New archdiocesan initiative aims to help young adults connect with their faith

By John Shaughnessy

It’s one of their favorite moments so far, a moment that occurred when Father Rick Nagel and Mary Schaffner traveled to different college campuses this fall as the leaders of a renewed archdiocesan effort to connect with young people.

“The moment came during a trip to the University of Indianapolis—and part of a schedule that would also lead Father Nagel and Schaffner to Butler, Indiana, Marian, DePauw, Indiana State and Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis by December.

“We were meeting with some Catholic students on campus,” recalls Father Nagel, the director of young adult ministry for the archdiocese. “A guy on the track team told us they have a Bible study program and they have Mass there every Wednesday night. He told us he invites the track team all the time. Then there was a girl who works in food services who invites others to the Bible study. They both said that it’s OK with them when people say ‘no.’ They still keep trying.”

The meeting served as inspiration for Father Nagel and Schaffner, the program coordinator of the archdiocese’s young adult ministry.

What does it mean to be a young Catholic in today’s world? See page 8.

Since they started the revived effort on July 1 at the request of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, Father Nagel and Schaffner have listened to the hopes, concerns and stories of college students and young adults, wanting to know what place the Church has in their lives and what the archdiocese can do to make the connection closer. Hearing the faith of the two students showed them the potential and promise of their approach.

Now is the time to re-claim, re-invigorate and re-establish our commitment to our young adults, who are striving for the nourishment of the sacraments, seeking understanding of the Catholic tradition, and searching for the supernatural love and presence of Jesus Christ in a secularized culture,” Father Nagel notes.

A critical time of faith

The increased efforts reflect the archdiocese’s commitment to connect with young people during what is generally considered as a critical time period in their faith life.

“From various documents and studies, it is known that college-age students make choices that will affect their life and studies, it is known that college-age students make choices that will affect their life. A committee of Catholic leaders was formed to promote his legacy, several conferences—including one with Jewish participants—were organized, dozens of articles appeared in Vatican publications, and a photo exhibit went on display next to St. Peter’s Square.

Pope Benedict celebrated Mass on October 28 in New Albany in which he blessed the work to restore the boyhood home of Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter. Joining the archbishop in prayer are, from left, Lawrence Timperman, the architect for the project and a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, and David Hock, chairman of the board of directors of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation and a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.

Unforgettable: Popes remain influential figures after their deaths

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A confluence of anniversaries this fall has turned the Vatican’s attention to deceased popes, who still loom large in the Church’s living memory.

In a seemingly continual procession of conferences, films, liturgies, speeches, books and articles, four late pontiffs in particular—Popes Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II—have been celebrated, praised, defended and, in some cases, proposed for sainthood.

On some days, the Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, has carried more news about departed popes than on the current occupant of the chair of Peter.

Pope Benedict XVI has been in the forefront of the commemorations, giving speeches and celebrating special Masses for his predecessors, and drawing frequent lessons from their teachings.

“Why does the Church keep looking back?”

Because tradition is fundamental for the Church. We look to the past so that we can look to the future,” said Giovanni Maria Vian, director of the Vatican newspaper.

For the Church, he said, the teachings of previous popes don’t merely have historical meaning, but are still alive.

The period of August-October this year marked the 90th anniversary of the death of Pope Pius, the election of Pope John, and the 30th anniversary of the “year of three popes,” with the death of Pope Paul, the election and death of Pope John Paul I, and the election of Pope John Paul II.

But the memory really began in July with the 40th anniversary of Pope Paul’s encyclical, “Humanae Vitae” (“Of Human Life”). Pope Benedict not only strongly defended its teachings against artificial birth control, but also went out of his way to praise Pope Paul’s courage and “far-sightedness” in promulgating a position that would inevitably be criticized by many.

In September, a massive campaign began to highlight the holiness of Pope Pius and defend him from accusations of failing to do enough to save Jews during World War II.

A committee of Catholic leaders was formed to promote his legacy, several conferences—including one with Jewish participants—were organized, dozens of articles appeared in Vatican publications, and a photo exhibit went on display next to St. Peter’s Square.

Pope Benedict celebrated Mass on October 28 in New Albany in which he blessed the work to restore the boyhood home of Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter. Joining the archbishop in prayer are, from left, Lawrence Timperman, the architect for the project and a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, and David Hock, chairman of the board of directors of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation and a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.
New Albany doctor’s mission work, faith touched people near and far

(Editors’ note: To help mark the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, The Criterion is inviting readers to share stories and memories of how their Catholic faith and the Church in central and southern Indiana have shaped their lives. Today, we feature a story from Cynthia Schultz, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.)

“Dr. Jim Nolan was a legend, a humani-
tarian. The retired New Albany optometrist was known across Indiana for his mission work in Honduras, where he touched thousands on the 50 trips he took with his beloved wife.

“Doc’s Catholic faith was at the core of all he did. With his wife, he began each day with Mass and ended it with a rosary.

“The rest of his life was spent in the community he served. He traveled with the Nolans to the jungles of Central America where he, along with others, brought eye care to Indian tribes and soldiers at an isolated Army outpost.

“A girlfriend of his was a formator in Chicago. He paved the way for me to go on two mission trips to Honduras.

“Despite his love for work, there was always a special place in his heart for his family. He was everything a father should be.”

Cardinal Ritter, when he was a seminarian at St. Meinrad, had no idea that he would become the personage that he became.”

Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter, who has been a victim of sexual misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator: St. Mary Parish, remembers hearing about the home and is overseeing its restoration. Achiprosh Bishop Daniel M. Buechlein announced that the Cardinal Ritter’s home will allow his legacy to shape a new generation.

“A memorial like this is not something that should just be another building. This is a place to honor Cardinal Ritter as he grew up, and she still looks up to him.”

“I feel his presence,” she said. “He went to the same school that she did. I had a steadfast faith in the name; I knelt on the same kneeler that he knew that on when he was in church. He is an inspiration to me in the way that he lived his life.”

Embassy to government official.

Walter, who is a member of the foundation’s board of directors, said she hopes that the restoration of Cardinal Ritter’s home will allow his future to shape a new generation.

“I want to make sure that the kids today get [his] message,” she said. “Kids need to know how God has blessed us. The cardinal is looking out after us.”

A through much of the exterior and the frame of the Ritter home has been restored, extensive work is still needed on the interior. Foundation members intend to continue the restoration of the Cardinal Ritter home. For more information about the home and how to donate to its restoration, log on to www.cardinalritterhome.org or call 502-291-3131.

The exterior of the home in which Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter was born in 1892 in New Albany has largely been restored. Work still needs to be completed on its interior and on an addition to the back of the home, which will likely be used for community meetings.

Pope reminds faithful that death brings eternal life for loved ones

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The death of a loved one brings pain and sadness, but Christians believe their loved ones will live on in the presence of Jesus Christ and that they will be reunited again with them in heaven, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Celebrating Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica on Nov. 3 in memory of the 10 cardinals and 103 bishops who had died in the past year, Pope Benedict ended three days of commemorations with “those who have gone before us” marked with the sign of faith.”

Marking the Nov. 1 feast of All Saints, the pope said just as God has created thousands of different kinds of beautiful plants and flowers so has he given the world male and female saints, young and old, from every race and culture.

The beauty of the saints, he said during his noon Angelus address, should lead to a desire in every Christian heart to be like them and to spend eternity in their company.

Recounting the Angelus publicly again on Nov. 2, the feast of All Souls, Pope Benedict said, “It is very important that we Christians live our relationship with the deceased in the truth of faith, and see death and the beyond in the light of revelation.

