A family business

Etienne family nurtured vocations with love

By Sean Gallagher

TELL CITY—A young woman knelt in prayer in the sacred groto in Lourdes, France. Her older sister had become a Benedictine sister, and some had suggested that she had a religious vocation as well. But she was convinced that God was calling her to be a wife and mother. She told the Lord in prayer that while she didn’t want to enter religious life, any children that she might have could be his own as religious or priests. That young woman, Kay Vogel of Tell City, accompanied on the pilgrimage by her brother, the now-deceased Father Bernard Vogel, married Paul Etienne a few years later in 1957. Over the next 12 years, they were blessed with six children. As the years passed, that prayer that Kay had prayed so long ago in Lourdes started bearing fruit. Three of her sons would eventually be ordained priests, and one daughter entered religious life. Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne entered Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove in 1986. Father Paul Etienne, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, was ordained in 1992. Father Bernard Etienne was ordained for the Evangelical Diocese a year later, and Father Zachary Etienne was ordained in 2004 for the same diocese. The Etienne’s two other children, Rick and Angela, eventually married and started families of their own. “I don’t think that there’s a day that goes by that we don’t say, ‘Thank you, God,’” Kay said.

Frewheeling and faith-filled

What was it in the way that Paul and Kay Etienne raised their children that led so many of them to discern calls to the priesthood and religious life? According to the parents, it wasn’t anything special, at least at the time. They sought to instill in their children good values. Prayer was also commonplace in their Tell City home. So were priests, seminarians and religious. The children had an uncle who was a priest and an aunt who was a sister. And when Kay and Paul began teaching religious education at St. Paul Parish in Tell City, where they are still members, children had an uncle who was a priest and an aunt who was a sister. And when Kay and Paul began teaching religious education at St. Paul Parish in Tell City, where they are still members, seminarians from the nearby Saint Meinrad School of Theology who assisted in the catechetical program frequently came by their home to visit. “They grew up knowing what the priesthood was all about,” one said.

Brownsburg Catholics celebrate new church

By Mary Ann Wyand

BROWNSBURG—Longtime St. Malachi parishioners Marie Quinn Bersot and Pauline Danda of Brownsburg couldn’t contain their joy after the Dec. 16 dedication of the new St. Malachi Church on former farmland that had belonged to the Quinn family for three generations. “My Grandfather Quinn came over here from Ireland,” Bersot explained after the Mass of Dedication on Dec. 16 for their parish’s fourth church since 1866. Bersot donated 40 acres of farmland for the new parish site north of Brownsburg.

Pope calls for Gaza peace talks, deplores violence in Congo

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As fighting continued in the Gaza Strip, Pope Benedict XVI urged Israelis and Palestinians to end the violent, armed clashes and start peace talks.

“Hatred and the rejection of dialogue bring nothing but war,” he said after praying the Angelus on Jan. 6 with pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

“Today I would like to encourage the initiatives and efforts of all those who, having a heart of peace, are trying to help rebuild the peace and bring Israelis and Palestinians agree to sit down together and talk,” he said.

He prayed that God would help sustain the dedicated efforts of these “courageous builders of peace.”

The pope also appealed for an end to the “inhumane brutality” unfolding in eastern Congo, where some 20 children were abducted over the Christmas period by armed bandits who launched attacks against villages, leaving many people dead or injured.

Caritas Congo reported on Dec. 29 that the children were abducted as child soldiers for the Lord’s Resistance Army—a Ugandan rebel group. Caritas Congo is the local affiliate of the international Catholic Church umbrella group Caritas Internationalis.

Caritas said violence in the region flared in late December, leaving hundreds of people dead. It said 50 bodies were found in the courtyard of a Catholic church in Doruma on Christmas morning.

The pope urged those responsible for such “inhuman brutality to give the [kidnapped] children back to their families” so that the future of these young people may be safe and fruitful.

The pope made the appeals on the feast of the Epiphany, which is a national holiday in Italy and is largely dedicated to children.

He said he was praying for the world’s children, especially those experiencing a troubled childhood.

“The violence against children worldwide appears even more alarming considering that 2009 marks the 20th anniversary of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child,” he said.

He called on world leaders to renew their promises to defend, safeguard and foster the
Celebrations offer lasting memories and help build faith

(EDITOR’S 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 their Catholic faith and the Church in central and southern Indiana that have shaped their lives. This week, we feature a story remembering the late Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara. The story is from Ron Massey, business manager of The Criterion and a member of St. Paul Parish in Indianapolis.)

“One of the greatest memories I have is of that of Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara. What a happy and personable man. When I came to the Church during the Easter Vigil, it was an archbishop O’Meara who confirmed me. I was so saddened by his death, but that soon evaporated as his funeral Mass was prepared. On that very cold, snowy and icy day of Jan. 16, 1992, sadness soon turned into a glorious and joyous day.

