinary synod in 1971, which discussed both the ministerial priesthood and justice in the world. On the latter topic, the bishops issued the stirring declaration that “action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.”

This position, endorsed by Pope Paul VI, clarified that action for justice is not an optional part of Christian living or a special gift entrusted to a few. Such a clear commitment not only encouraged those who were working for justice, but inspired many others to join organizations and programs to fulfill this responsibility.

Following the synod on evangelization in 1974, Pope Paul VI issued an apostolic exhortation that gave greater prominence to the responsibility of every Catholic to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. He also affirmed the unique role of missionaries in the modern world and the special challenge of inculturating the Gospel while respecting local customs and beliefs.

After the synod on the family in 1980, Pope John Paul II urged families to “become what you are,” a community of persons committed to dialogue and service in the Church and society, reiterating Vatican II’s image of the family as a domestic Church.

Similarly, after the synod on the laity in 1986, Pope John Paul II praised the active involvement of lay people in the Church while reaffirming their primary calling as a “leaven” in society.

What contribution will this synod make? If the past is any indicator, it is likely to affirm Catholics’ enthusiasm for the Bible since Vatican II and suggest ways to make the word of God even more vibrant in the life of the Church.

[If after Robert L. Kinast is a pastoral theologian in Prairie Village, Kan.]

The Bible is the voice of God

How do you think Catholics can be brought closer to the Bible?

“Like memories of our parents speaking to us, the Bible is the voice of God giving us direction. We should pay attention at Mass and read by ourselves maybe 15 minutes every night.” (Denise Hormbuckle, Birmingham, Ala.)

“I think there should be more Bible studies in the parishes. I’m 71, and I had a Catholic education, but there’s a difference between hearing it every Sunday and going into it deeper with someone with knowledge of theology.” (Kerry Corcoran, Sycamore, Ill.)

“By making it relevant to their daily lives. I try to do that in homilies, but you don’t reach everyone. Through faith-sharing groups, you can take passages and ask people how they can apply and integrate them into their own lives.” (Deacon Larry Cummins, Nashua, N.H.)

“I’ve gotten closest through retreat experiences. Our parish offered ‘Christ Renews His Parish’ workshops, and that helped me.” (Nancy Vernon, West Des Moines, Iowa)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: As a teenager or young adult what keeps you connected to your Catholic faith?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cngreene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth Street N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
The mystery behind the special place where God lives

Last week, my 4-year-old nephew began peppering his mother with questions about God.

"Is God married?" he asked, not to be dissuaded.

"Is God invisible?" Does God give everyone candy?'

At one point, as I observed him still asking all his questions about his best ability,

"Is it true that behind his curiosity was served on Sunday as she rode order to "be Christ" to his people on the road itself.

"Between us three, most of us assume grown-ups are godlike because they appear

"Priests are ordained to celebrate the Eucharist. So when we see people returning from communion, we may say, "God lives there." We grow in faith, we realize that God provides us with the spark of his divine essence and inspires us with his holy breath of the Spirit. It is the only way we talk about, or even try to find the silly laughter. Although I enjoy clever

"The Joyful Newsletter. Their address is

As part of a graduate program I am in, I have attended Lutheran and Presbyterian services in my neighborhood, and I have also attended a Hispanic Mass at a nearby parish. As a Lutheran, I have been treated as an outsider. Services, I felt quite at home. I knew friends in the congregations, the worship, and I felt quite welcome. I knew friends in everything.

"The Joyful Catholic/Rich Herman

The Joyful Newsletter (Twenty-first in a series of columns)

The Diocese of Richmond, Va., introduced the cause for sainthood of Frank Parater mainly because he left "to be opened the depth of his heart," to the rector. It was translated by the saintly archdiocesan bishop, who also died young: John Berchmans, at 18.

The mystery behind the special place where God lives;

In his will, Parater mentioned three saints who also died young: John Berchmans, at 22; Alphonso Gogazza, at 23; and Stanislaus Kostka, at 18.

For space reasons, here is an excerpt of one note.

"I have nothing to leave or give but my life, and this I have consecrated to the Sacred Heart to be used as he will. I have offered my all for the conversions to God of non-Catholics in Virginia. This is what I live for, in case of death, what I wish to say to the world. 'Death is not unpleasant to me, but the most beautiful and welcome event of my life. Christ promised to me: 'You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood.'