The subjects of death and eternal life are “particularly subject to superstitions,” he said without providing examples.

Papal spokesman raised he raised in his 2007 encyclical, “Spe Salvi” (“On Christian Hope”), the pope asked if Christian faith still gives people hope and if they still desire eternal life or think that earthly life is all there is.

While no one knows exactly “what it is or how it will be,” he said, “eternal life will be like ‘immersing yourself in the ocean of infinite love where time—before and after—no longer exist. Fullness of love and joy: This is what we hope for and expect from our being with Christ,” he said.

If you have a story or a memory to share, we would love to receive them. Please send your story to The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Or you can e-mail your story to Criterion@archindy.org. In the e-mail heading, ask that you try to keep your story to 250 words or less. t

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Celebration marks generosity of Catholics in southern Indiana

By Sean Gallagher

CLARK COUNTY — On a beautiful fall evening marked by crisp autumn air, a crystal clear sky and colorful leaves, Catholics from across southern Indiana gathered on Oct. 28 with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein at Huber’s Winery in Clark County to celebrate the success of the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future capital stewardship campaign.

The evening began with a celebration of the Eucharist.

“Tonight is a night of thanksgiving,” Archbishop Buechlein said at the start of the Mass. “Thanksgiving to God for the marvelous blessings that he bestows on our Church in southern and central Indiana, thanksgiving to God for the generosity of so many folks like yourself. You help us carry on the mission of our archdiocese.”

Stumpf noted that $13 million of the $104 million pledged in the campaign were dedicated to the endowments managed by CCF.

He also spoke about the effects of the volatility in U.S. stock markets over the past 12 to 18 months, including the sharp declines in the last quarter alone, which ended on Sept. 30. CCF’s assets dropped in value by 9 percent to a total value of $141 million. Stumpf said that because of increased market volatility and distractions and avoid some of the market panic, we will be on the long-term,” Stumpf said. “I think if we can avoid the panic in a three- or six- or 12-month period, but to stay the course and keep focused on the long-term,” Stumpf said. “I think if we can avoid the distractions and avoid some of the market panic, we will be rewarded going forward to offset some of the pain we’ve felt over the last 12 to 18 months.”

Southern generosity

In remarks after the Mass, Jeffrey Stumpf, the archdiocese’s chief financial officer, gave a presentation on the relationship of Legacy for Our Mission to the Catholic Community Foundation (CCF), which manages 356 endowments that support the ministry of archdiocesan parishes, schools and agencies.

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Southern generosity

In remarks after the Mass, Archbishop Buechlein noted the generosity shown by many Catholics in three counties of southern Indiana, including southern and central Indiana, as a result of the campaign.

In the southern part of the archdiocese, 4,500 individuals and families contributed to the campaign, the archbishop said. “That’s an outstanding number.”

Deacon John Thompson, who assisted the archbishop at St. Augustine Parish in Jeffersonville and who assisted the archbishop at the evening’s Mass, was gratified to learn about his fellow New Albany Deaney Catholics’ generosity.

“That makes me proud,” Deacon Thompson said. “They’re putting their faith into action. It’s not just all talk.”

Father John Geis, pastor of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, spoke during the evening celebration about his parish raising more than $8 million to build a new church and parish life center. (For more about the St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish plans, log on to www.CriterionOnline.com.)

Members of other parishes in the area that are planning great improvements because of Legacy for Our Mission were also on hand.

Dennis Ernst, a member of St. Michael Parish in Brandford, spoke to The Criterion about how his parish will come from their continued involvement in their parishes and the future of the campaign.

“It’s a $2.5 million project made possible by the generosity of St. Michael’s parishioners in Legacy for Our Mission.”

“It’s invigorating,” Ernst said. “It’s such a vibrant parish. [The project] is a real testament to the dedication that this parish has, and the vibrancy and the life that exists within it to further the mission.”

Amy and Carl Duncan, members of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, were excited about some extensive renovations to their parish’s church and school—the first significant upgrades there since it was founded in 1954. The Duncans were particularly enthused about how the church is being made handicap-accessible because their son uses a wheelchair.

“When we first started going to Holy Family, we had to drive all the way around [the church] to find a way to get him in,” Amy Duncan said. “Now every entrance is wheelchair accessible. It tickles him to death because he can actually come in the front [door] of the church.”

The Duncans both volunteered in the parish to make the campaign a success. They were among the 14,000 volunteers across the archdiocese who gave of their time to bring Legacy for Our Mission to a successful conclusion.

“That’s an amazing number,” a archbishop Buechlein said about the number of campaign volunteers.

“Think of what a powerhouse that is. The blessings that will come from their continued involvement in their parishes are still to be seen and will be astounding.”

For more information on Legacy for Our Mission or the Catholic Community Foundation, log on to either www.archindy.org/legacy or www.archindy.org/legacy.
Advancing the Church's mission

One of the first principles of Christian spirituality is that God will provide. Stewardship builds on this principle. It reminds us that God's goodness and generosity are unlimited, the source of everything that exists. As the beneficiaries of God's abundance, we are called to "receive gratefully" and "share generously" all God's gifts. Trust in God's Providence does not mean that we can sit by and do nothing. As stewards of creation, we are called to work tirelessly, to develop and grow God's gifts, and to "give them back with increase." It is because we trust in God's faithfulness that we refuse to be discouraged or defeated during times of adversity.

As Christian stewards, we know that Christ has already achieved the victory we are fighting for. He is the source of our confidence and hope. He is the absolute assurance that God will provide!

True stewardship is a work of the Holy Spirit. It is the presence and power of God active in the world, making sure that we have everything we need to proclaim the Gospel and to be "the seed and beginning of that kingdom" here and now.

The Spirit gives us everything we need. Sometimes we worry that it is not enough. That is when the Holy Spirit gently reminds us that God has already given us everything we need and more. We are called to be grateful, responsible and generous stewards of all creation. That is when we remember that God is with us always. And that God will provide.

As stewards, our job is to be grateful. To accept responsibility. To share generously with others out of justice and love. And a gift to give back to God with increase. This is how Christian disciples respond to the Lord's invitation, with hope. With love. And with great joy. We should never be discouraged or lose hope. God will provide.

There is a saying, "When you pray for potatoes, reach for the hoe." Confidence in God's Providence doesn't excuse us from working hard to proclaim the Gospel and help build the Kingdom. In fact, it motivates us to do more—and do it more enthusiastically—with a heart full of gratitude and generosity for God's goodness to us. Sometimes we hear it said that in the old days, before Vatican II, Catholics were more interested in "obligatory giving and obey." This is a caricature, of course, but it describes a moment in the life of the Church when many had lost sight of the universal call to holiness—and of every baptized Christian's responsibility to carry out Christ's work on earth. But when you think about it, "pay, pray and obey" is not entirely negative. Prayer is certainly the most important thing any Christian is called to do. Authentic prayer means entering into a relationship with God that is personal and loving. The first responsibility of every disciple of Jesus Christ is to be a person of prayer.

Obedience is also a basic Christian duty. We are all invited to discern God's will for our individual lives and for His Church. Obedience requires openness and careful listening. It means setting aside our own agenda for the good of others. Obedience isn't easy, but it is essential to our growth and development as individual Christians and as a community of faith.

Finally, there is the notion that Catholics should "pay" for the privilege of being members of the Christian community. We all know that Church support is important, but it's a grave mistake to think that "obligatory giving" can ever be enough to satisfy our biblical responsibility to be full, conscious and active members of the Body of Christ.

Yes, each one of us is called to pay—to contribute our time, talent and treasure—to build up the Kingdom of God.

As Christian stewards, we have an obligation, and a profound opportunity, to pay for the privilege of life in Christ through our gifts of self and through our active engagement in the Church's life and ministry.

So, the next time we are asked what our role is in advancing the mission of the Church, we can honestly answer "pay, pray and obey" in the very best sense of those terms.

—Daniel Conway

Parish Diary

Faith and friendship are at stake in a new high school reunion

Fifty years is a long time, half a lifetime for the average person in the U.S. I went to my 40th high school reunion recently. It was 800 miles and half a lifetime away.

My graduation year, 1968, was a traumatic one. It was the year of the Tet offensive in Vietnam, the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Sen. Robert Kennedy, the Chicago Democratic convention and riots all across America.

Our graduation took place in a world that seemed literally to be on fire. For a school on the west side of Chicago and in the midst of all of that, we were stepping into an exciting unknown.

But now, 40 years later in the midst of new upheavals, we have the benefit of perspective. Having lived through the traumas of the past, we are just glad to be alive. A bout a dozen of the 240 members of our class was deceased.

So many things have changed in 40 years. St. Ignatius was an all-boys high school when we went there four decades ago. Today, it is co-educational.

The west side of Chicago was a dangerous jumble of tenements, abandoned buildings and a rail yard. Today, it has upscale condos and trendy restaurants.

Our school looks cosmopolitan. For those who had not been back in 40 years, it was unbelievable. The school now has a theater, two museums, a digital library, a planetarium.

We used to run track through the streets. Now students have a landscaped track with the dramatic backdrop of the skyscrapers of the Loop.

When we were students, we ate lunch in a Squadron Hut with a jalousie window sprayed on the ceiling for insulation. We didn't worry much about the carcinogenic asbestos falling in our food because we were allowed to smoke in that lunchroom. Today, there is no smoking and no asbestos anywhere. Students eat in a lunchroom worthy of a fine hotel.

All of these improvements cost a little. The 40th reunion bill was about $400.

Today tuition is $11,000.

The atmosphere in the school has changed too. In the 1960s, nearly all the teachers were Jesuit priests, brothers or scholastics (seminarians). Today, there is only one Jesuit on the staff. The rest of the faculty and staff are lay, equally divided between men and women.

The Society of Jesus does a good job of preserving its Catholic character and Jesuit tradition of education. It requires everyone on staff, from the principal to maintenance workers, to go through a five-year adult faith development program.

In some ways, they probably have more unity on the staff today about what a Jesuit education is supposed to be than they had 40 years ago.

But the biggest change was in the school or in the neighborhood. The biggest change is in those of us who had graduated 40 years ago. We were calmer. We were less competitive. We were just happy to be there.

We are a food-sweetened people traveling down memory lane with people of your own age and era who are still in the game of life. But we have seen enough of life's disappointments, successes and defeats to know that only a few things really matter, and faith and friendship are among them.

We probably didn't appreciate it 40 years ago, but we were being given both in our very special way of life.

We made friendships that have endured half a lifetime. And we absorbed a faith that has led us this far through this life and will lead us into the next.

(Father Peter Daly writes for Catholic News Service.)

Letter to the Editor

Future Farmers of America members help local charity assist the needy

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul welcomes more than 360 Future Farmer of America (FFA) volunteers to our two Special Works facilities (distribution center and food pantry) on Oct. 23-24 for “Days of Service” during the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis.

These highly motivated young men and women complemented our organization’s all-volunteer work force in our mission to serve needy individuals and families.

At our Free Distribution Center, FFA volunteers completed two major projects. They painted a large meeting room and hallway, and they landscaped around the property and spread several yards of mulch. Other volunteers helped clean up and organize areas within the center that will allow us to better serve our clients.

The St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry is housed in a large facility that also contains administrative offices, the Gennarelli Free Medical Clinic, the Ozanam Free Legal Clinic and storage areas. Three shifts of FFA volunteers (about 40 people each shift) performed a variety of tasks at the facility.

In the pantry, they assisted clients with shopping, bagging and loading boxes of food. Other volunteers sorted food and non-food items, repackaged bulk products and stocked shelves with canned goods.

In addition, several volunteers worked outside to clean up trash and weeds, remove overgrowth, trim and prune plants, winterize garden areas, hill flower gardens and spread several yards of mulch.

Although we are grateful for the annual boost that these young people provide, we also want to thank you for donating extra time to plan, coordinate and supervise the “Days of Service” projects.

The FFA obtained sponsors to purchase tools and supplies for the projects, which allows the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to use our funds for direct aid to the needy. We are also grateful for in-kind donations from Tiffany Lawn & Garden (mulch), Green Acres Landscape (mulch and delivery), Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish (paint and supplies), and Baker & Daniels (lunch for volunteers).

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul appreciates the partnership with the FFA in its efforts to provide service learning for members at national days of service. We hope to continue to leverage their talents and enthusiasm in future years.

For more information on the charitable works of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the Indianapolis area or to make a donation to support our ministries, please visit our website at www.SVDPindy.org.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s 40th high school reunion food pantry project received a 100 percent volunteer organization so every dollar goes to direct aid.

As a faith-based charity, we appreciate your prayers, sacrifices and support in our mission to serve those in need.

Dan Stalcup
Volunteer Coordinator
Society of St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis
Debemos convertirnos en ministros de esperanza para quienes lo necesiten

Esa noche, camino a casa, sufría un accidente en el coche y se fracturó una pierna. Cuando llegó el momento de quitarle el yeso de la pierna, su madre lo llevó a una clínica del vecindario que le dijeron que era una fractura. Durante la cirugía, el padre de su hermana observó las imágenes que se habían tomado de su cabeza y vio que había una pequeña lesión en el cerebro. Esto le hizo pensar que él también podría tener una lesión similar. En el hospital, recibió un tratamiento que le permitió recuperarse rápidamente. A pesar de las dificultades que atravesó, consiguió volver a sus estudios y continuar con su carrera. En el futuro, piensa seguir trabajando en el campo de la medicina para ayudar a otras personas que estén en situaciones similares.

Este relato nos enseña cómo la perseverancia en la fe puede ser un factor clave en el crecimiento personal y en el logro de objetivos. A pesar de las dificultades que un individuo puede enfrentar, siempre hay la posibilidad de recuperarse y seguir adelante. En este caso, la perseverancia en la fe y el trabajo duro permitieron a esta persona superar la situación y seguir adelante con su carrera.

El arzobispo Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., es el arzobispo de la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis. Ha servido en diferentes puestos en el ámbito eclesiástico, incluyendo su rol como arzobispo. Durante su mandato, ha destacado por su apoyo a la educación, la caridad y la formación humana. Ha sido reconocido por su liderazgo y su compromiso con la comunidad. En este artículo, el arzobispo Buechlein reflexiona sobre la importancia de la perseverancia en la fe y cómo esto puede ser un medio para superar retos en la vida. Su mensaje es un llamado para que todos buscamos el camino de la fe y sigamos adelante con perseverancia, incluso en momentos de dificultad.
November 7
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Lunni Dei meeting, 6:30 a.m. Information: 317-784-4439.

November 8
St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. White elephant sale, Sat., 2-7 p.m. Sun., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-485-4600.

November 9
Firefighters Hall, 74 Massa-chussets Ave., Indianapolis. Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, cornhole tournament, food, music, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. per person. Information: 317-787-8246.

November 10
St. Anthony Parish, 379 N. Warren Ave., Indianapolis. Eucharist prayer, 1:30 p.m., $3 per person. Information: nsneshae@aisl.org.