"Mortal or moral sentiments is not the cause of my writing this, for I love life here, the college, the men, and Rome itself. But I have also to die and be buried with the saints. I dare not ask God to take me lest I should be ungrateful or be trying to shirk the higher responsibilities of life, but I shall never have less to answer

"I do not want to die, but—primarily—grant longevity." (20:3:9)

"Everyone is created to receive God's holy love and to let him dwell in us. It's our choice whether or not we accept this love. From the moment of our conception, God provides us with the spark of his divine essence and inspires us with his holy breath of the Trinity. The gift is the only way we talk about, or even try to find the silly laughter. Although I enjoy clever

"The Joyful Catholic/Rich Herman

because his entire creation, except where there is sin. As we grow in faith, the Church and God's love keep us all more human, more loving, and more grateful. Because of extenuating circumstances, I lost my job, and it sent me searching for—and finding a wonderful music was provided by the parish's saxophone player, Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister Welcome happy, we obey his will in life, Christ promises to live in each one of us: "I am in your Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." (Jn 14:20).

"I am a chosen people, a royal priesthood" (1 Pt 2:9).

"I am a chosen people, a royal priesthood" (1 Pt 2:9).

"I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." (Jn 14:20).

"I am the bread of life, the living bread. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I will give him is my flesh; for the life that the Father has given me I will give to anyone who has faith in me." (Jn 6:51, 53)." (Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)

perspectives

for the journey/effie caldara

Opening wide parish doors to welcome diversity

For her prom this year, my 17-year-old daughter Mani’s date was a handsome

Samiran said he is active as she is to the rector. She is markedly part of a big circle of parish friends. Her friend also happens to be a Mormon.

Any of these books would be perfect as a gift for someone who wants to

I have always desired to be only a little child, that I may enter the Kingdom of God. In the general resurrection, I wish to always meet my Maker, my God, my All. Since I was a child, I have desired to die for the love of God and for my fellow man. Whether or not I shall receive that favor I know not. Because of extenuating circumstances, I lost my job, and it sent me searching for—and finding a wonderful music was provided by the parish’s saxophone player, Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister Welcome

My reintroduction came about because of a couple already known by many Catholics—

I agreed with him completely. I had heard the news in the Church of a prayer: "Grant me faith, grant me faith. Let good humor help me cope. Let me spread the love you give and find a powerful way to live. Use all my talents, bless my daring, to show others Christian caring. Build my friendships, grace and levity, but—primarily—grant longevity." (20:3:9)

"And in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through the Word, and without the Word nothing came to be that has come to be. In him was life; and the life was the light of people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. The true light, who comes into the world, enlightens every person who believes in him—believing in the light so as not to remain in darkness. He came as a true light, to give light to every person coming into the world. He was a chosen people, a royal priesthood" (1 Pt 2:9).

"I am a chosen people, a royal priesthood" (1 Pt 2:9)." (Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)

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Opening wide parish doors to welcome diversity

For her prom this year, my 17-year-old daughter Mani’s date was a handsome

Samiran said he is active as she is to the rector. She is markedly part of a big circle of parish friends. Her friend also happens to be a Mormon.

Any of these books would be perfect as a gift for someone who wants to

My reintroduction came about because of a couple already known by many Catholics—

I agreed with him completely. I had heard the news in the Church of a prayer: "Grant me faith, grant me faith. Let good humor help me cope. Let me spread the love you give and find a powerful way to live. Use all my talents, bless my daring, to show others Christian caring. Build my friendships, grace and levity, but—primarily—grant longevity." (20:3:9)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Oct. 19, 2008

Matthew 22:15-21

The Sunday Readings
Msgr. Owen F. Campion
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time/
The Sunday Readings

The Criterion  Friday, October 17, 2008

Daily Readings

Monday, Oct. 20
Paul of the Cross, priest
Ephesians 2:1-10
Psalm 100:1b–5
Luke 12:13-21