November 11

November 12
St. Joseph Parish, 1875 S. County Road 700 W., Jennings County. Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 13
St. Maura Parish, 8874 N. Harrison St., Napoleon. Smorgasbord, 4-7 p.m., $8 adults, $3 children 3-12, $5 children 3-6 years old. Information: 812-852-4394.

November 14
St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Center, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Divorce and Beyond!” program, six-week series, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-236-1586 or 317-383-9835.

November 15
St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Sixth annual neighborhood commorative candle-lighting service to remember those afflicted by Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia. 7 p.m. Information: 317-784-2592.

November 16

November 17
St. Augustine Guild, 326 N. Green St., Brownsburg. “Christmas Bazaar,” craft show, 12:30-4 p.m. Information: 317-826-6000.

November 18
St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. Concert, 1-3 p.m. Indianapolis. “Are You What You Believe?”, 6-9 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439.

November 19

November 20
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 21
St. John Paul the Great Parish, 3000 Prosperity Ave., Indianapolis. “You Know It, Show It,” 7 p.m. Information: dicksoncorp@parallax.ws.

November 22
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 23
St. Margaret Mary Parish, 8874 N. Harrison St., Napoleon. Smorgasbord, 4-7 p.m., $8 adults, $3 children 3-12, $5 children 3-6 years old. Information: 812-852-4394.

November 24
St. John Paul the Great Parish, 3000 Prosperity Ave., Indianapolis. “You Know It, Show It,” 7 p.m. Information: dicksoncorp@parallax.ws.

November 25
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 26
St. John Paul the Great Parish, 3000 Prosperity Ave., Indianapolis. “You Know It, Show It,” 7 p.m. Information: dicksoncorp@parallax.ws.

November 27
St. John Paul the Great Parish, 3000 Prosperity Ave., Indianapolis. “You Know It, Show It,” 7 p.m. Information: dicksoncorp@parallax.ws.

November 28
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 29
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.

November 30
St. Joseph Parish, 3035 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. “Rosary Society, craft bazaar, country store, food, Santa Claus, 1-2 p.m., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-236-8685.
A message of hope

Homeless receive shoes and socks through Eagle Scout project

By Mary Ann Wyand

Glenda M. oore is homeless and can’t find a job.

On most days, she doesn’t have much to smile about as she walks along near-

north side streets in Indianapolis on her way to the Cathedral Kitchen and Food Pantry for a free hot meal and groceries.

But on Oct. 19—the day that the Catholic Church observed World Mission Sunday—Moore smiled more often as she talked with Boy Scout Manuel Peredo-Muniz at the Cathedral Kitchen adjacent to SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

She was excited about a special opportunity to help Manuel earn his Eagle Scout badge by having her feet washed and being fitted for new shoes.

“I got up this morning and I walked down here,” Moore said after receiving a new pair of socks and comfortable athletic shoes.

“I appreciate it very much,” she said.

“They asked you what size shoe you wear. If you don’t know, they measure your feet. I think it’s swell for the young guy that is doing this because it shows that they care for the homeless. I told him personally thanks, and I think he’s doing a good job caring for the homeless people’s feet. I love to see young people make it because there’s a whole lot of us who haven’t [been able to succed in life].”

Moore looked down at her new shoes and smiled.

“I have shelter at night, but it’s not as good as it should be,” she said. “I have a friend that is letting me stay in one of his houses, but it doesn’t have lights and stuff. I’ve just got a roof over my head. I have a little problem with reading. I can do some things, but I’ve been trying to get a job and had no luck.”

She smiled again and shrugged her shoulders then picked up her bag of grocires, climbed the stairs and walked outside into the cool autumn weather.

Manuel, who is 14, volunteers at the Cathedral Kitchen with other members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

While helping serve food there for his eighth-grade service project, Manuel noticed that many homeless people need shoes that fit better and are suitable for lots of walking.

He decided to collect donated shoes and organize a foot clinic for homeless people with advice from Cathedral Kitchen and Food Pantry director Margie Pike, a Cathedral parishioner and registered nurse. Doug Lowery, assistant scoutmaster of Troop #125 and a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, said Manuel’s Eagle Scout project is “centered right in service, centered right in the grace of Jesus Christ, and it’s modeled after the fact that if Christ was willing to wash the feet of the least of our brethren then it’s certainly something that we can do as well.”

Fifteen adults and 20 teenagers helped with his service project.

Dr. Patrick DeHeer, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish who specializes in podiatric medicine, volunteered to examine people’s feet.

“It’s great to be here,” DeHeer explained during a short break. “I work at a couple of other free clinics and do a lot of medical mission work so this is something that is natural for me. I was very impressed to see Manuel come up with the concept to do this [foot clinic].”

DeHeer said improper hygiene, ill-fitting shoes and dirty socks cause fungal problems and other foot infections for homeless people, who must rely on their feet to get around every day.

“A lot of the people have arch problems,” he said. “Most of the people are on their feet all the time so they have a lot of overuse injuries, too.”

Manuel’s father, Carlos, and mother, M. ercedes, helped him coordinate the foot care clinic for about 150 homeless people.

Teenagers carried tubs of warm water to the adults, volunteers, who washed the homeless people’s feet and fitted their new shoes then prayed with them.

“Their feet are their only means of transportation and they need good walking shoes,” Carlos Peredo said. “We have a big group of volunteers from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish and St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, and also from [Boy Scout] Troop #31 at the Carmel United Methodist Church, which is where my son goes for Scouts.”

M. urrel collected hundreds of pairs of donated shoes for men, women and children thanks to the generosity of members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Carmel United Methodist Church, Carmel Christian Church and Carmel Lutheran Church.

“I wanted to serve people in need with my Eagle Scout project,” M. urrel explained. “I came here with 236 pairs of shoes. I was able to help 234 people. Everybody was really grateful. I heard some of their stories—everything from how some people chose to be homeless because they felt a sense of freedom to the people who just got out of prison or [had] dropped out of school and can’t get a job.”

Several hundred pairs of extra men’s, women’s and children’s shoes were given to the Catholic Charities Indianapolis Crisis Office, archdiocesan Refugee Resettlement Program and archdiocesan Birthline program, which serve low-income people.

“There were two parts to my project—the physical part and the spiritual part,” Manuel said. “The homeless people can walk easier, and they’ll have clean feet and good shoes. But the main part of the project was that we gave them a message of hope, and they know that there are people who really care about them and will get down and wash their feet. All the volunteers prayed in a circle before we started, and each foot washer prayed with their clients.”

“The spirit that they have, they have a reason to be there. They have all been through so much and they still have that spirit of giving.”

“We thank the Lord for Joan’s leadership, dedication, friendship and love.”

In tribute to Joan Byrum

Joan passed along her passion for defending the defenseless to all of us—and for that we are grateful.

We will all miss her!!!

— The staff, board and volunteers of Right to Life of Indianapolis
By John Shaughnessy

After she graduated from college in the spring, Kendal Diedinsky struggled to find a new spiritual setting to continue developing her Catholic faith that means so much to her.

For four years at Washington University in St. Louis, the Newman Center helped her grow in her faith in the company of other Catholics in her age group.

“My experience at the Newman Center was amazing,” Diedinsky says. “If the students to the Catholic priest, it gave me a real sense of purpose. One of the biggest things I found there was an understanding of why I’m Catholic, and what it means to be a Catholic woman in today’s world.”

For now, she has found a spiritual home with the Catholic community at Butler University in Indianapolis. Yet, even though it has filled the void for her, it doesn’t completely meet her faith needs—a reality that a lot of people her age struggle with, she says.

“My experience at the Newman Center was amazing,” Diedinsky says. “If the students to the Catholic priest, it gave me a real sense of purpose. One of the biggest things I found there was an understanding of why I’m Catholic, and what it means to be a Catholic woman in today’s world.”

Cindy Flaten knows what’s at stake in her parish’s efforts to reach out to young adults.

“It’s for the growth of the larger Church and why we’re put on this Earth—to love and serve God and each other,” says Flaten, the director of religious education at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “If we don’t let young adults know that their community is still thinking of them, they’ll find what they’re looking for somewhere else.”

Flaten’s conversations with young adults have convinced her that they want to grow in their faith, so she’s trying to provide them with ideas and resources for their spiritual growth.

One outlet could be Theology on Tap, which lets young adults learn about their faith in a community setting, such as a restaurant, a parish hall or a bar. She’s also trying to develop programs at the parish and deanery levels, with the help of Mary Schaffner, the program coordinator of young adult ministry for the archdiocese.

“I’m working with the other directors of religious education in the [Indianapolis] North Deanery to try to establish some events,” Flaten says. “We want to connect them with other young adults in the North Deanery to help them see the bigger Church—not just on a spiritual level, but a social level. Mary tells us that once there’s a process, the young adults will take it over.”

Ideas being considered are Bible study sessions and spiritually themed movie nights that would also involve wine-and-cheese gatherings.

Christ the King Parish has also made efforts to keep in touch with their parishioners who are college students. The parish provides the students with information about the churches and the Newman Centers at the colleges they attend. The parish also sends care packages twice a year to their college students.

“I make scarves in their college colors just to let them know that their community is still thinking of them,” Flaten says. “That way, they know the Church is still reaching out to them as young adults.”

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult for more information on all of these events, plus more! or call Mary Schaffner, Program Coordinator at (317) 236-1430 or (800) 382 9836 ext. 1430

Young Adult Ministry Fall Summit Sunday, November 9, 2008 Young adults of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are invited to come together to celebrate the Eucharist, get to know one another and share in shaping the vision of young adult ministry in your Church.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Catholic Church 6:00 p.m. Mass followed by dinner and summit

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Teology on Tap

Teology on Tap is a social and educational organization where young adult Catholics meet at a local Indianapolis pub, currently Vito’s on Penn (20 N. Pennsylvania St.), and listen to talks about the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

The mission of the organization is to provide those in the Indianapolis area an informal platform to meet and socialize, while strengthening faith through the seeds of the Lord’s word. Those attending will have a chance to hear and meet fellow young adult Catholics in the area, plan to join the fun and comradery by checking out our calendar for all upcoming ToT talks and events.

Fall Theology on Tap Events—a series on Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body

• November 12 - Porn: X-Rated: An open discussion about the growing "Culture of Death" through pornography; Reclaiming a "Culture of Life" through purity.

• November 26 - Marriage and the Eucharist: Let’s ConsumeMate A discussion of how gift of self and marriage is consummation of persons is most completely realized in each - marital embrace and the Eucharist.

• December 10 - NFP: The Trojan War: Hear from a local physician on the beauty and reality of Natural Family Planning.

• December 17 - Theology of the Body Panel Discussion: Let’s Talk about Sex

See you at the Tap! All talks begin at 7:00 p.m.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Parishes hold the key to opening doors to young adults

Cindy Flaten knows what’s at stake in her parish’s efforts to reach out to young adults.

“It’s for the growth of the larger Church and why we’re put on this Earth—to love and serve God and each other,” says Flaten, the director of religious education at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “If we don’t let young adults know that their community is still thinking of them, they’ll find what they’re looking for somewhere else.”

Young Adult March for Life Pilgrimage — January 20 –22, 2009

A chance of a LIFEtime! Join us as our Archdiocese sponsors its first young adult trip to Washington D.C. to our nation’s capital to march in support of the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death. Priority will be offered to our college age students and young adults up to the age of 30.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Opportunities for Young Adults as our Archdiocese celebrates its 175th Anniversary

• Pilgrimage to Vincennes with Archbishop Daniel Buechlein – April 18, 2009

In conjunction with other pilgrimages of this kind, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein will lead this spiritual pilgrimage to Vincennes Indiana with our young adults on April 18, 2009. This historic city was the original location of the cathedral and home of Bishop Simon Brute, first Bishop of Vincennes, which pre-dated the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Pilgrims will tour the original cathedral, visit the crypt church and the remains of Brute, celebrate Mass and enjoy a meal, all while taking advantage of the opportunity for prayer, conversion and a deeper understanding of the origins of our Catholic heritage in Indiana.

• Young Adult Hospitality

Young adults will act as hosts for the over 30 Bishops from around the country who will be here to help celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation as part of the celebration Mass on May 3, 2009.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Mass and Run for Vocations — May 1 and 2, 2009

May 1st and 2nd, 2009 will be the weekend for our second annual Mass and Run for Vocations. Mass will be celebrated on May 1st at St. John’s downtown beginning at 6:00 p.m. and the run/walk will follow the next morning.

For those who don’t think they can—or have no desire!—to run the mini, we invite and encourage you to walk or run the 5k, sign up to hold our banner and cheer our runners on, or help out at our hospitality tent so that we have a great representation on that day. While this is sponsored by the young adults, all ages are encouraged to participate in support and awareness of vocations.
practice or non-practice of their faith for life, or at least until they move into married and family life” says Sister Carmen Gillick, a member of the Sisters of the Christian Community, who has worked as a college campus minister for 20 years. “So these years are critical,” adds Sister Carmen, who now serves at St. Joseph University Parish as the pastoral associate for college students in the Terra-Haute area. She also says it’s significant that the archdiocese is seeking different approaches to connect with college students and older young adults.

“It’s very important to see the difference in the needs and expectations of college students as opposed to young adults who are not college-going,” Sister Carmen says. “You can get college students at 10 p.m. If you try that with people in the workforce, they’ll tell you, ‘You have to be kidding. I have to get up at 5 a.m.’” I do commend the archdiocese’s outreach to both groups at this point in time.

So do college students. “I think it’s a real blessing that the archdiocese is realizing the potential our generation has,” says Moby Hyland, 23, a student at Butler University in Indianapolis and the president of the college’s Catholic community. “To help us know ourselves and our family life,” says Sister Carmen Gillick, a member of the Sisters of the Christian Community, who has worked as a college campus minister for 20 years.

Students say that the Butler Catholic community especially benefits from having a priest, Father Jeff Godacker, on campus as a chaplain. “It was a really hard transition coming here my freshman years,” says David Krieg, 20, a sophomore who grew up in St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. “When I first got here, I lost. It helped me get involved in the Butler Catholic community, and having a priest here makes a huge difference. The sacraments are always available. You can talk to him if you have troubles. He provides a link to the archdiocese that we wouldn’t have. I think it’s just essential.”

A need for a stronger connection

At 27, Allison Witmeier believes that young adults need a stronger connection to the Church, too. “It’s an age group that can easily be misunderstood,” says Witmeier, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “I know a lot of people my age feel left out. After you graduate from college, there’s not a lot of involvement for you until you have kids. A lot of people let their faith go. They don’t feel there’s a lot there for them. They don’t have that strong connection. I think the archdiocese reaching out to people that age is excellent. It needs to happen.”

Father Nagel and Schaffner agree. They will spend the first year of their initiative by meeting with young adults and researching approaches that have succeeded so they can develop a five-year plan for re-establishing campus and young adult ministry.