Tuesday, Oct. 21
Ephesians 2:12-22
Psalm 85:9-14
Luke 12:35-38

Wednesday, Oct. 22
Ephesians 3:2-12
(Respons) Isaiah 12:2-3, 4c-6

Thursday, Oct. 23
John of Capistrano, priest
Ephesians 3:14-21
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 11-12, 18-19
Luke 12:49-53

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen

Young man needs to be taught reverence for the sacraments

Q Since becoming Catholic 35 years ago, I've understood that certain conditions should be met when we receive the Eucharist. A young man who is a relative makes no pretense of living a Catholic life. He is married out of the Church, seems to have no prayer life, ignores the religious education of his children either at home or in school, and attends Mass only at weddings and funerals or big heads. On these few occasions, he receives Communion. He doesn't see anything wrong with his actions, but it has created a serious challenge for our family. I find it impossible to deal with. Do you have any insights that will help us? (Illinois)

A Before answering further, let's be clear: if you describe the situation correctly, what he is doing is wrong. It seriously violates the reverence due to the sacraments. Neither I nor any other knowledgeable Catholic could condone what he is doing. What can you do?

First, he needs to realize that what he is doing is spiritually hurtful to his family and terribly confusing to his children and others. If he has any smarts, he must know that already, if not, he needs to be told.

Whether that fact means much or little to him will be determined by whatever faith he still possesses. In these painful circumstances, some seem to feel that continuous restating Catholic rules will change what is happening. That is not likely. It seems clear that, whatever his problem is, it is not lack of knowledge or a need to be "straightened out." It's a problem of faith, which somehow, along the way for him has been badly damaged.

That places the problem at a much more spiritual and difficult level to deal with. But it is where any hopeful efforts lie—in prayer, giving him something to hope for and a genuine experience of unconditional love to which he may someday be attracted to respond. I urge you to explain the situation this way to your children and family. Solomon warned that "All the ways of a man are pure with God, if he maintain his ways of reverence for the sacraments."

Catholic dioceses have geographical names, like the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston or the Pittsburgh Diocese. But I've never seen a Catholic parish with a geographical title such as many Protestant churches have—Main Street Baptist, Eastside Christian and so on. Why is this? Who decides what name a parish will have? (Ohio)

In early Christianity, communities of believers in Christ were designated by location. In this way, for example, writes to "the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor 1:2). The Book of Revelation (Chapters 2 and 3) describes messages sent to "the church" in seven different cities.

Anywhere like the parishes as we know them today came into existence much later. Since at least the beginning of the fourth century, however, local churches or congregations have been placed under the patronage of certain saints, especially martyrs, or events or titles of Our Lord.

A monogamous thing, the practice helps to profit the bond between present believers and those Christians who are part of our heritage. The diocesan bishop makes the final decision on the title of a parish, although he will usually reach that decision in consultation with the priest and people involved.

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunication and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612.

Young man needs to be taught reverence for the sacraments.

God's Gifts

The smoke of flickery fills the air,
The hounds chase the speedy hare.
The smoke of hickory fills the air,
The woodland orchestra plays.

The birds do sing their praise all day,
The woodland orchestra plays.

Our eyes, our ears, our nose, our hands,
God's gifts so wonderful and so grand.
Our best, our best, to Him each day.

By Richard Wechsler

My Journey to God

The smoke of flickery fills the air,
The hounds chase the speedy hare.

The smoke of hickory fills the air,
The woodland orchestra plays.

The stars do flicker in the cool, crisp night,
The moon issues forth its bright lazy light.
The crickets chirp their merry song,
The birds do sing their praise all day.
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UPCOMING RETREATS

October 24-26: Men’s Retreat
Reflecting on the question John the Baptist asks of Jesus, "Are you the one?" We will examine the root of most of our social ills, and she knew the mentality that abortion was shaping our culture, particularly future generations, to have a callous disregard for life. … John knew abortion was at the root of most of our social ills, and she knew the mentality behind abortion would lead to increased euthanasia, a disregard for the handicapped, and in general a more violent future.

In a videotaped speech for the organization’s 26th anniversary “Celebrate Life!” Fundraiser, Byrum emphasized that “Education is so important … with life issues because abortion has been legal for so many years. … Everyone needs to understand the injustices of what is going on with the abortion issue and how it is detrimental to our society.

… The more you learn about life issues, the more offensive you realize it is to our Lord,” she said. “We cannot kill our own babies, and the handicapped and our elderly, so I’m counting on you to help the Lord. … I thank you so much for all the years that you have worked with me.”

The former John Dalton was born on Jan. 8, 1934, in New Castle. Her family later moved to Marshall, Mich. She earned her bachelor’s degree in education at Indiana University in 1956, and was married to Clark Byrum on June 8, 1957. In addition to rearing five children, she volunteered for a number of Church and community organizations, including serving as president of Right to Life of Indiana from 1988 until 2001 and volunteering as a pro-life and Church volunteer from 1989 to 2003. Right to Life of Indiana volunteers said Byrum revitalized the organization.

She also served the Church as a member of the archdiocesan Pro-Life Committee. “She was so quiet, but a very kind and gentle soul,” said Amy Schuler, executive director of the archdiocese’s Pro-Life Committee.

A mong her numerous honors, she received the archdiocese’s Archbishop Edward Cardinal ANderson Award in 1999, the archdiocese’s Outstanding Education Award in 1994, the Charles E. Stimming Pro-Life Award from Right to Life of Indiana in 1996, and an Illinois Right to Life Award from Legatus International in 2007, and the Sagamore of the Wabash Award from Gov. Mitch Daniels in 2008. To boot, in 2011 she was awarded the Wabash Award from Gov. Mitch Daniels.

Also in 2008, Right to Life of Indiana honored her with a youth scholarship in her name.

Surviving are her five children, five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Joan Byrum Right to Life Scholarship Fund in care of Right to Life of Indiana, 812-205-5000, care of Right to Life of Indiana from 1988 until 2003. Right to Life of Indiana volunteers said Byrum revitalized the organization.

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History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

“This history will help all of us learn how our ancestors in the faith revealed the face of the Lord to others and how over the years, they invited people to ‘come and see.’”

— Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

The nearly 200-page hardcover, tells the story of Catholicism in central and southern Indiana from the arrival of Jesuit missionaries in the mid-1700s to the present day.

The history book sells for $27 (plus 6 percent for shipping and handling). The coffee-table book contains full-color photography and graphics. The first half of the book is an historical account of the founding of the diocese and the growth of the Catholic Church in Indiana. The second half of the book contains historical information and photographs of each parish in the archdiocese.

History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

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New playground at St. Joan of Arc School is ‘a dream come true’

By Mary Ann Wyand

Second graders Chandler Sims, Jaden Payne and Lily Johnson couldn’t wait to climb on the new playground equipment at St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis.

“I think it will be nice because we’ll have a safe place to play,” Lily said after the Sept. 22 dedication ceremony. “We won’t have to rush to the swings anymore [during recess].”

St. Joan of Arc Parish’s new Monarch Parc playground adjacent to the school, church and Marian shrine is “a dream come true,” said Mary Pat Sharpe, who has served as the principal for six years.

Sharpe helped plan the playground design and assisted with fundraising projects which raised $33,000, but had no idea that the new parish park would be dedicated in her honor.

“I was very surprised,” she said, moments after the announcement at the beginning of the dedication ceremony for the new physical fitness equipment, which includes two slides, a balance beam, parallel bars, a climbing wall and two spring riders that resemble monarch butterflies, the school mascot.

“IT’s here because so many parents have been here,” Sharpe explained. “They want it for their children.”

The brightly colored and durable playground equipment cost $37,000 plus installation fees, she said, and will serve the school, parish and neighborhood children for many years as a visible symbol of vitality in the center city.

“This is a happy place for children and we want to get that message out,” Sharpe said. “We’re doing lots of great things here, and this is one of those examples from the parents. It’s really exciting.”

She said the hard work of 371 students, their parents and school staff members as well as the generosity of parishioners and other donors resulted in yet another “Miracle on 42nd Street” for the Indianapolis North Deanery parish at the corner of Central Avenue and 42nd Street.

“Last year, all the classes raised money and the parents raised money,” Sharpe said, “and we did a school ‘Growing the Arts’ fundraiser.”

The playground swings were installed about eight years ago, she said, but there was no other outdoor fitness equipment and recreational equipment for students.

Suzi Abell, director of curriculum and the art teacher, said Families Supporting Faculty, the school’s parent-teacher organization, led the fundraising efforts.