The initiative already has the theme of a “Universal Call to Holiness.” Two of its main goals involve evangelization and an increase in vocations.

“We are lots of campuses, one of the things the students immediately talk about is the presence of priests on campus,” says Father Nagel, who is also the associate director of vocations for the archdiocese and the associate pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.

_THAT’S WHERE WE BECOME PART OF A FAITH COMMUNITY_”

“When the priest is there, the sacraments are there. They see that clearly. It’s also the Catholic identity. They want to have Mass on campus. They think it would help evangelization. We are called to evangelize to all people, not just Catholics. It leads into vocations, too. Every comment the archbishop makes on this is with an eye on vocations.”

The challenge and the future

For young adults, an emphasis has also been placed on making parishes more welcoming to them, giving them opportunities to be involved in parish programs and helping them connect with people in their age group.

“The opportunity to serve the community is something my age group and younger feel is important,” says Witmeier, who has been involved in guiding confirmation classes at Christ the King Parish with her husband, Andy, who is 28.

“Service opportunities would be a great way to get people involved. There’s a passion there to make a difference. A lot of people my age look opportunities to be social and have fun, too.”

The leaders of the archdiocese’s young adult ministry are listening.

“Our challenge is to gently, persistently invite them into a parish faith community,” says Schaffner, a mother whose children range from teenagers to young adults in their 20s. “That’s where we become part of a faith community. That’s the piece they need to be invited into.”

Father Nagel nods and adds, “It’s a culture they’ve grown up in, a culture that says it’s OK to pick and choose. But it never really connects them to the ownership of a parish and parish life. We’re looking for unity in community.”

In that pursuit, Father Nagel and Schaffner continue to cross the archdiocese, racking up the miles between college campuses, spending late afternoons and evenings listening to the hopes and concerns of young people, and even sending out round after round of text messages—all with the goal of bringing young adults closer to the Church.

The effort drives a chord with 22-year-old Kendal Dedinsky, a 2008 college graduate who was seeking a new spiritual home when she recently returned to Indianapoliss, the city where she grew up.

“I think the archdiocese’s efforts to have more ministry with young adults is awesome,” Dedinsky says. “I’m looking forward to seeing where it goes.”

Young adults in the archdiocese are invited to a Young Adult Ministry Fall Summit on Nov. 9 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood. Mass will be held in the church at 6 p.m., followed by a dinner and social at 7 p.m. The summit will include several speakers and small group discussions about information about ministry to young adults in the archdiocese, log on to www.archindy.org/youngadults.

Pew study offers a glimpse into the faith lives of young adults

By John Shaugnessy

Some studies and statistics offer intriguing insights into the faith of young adults in a American society today.

According to a Pew Forum and the Pew Research Center for the People & American culture, and it is not entirely clear that the Christian Church understands or particularly knows what and its influence on religion.

Christian Smith, the director of the Center for the Study of Science, Technology, and Society at the University of Notre Dame. In the November-December 2007 issue of Books & Culture, Smith writes about a concept called “emerging adulthood” and its influence on religion.

“There is a new and important stage in life in American culture, and it is not entirely clear that the Christian Church understands or particularly knows what to do with it,” Smith writes.

Smith notes how young adults in the past have sometimes drifted away from their faith for a while only to return to it when they get married and have children.

Now, he asserts, there are factors in the lives of the 18-29 age group that are extending the amount of time before that return. Those factors include a delay of marriage by young adult A generation movement toward a “rewilding” of their twenties, a prolongation of parental financial support, and uncertainty involving job and career choices.

“With the space between high school graduation and full adulthood was fairly short, as it was 50 years ago, the length of time spent out of church tended to be rather short,” Smith and securities products and services as a Registered Representative of the Prudential Family of Companies, 1-800-201-6690.

Those factors include a delay of marriage by young adult A generation movement toward a “rewilding” of their twenties, a prolongation of parental financial support, and uncertainty involving job and career choices.

“When the space between high school graduation and full adulthood was fairly short, as it was 50 years ago, the length of time spent out of church tended to be rather short,” Smith notes. “The 18-29 age group is an age group that is extending the amount of time before that return. Those factors include a delay of marriage by young adult A generation movement toward a “rewilding” of their twenties, a prolongation of parental financial support, and uncertainty involving job and career choices.

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The Criterion  Friday, November 7, 2008

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passed a recent milestone, with approval of the diocesan phase of investigation. Pope Paul’s cause has also reached the Vatican. And the “santo subito!”—“sainthood now!”—movement is still pushing for the quick beatification of Pope John Paul II. The push to canonize deceased popes is a relatively recent trend. Over the last 700 years, only two popes were declared saints. Yet today, it seems almost a given that sooner or later a pope will be proposed for sainthood after his death.

Luigi A. Cattoli, a respected Italian journalist who has covered the Vatican for decades, wrote after the death of Pope John Paul II that papal canonizations were “pointless” and that the Church would better spend its energy by looking for less renowned saints. He said the starting gun for the pope “race for sainthood” was fired by Pope Paul, when at the end of the Second Vatican Council he simultaneously launched the causes of Popes Pius and John.

There is no doubt recent popes have been holy men, he said. But sometimes rushing to proclaim sainthood for a pope is simply a way for “the Roman hierarchy to canonize itself,” he said.

Accattoli’s views are not shared widely by Vatican saint makers. Jesuit Father Paolo Molinari, who until recently was the postulator for the cause of Pope Paul, said it was a primary requisite for opening any sainthood cause is “fama sanctitatis,” Latin for “reputation of holiness,” which must be recognized widely among the faithful. Some think that tends to favor popes, who live on the world stage. But Father Molinari said global celebrity does not guarantee a reputation for holiness, even for popes.

“It can work both ways,” he said. On Nov. 2, All Souls’ Day, Pope Benedict prayed in the grotto beneath St. Peter’s Basilica in memory of all his predecessors—another sign that popes may be gone, but they are not forgotten.

Exhibit opens as debate continues over Pius XII’s wartime role

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican opened a major exhibit on the life and pontificate of Pope Pius XII that highlights the late pope’s actions on behalf of Jews and others who suffered during World War II.

The retrospective show—featuring photos, articles of clothing and documents—opened on Nov. 4 in an exhibition hall adjacent to St. Peter’s Square.

Several sections of the exhibit are dedicated to the Vatican’s actions during the war. Pope Pius is described as a “defender of peace” who opened Vatican properties to refugees, and created an office to help prisoners of war and their families.

The pope is pictured standing amid the Roman populace after aerial bombardment of the city, visiting the Vatican bakery that furnished free bread to residents, and meeting in 1943 with Jews who escaped deportation to concentration camps.

Press clippings and letters attesting to the pope’s courage in defending the Jews are included, along with transcripts of the pope’s radio broadcasts during the war.

To help demonstrate the pope’s clear anti-Nazi sentiments, one glass case displays pages of a draft version of the 1937 encyclical “With Burning Concern,” which condemned the racism and paganisms of the Nazi regime. The text was written by Pope Pius XI, but with assistance from his secretary of state, then-Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli—elected two years later as Pope Pius XII—whose margin notes are clearly visible.

The exhibit opened as an international debate continued over the late pope’s actions during the war. Some Jewish groups have said that he did little to mobilize the Church in defense of Jews, while other experts have gathered evidence to show that he worked quietly but effectively to save the lives of thousands of Jews and others.

Mgr. Walter Brandmuller, president of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences, told a press conference that the exhibit should help demonstrate that “the accusations against [Pope Pius XII] cannot be based on historical research, which ever more convincingly demonstrates how groundless they are.”