“We started out just asking for individual donations,” Abell said, “and then we had a ‘Growing the Arts through Play’ party with all the proceeds going to the playground instead of to the [school] arts and cultural enrichment fund. We were able to raise $33,000. One of the other portions of the project was to tie it in with our wellness class. We’re finding that children are lacking in their upper body strength so the most the majority of the fitness equipment is designed to be used for [exercising their upper body].”

Abell said: “St. Joan of Arc School has truly undergone the most transformation [during Sharpe’s] time here so it was only appropriate that she be recognized.”

During the ceremony, eighth graders Marshall Coryell and Graham Banytel paid tribute to the faculty, students, staff, parents and parishioners that “Mrs. Sharpe has transformed our school into a more successful learning environment.”

Under her leadership, Marshall and Graham explained, the students’ STEP (Indiana Standard Testing for Educational Progress) scores nearly doubled and new technology was installed in classrooms.

Children up to age 12 can play on the outdoor equipment, Abell said, which will serve most of the grade school students as well as the pre-kindergarten students, preschool students and “Mini-Monarchs” in the school’s childcare program.

“Physical activity is so important for all children,” said Jennifer Schafer, assistant principal and the school’s learning center director. “This playground equipment gives the kids a chance to come outside for exercise and recreation.”

Schafer said several parents will volunteer as playground monitors three days a week when the students do not participate in physical education.

“We add the addition of the parent support,” she said, “students are able to get fitness activities in every day.”

Father Guy Roberts, pastor, said St. Joan of Arc’s new playground will be open for neighborhood use when school is not in session.

“Parents and children are certainly welcome to use this park,” he said. “We want it to be open for community use as long as it is respected and taken care of. The park will close at dusk.

He said it is fitting that the new park was dedicated in the principal’s honor.

“She is very much loved by the students,” Father Roberts said. “She’s helped to bring the school out of a bit of a slump and move forward. That’s been her goal—to make us a Catholic school for the 21st century.”

SYNOD (continued from page 1)

understanding of the texts, he said.

One thing that the synod has heard emphasized repeatedly is the importance of “lectio divina,” the prayerful reading of Scripture, both in the preparation of priest and as a spiritual practice for lay faithful.

In the “world of the hearers,” whether in developed countries or in places of oral tradition, the Church has to help make sure that the word of God has a chance to be heard, Cardinal George said.

For Catholics, however, he said, salvation is all about relations—the relationship to Christ and to those who know him, or if you can master it, then you’re OK and you know knowledge is what it means to be saved.”

producers who want to do that,” he added.

Cardinal George said it’s a bit of an uphill battle in the United States because today’s culture tends to subscribe to the gnostic conviction that obtaining “hidden, secret knowledge is what it means to be saved.”

To Catholists, however, he said, salvation is all about relations—the relationship to Christ and to those who know Christ and love him, and the conviction that love is more powerful than knowledge.

A century ago in the United States, he said, the Bible was read regularly in many homes. Today, even among fundamentalist Christians, that kind of familiarity with Scripture appears less strong, he said.

“You wouldn’t have a literary figure like [William] Faulkner writing about A. Baloom, I think,” he continued, not even in the South. Who’s a baloom? Faulkner knew, and so did his readers. Now you need a guide in order to tell you that,” he said.

Faulkner’s novel, Absalom, Absalom! is considered a literary masterpiece. Its title refers to the biblical story of Absalom, a son of David who rebelled against his father.

Cardinal George said that it was important to reintroduce these images and figures into the popular culture, but to do that the Church has to “be where the conversations that shape culture take place.

“You have to find people who shape that culture, or who are willing to do so, or who live themselves, so that religiously inspired works of art and literature aren’t automatically in the small categories rather than the mainstream of modern culture and art,” he said.

That means you’ve got to have agents, actors, artists, producers who want to do that,” he added.

Cardinal George said it’s a bit of an uphill battle in the United States because today’s culture tends to subscribe to the gnostic conviction that obtaining “hidden, secret knowledge is what it means to be saved.”

He said the idea is that “if you can get hold of this knowledge or if you can master it, then you’re OK and you don’t have to depend upon relations.”

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