Much of the Vatican exhibit presents a human side of the pope, including his early years as a boy in a neighborhood not far from the Vatican.

It also highlights aspects of his pontificate that are often overlooked: his launching of archaeological excavations beneath St. Peter’s Basilica, his interest in contemporary artistic works and his extensive travels, which included the United States.

One of the most unusual items is a handwritten page in the pope’s radio broadcasts during the war.

“Debate continues over Pius XII’s wartime role”

Actually, we don’t mind if you compare. Because for the last four years, when HealthGrades—America’s leading independent healthcare ratings company—has compared hospitals for overall heart care, St. Vincent Heart Center of Indiana has been named #1. No hospital in the 10-state region has earned this honor four years in a row: 2006, 2007, 2008, and now 2009. When the experts compare, there’s simply no comparison. The best heart care in Indiana. Period.

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Incomparable.
Study shows America as ‘a competitive religious marketplace’

By Edward P. Hahnenberg

A study by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life reveals the highly fluid and diverse nature of religion in America, raising important questions for religious institutions in general and for the Catholic Church in particular.

The “U.S. Religious Landscape Survey” (available online at http://religions.pewforum.org) is one of the largest and most in-depth studies of its kind. It is based on interviews with more than 35,000 adults conducted over the summer of 2007.

A new report published in February 2008 described the basic religious affiliations of Americans. A second installment released in June explores the implications of faith on social and political views.

The results of the survey may be surprising. More than a quarter of adult Americans have left the faith of their childhood for some other faith or for none at all. If the numbers are adjusted to include those who move from one Protestant tradition to another, then it appears that almost half of all Americans have switched religious affiliations.

The United States has become a nation of religious seekers. Calling America a “competitive religious marketplace,” the survey describes a dynamic arena in which every major group is gaining and losing members at the same time.

The gamut of possibilities is carefully charted from the smallest religious communities in the United States, like Russian Orthodox, Hinduism and New Age (each less than a half percent of the population), to growing religions like Buddhists and Islam (less than 1 percent), to the four largest religious groupings: Evangelical Protestants (26 percent), Catholics (24 percent), mainline Protestants (18 percent) and the unaffiliated (16 percent).

The diversity demonstrated across these groups is displayed within each community, whose members show a remarkably tolerant attitude toward others. Many of those who are affiliated with a religious tradition, seven-in-10 say many different religions can lead to eternal life, and two-thirds agree that there is nothing in particular.

A study by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life shows that Latinos are influencing U.S. religious practice, especially Catholicism.

‘Americans’ apparent flexibility in belief … does not make for a nation of unbelievers.

As Michael Lindsay of Rice University put it, “It’s not that Americans don’t believe in anything. It’s that we believe in everything.”

This apparent flexibility in belief, however, does not make for a nation of unbelievers. As Michael Lindsay of Rice University said, “It’s not that Americans don’t believe in anything. It’s that we believe in everything.”

Nine-in-10 Americans believe in God and three-quarters believe in life after death. Even in the unaffiliated category—the quickest growing group—we find few hardened atheists or agnostics (less than 2 percent of Americans call themselves atheists). Instead, the category is made up mostly of individuals who simply describe their religion as “nothing in particular.”

Many cite the importance of religion in their lives, even as they distance themselves from any one religious tradition. The Pew survey offers good data on a trend that has occupied sociologists for years. The Pew report notes that almost a third of all Americans switch affiliation at least once from one group to another, reflecting a larger shift away from institutional religion toward more personal experiences of faith, from what Robert Wuthnow calls religious “dwelling” to religious “seeking.”

For the Catholic Church in the United States, the survey notes both loss and gain. First, looser denominational loyalties mean that almost a third of all American Catholics leave the Catholic Church. The survey concludes that, among all religious groups, “Catholicism has experienced the greatest net losses as a result of affiliation changes.”

The Catholic Church has lost the most members, but it has one of the highest retention rates of all religious groups (68 percent). A mong major U.S. religions, only Jews and Mormons “keep” a higher percentage of their members than Catholics.

Still, it remains a fact that almost a third of all Americans raised Catholic are no longer Catholic. Not all enter the ranks of the unaffiliated. Instead, it seems that many are searching for something—a experience of God or a connection to others that they do not find in the Catholic Church. Secondly, alongside these losses are the gains. Recent immigration has brought huge numbers of Catholics to the United States, particularly from Mexico and Latin America. New immigrants have offset the decline noted above, keeping the percentage of Catholics in the overall population fairly stable.

These Catholics coming to the United States are seekers, too. But so often, they are searching for something more immediate and concrete: a job, a new life, a place in this community. A number of Catholic parishes have been exemplary in welcoming immigrants, supporting them and celebrating with them. In remarkable communities around the country, settled Catholics have joined these seekers in their search. Perhaps there is something we can learn from this two-fold dynamic of loss and gain.

The freedom with which individuals enter and exit different faith communities can seem like a threat to those that imagine themselves as institutions. But when a Church sees itself as a people—a pilgrimage of God—then worries over membership give way to a focus on mission.


Discussion Point

Better formation needed to keep people Catholic

This Week’s Question

The Pew survey says that more than one in six American adults are not currently affiliated with any religious group. How can Catholics reach out to them?

“I think we’ve lost two generations of people … who haven’t passed down religious values and principles because they didn’t have any themselves. My solutions are first to … keep churchgoers going to church and to keep them knowledgeable so they can pass on their faith to grandkids, etc.” (Gus Zenker, Little Canada, Minn.)

“I don’t know much with the people who […] are the grom [i.e., Christ]. If we preach that the relationship to him is part of what we believe, that could lead to love of his bride.” (Chris Paul, M anchester, N.H.)

“In these hard times with high gas and food prices and mortgage problems, community is one of the biggest help. Catholics should reach out to people who are hurting, maybe starting community gardens, and this would form the deep connections that to me are where the spirit lives.” (Paula Evitts, Great Falls, Mont.)

“I think we don’t get enough publicity on the good things. 250,000 young people were [at World Youth Day 2008], and they should be recognized for it.” (Mary Weingert, Des Moines, Iowa)

Land Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Perhaps you can’t perform a miracle today, but you can work wonders. Tell a story of what work of wonder you witnessed, something someone in your family or parish did that was quite wondrous.

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

Like a proud parent, God rejoices in our good deeds


"I asked her what a cow is," she said, and I called him at work just to let him know. It was a typical news flash for a Wednesday afternoon. I was so delighted that you would have thought I was holding a winning lottery ticket. Then I dialed my sister to fill her in.

"I was holding a winning lottery ticket. Then I was so delighted that you would have thought I was holding a winning lottery ticket." That is what I said to my friend who had been from the border Alsace. Both of them holding a plastic basin on his head and being carried by their father, sitting on barren land, pensively reading a letter … a child on a bike in snow and an afternoon. I was so delighted that you would have thought I was holding a winning lottery ticket.

They included: • "Complain less and give of ourselves more." • "M'dem 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world." • "Be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have." • "Modern 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world." • "Be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have." • "M'dem 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world." • "Be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have." • "M'dem 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world." • "Be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have." • "M'dem 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world." • "Be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have and be grateful for what we have." • "M'dem 'advanced' societies ignore or forget of the other two-thirds of people in the world."
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Nov. 9, 2008

Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12
1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17
John 2:13-22

Last weekend, the Church replaced the liturgy of the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time with the liturgy of the commemoration of All Souls. This week, instead of the liturgy for the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Church celebrates the Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome. As was the case last week, the Church has lessons here to teach.

Actually, the Basilica of St. John Lateran is the principal church in Rome. St. Peter’s Basilica, probably to the surprise of most Catholics, is not the major church in Rome.

Historic circumstances associated St. Peter’s so intimately with the popes. St. Peter’s Basilica is a shrine, not a cathedral.

Cathedrals are the churches in which local bishops celebrate the Eucharist and preach, especially in their official positions as shepherds of the flock. In Rome, the Basilica of St. John Lateran is the cathedral, the seat of the pope. Since the pope, the bishop of Rome, is also the Pope, the Archbishop of the Church Universal, St. John Lateran has significance for every Catholic.

This link with the pope reminds us that we all are part of the Church.

The dedication of any church is important since by dedication we set a space on Earth aside for God, there to hear God’s holy word and to be with God in Jesus the Eucharist.

For the first reading, the Church offers us a beautiful passage from the Book of Ezekiel.

The prophet sees water flowing from the temple. The Holy Land then, as now, was very dry. Water meant life. Life flowed from God’s house, from God’s presence.

St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians is the source of the second reading.

Reflection

We can be overly literal in reading this passage from St. John’s Gospel. Of course, Jesus ridded the sacred precincts of the temple of merchants and charlatans who were preying on the devout.

However, John saw more in this event. John recalled that Jesus was the true temple of God. Jesus would be killed and in three days would rise. It was just as Jesus predicted that the temple would fall and in three days be replaced.

There is no place for sin in the true temple of God. John further saw a community aspect in the group of believers surrounding Jesus. They were united to the Lord by the Lord’s own design. He was united with them. The bond was created by God.

We are now in this community, which is the Church. There can be no sin among us. We cannot allow our greed or dishonesty to defile the holy temple that is Christ.

The Basilica of St. John Lateran, as any dedicated church, has a pragmatic purpose. It provides us with a setting for worship, for hearing the Word of God and for the Eucharist. It also represents us as we are the Church. We are the Body of Christ, resurrected and living in the world.

Christ is in us. We are in Christ.

We are God’s people. In God’s mercy, the pope guides us and ministers to us. †

Church offers guidelines for prayer of the faithful at Mass

Does the Church have guidelines for the prayers of the faithful at Mass? It gets wearisome hearing the same ones week after week, and sometimes they are awfully long.

Are there suggestions that would help us know what they are supposed to be? (Texas)

It appears that most Catholics, including many priests and parish religious ministers, would find some good catechesis about these intercessions extremely helpful.

A General Instruction of the Roman Missal (#55, #69) gives the bare rubrical bones for use. Of the general intercessions, or prayer of the faithful, it says, the people, “exercising the office of their baptismal priesthood, offer prayers for God to the salvation of all.” It gives a general rule for the sequence of intentions:

a) for the needs of the Church;
b) for public authorities and the salvation of the world;
c) for those oppressed by any need;
d) for the local community.

Intentions may also appropriately be related to special occasions, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms and confirmations.

These brief lines in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal are based on a number of documents about the history and nature of these intercessions and the prominent place they have held in the liturgy nearly from the beginning.

We know that by the year 150 they already had an honored place in the Sunday Christian celebrations. After the Scriptures were read and reflected upon, the intercessory prayers were seen as the flourishing of that word in the hearts of the faithful, offering their prayers for the Church and for the whole world.

Perhaps still the best brief resource is the document “The Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful,” issued by the Vatican Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1966. It offers some marvelous insights into how the intercessions fit into the life of the communion of saints.

“The gathered Church,” it says, in offering this prayer, “stands as the great entreator and advocate appointed for all humanity. The holy people of God exercise their royal priesthood to the fullest above all by sharing in the sacrifices also but also by joining in this prayer” (#1-#3).

In a remarkable comparison, the congratulatory notes an analogy between sacramental Communion, which climaxes the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the intercessions, which the ancient and modern Church regards as climaxing the Liturgy of the Word.

There is much more, sometimes surprising, information about the intercessions even in this one document.

In particular, it indicates two points relevant to your question and to the rest of us concerned about good and traditional liturgies.

First, the general intercessions deserve serious, thoughtful attention to their majestic purpose in the Mass. Routine lack of reflective care in preparing and presenting them reveals itself in the negative way that you describe in your letter.

Second, the worldwide and Church-wide concerns they are meant to address should keep us from trivializing the intercessions.

Masses on weekdays and special occasions may allow for more informal and personalized prayer. But even then, their primary thrust should be respected.

As a general rule, the Church means the prayer of the faithful to be “for all the baptised people of God,” and to place the prayer power of all the baptized members of Christ at the service of those needs.

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen

My Journey to God

Three Haiku Reflections

Autumn Garden
fallen yellow leaves
at the concrete virgin’s feet
a gold-hued blanket

Galilee Sunrise
pink and silver sky
the palm fronds swaying, waving
greet the golden disc
at the concrete virgin’s feet

Tropheaenum
tiny capuchin
clothed in fiery habit
nourish me, I pray


**Catholic News Around Indiana**

**DOCTEUR OF GARY**

Catholics, Muslims gather for annual Midwest dialogue

By Steve Euvino
Northwestern Indiana Catholic


They met at Catholic and Islamic institutions to engage in interreligious dialogue because, as one session declaration states, the dialogue “is part of our core identity as people of faith.”

Representatives from several states and the District of Columbia attended a series of scholarly sessions and public sessions dealing with such issues as religious freedom, religion in the public square and immigration as well as an analysis of the American legal structure as it relates to Islamic law.

Joan Crick, director of the Gary diocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affair, said the purpose of the dialogue, started in 1996, is to “create understanding between our two religions.”

Sessions were held at the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center in Crown Point, Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting and Gary Diocese’s pastoral center in Merrillville. The schedule allowed time for the five daily prayers of Islam and for Masses and Catholic prayer services.

Gary Bishop Dale J. Melleck, offering a welcome on Oct. 26 at the Islamic center, said that in the past year leaders from both faiths have made public efforts toward making peace between the two groups.

Noting that Christians and Muslims comprise 55 percent of the world’s population, the bishop quoted from a Muslim text that stated: “If Muslims and Christians are not at peace, the world cannot be at peace.”

Quoting from the Quran, the sacred book of Islam, the bishop noted that, “Without giving the neighbor what we ourselves love, we do not truly love God or the neighbor.”

He likened that to a street sign which read: “my brothers, what good is it to profess faith without practicing it?” (Is 2:14).

The bishop also quoted from Catholic bishops in a fria who said that although Catholics and Muslims hold some similar fundamental religious values—the need for prayer, the uniqueness of God, and the importance of almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimages—bigotry, intolerance, militarism and fundamentalism by a tiny minority are the main sources of tension.

While these bishops acknowledged these challenges, Bishop Melleck said, “they urged that we place the difficulties in the hands of God and move forward with a spirit of hope.”

In his welcome, Imam M. ongy el Quraani, the Islamic center’s spiritual leader, listed some of the religious figures that both faiths hold in common, including Noah, Moses, Jacob, Joseph, Benjamin, Aron and John the Baptist.

“Let us come together for a common word,” the Imam said, and that word is “justice.”

He added that both Christians and Muslims have lived in this country for a long time, but he said it was not until he spent some time in New York that he experienced tension between the two groups. He prayed that the dialogue would help these groups “bring all the issues that can bring us together.”

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**Catholic News Around Indiana**

The Criterion Friday, November 7, 2008

**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

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 coffetable book contains maps, full-color photographs and graphics. The first half of the book is an historical account of the founding of the archdiocese 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.
“I put my trust in St. Francis. And they saved my life.”

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