“The procession of priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, dignitaries and the apostolic nuncio was a sight to behold for any new Catholic. The magnificent sounds of the organ, and the choir’s and the assembly’s voices, were and still are indescribable. I felt as if I was flying as I stood in the choir loft of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

“The days that followed were quiet ones and almost forgotten as time passed. In September of 1992, we celebrated the installation of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and, once again, I had the wonderful pleasure of being a part of another magnificent celebration in our Church.

“These are the memories that I will never forget for they helped to build my faith in so many ways, and especially during the difficult times of my life.”

(If you have a story or a memory to share, we would appreciate receiving it. Send it to The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Or you can email your story to criterion@archindy.org. Please include the words “Anniversary Story” on the envelope and in the e-mail heading. We will try to keep your story to 250 words or less.)

Paul and Kay Etienne above the rosary in their Tell City home. Married for 31 years, the Etienne’s raised six children. Three sons are now priests and one daughter is a woman religious.

ETIENNE

continued from page 1

Paul said. But not only did they know what the priesthood was about, they knew priests—as people.

“Always a home was a place for wayward priests and religious,” said Father Bernie with a laugh. “The priests and religious sisters and seminarians knew that if they just needed a place where they could kick off their shoes and have a meal and just be themselves and unwind, they could do that at our house. You never knew who was going to show up.”

As the Etienne children grew, they also had fun and got into trouble the way that a lot of kids do from time to time. And the couple says that is still the case when they come to visit. “When those kids come home, they are absolutely wild kids again,” said Paul. “There would be nobody in the world that would think that they had any connection with religious life. You’d wonder what in the devil these nuts do.”

“They tweak each other,” Kay said. “They’re constantly breaking each other just to get each other to look foolish.”

“When we all get together, we don’t have these little halo things around us,” said Paul. “We never put any pressure on them to go into the religious life or to be an insurance agent like I was that was their choice.”

Rick has been married for 25 years and has three children. From his own experience of married life, his memories of his parents and in his time helping to promote priestly and religious vocations for the Evansville Diocese, he knows the power of a marriage on vocations.

“(Any) healthy priestly vocations come from healthy marriage,” he said. “They are the direct result of healthy marriages. The same skills that would be good for the priesthood also make for a good married life: pastoral kindness, love, gentleness.”

Discerning and promoting vocations

As Paul and Kay’s children entered their adult years in the 1960s, their own vocations started to emerge.

But it was only after her children chose to enter the seminary or religious life that Kay told them about the prayer she made at Lourdes so long ago.

“I never heard about it until the day that I was going to leave for the seminary,” said Father Paul.

He was a college seminarian from 1964-66 and then became a seminarian again in 1988, studying at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. On the same day that Paul left for Rome, Father Bernie left for Our Lady of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Ill., as a seminarian for the Evansville Diocese.

In 1986, Sister Nicolette entered Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, where her aunt, Benedictine Sister Jeanne Voges, is and continues to be a member. Sister Nicolette professed her final vows in 1991.

Father Zach’s vocation came a little later. He was ordained for the Evansville Diocese in 2004.

“Paul and I joked when I was thinking about your idea. It was going to be a clarion call: ‘Let the family be the priority,’” said Father Paul. “I think today there are just so many other distractions and activities. And make prayer a part of the practice [of the faith] in the home. Make that regular meal a family priority. There is just so much that says that.”

It seems like there are a lot of parents who just don’t support it,” said Sister Nicolette. “I would tell [them] to just really be open if their children feel like they’re being called, and to encourage them to explore it and not be afraid of it.”

“If your young child says that they’re interested in being a priest or being a nun, don’t discourage that,” said Father Bernie. “As a parent you need to try and not discourage it. A child may not get that idea right away.”

Correction

Caption information was incorrect for a photograph featuring two angels at the altar at historic St. Patrick Church in Indianapolis. The picture was published on page 18 in the Christmas Supplement as part of the Dec. 19 issue. “IHS” is a monogram for the Holy Name of Jesus. Sometimes the letters transcribe to the Roman letters “IES” or “IES.” “IHS” is the main part of the seal of the Society of Jesus.
Financial crisis calls for new economic model, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The current financial crisis should be seen as a challenge to find new economic models that promote honesty, development and concern for the environment, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“We need to try to establish a ‘virtuous circle’ of living simply and fighting poverty,” the pope said on Jan. 1. He celebrated Mass for the Feast of Mary Mother of God and World Peace Day.

During the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica and reciting the Angelus afterward with people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Benedict focused on the 2009 World Peace Day theme of “Fighting Poverty to Build Peace.”

But he also called for an end to the “massive violence” in the Gaza Strip and offered special prayers for “the small, but fervent parish in Gaza.”

“We place at the feet of Mary our concerns for the present and our fears for the future, and our well-founded hope that with the wise and farsighted contributions of everyone it will not be impossible to listen to one another, meet together and give a concrete response to the widespread aspiration to live in peace and dignity,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict prayed for peace throughout the Middle East, accepted the offering gifts from a group of children from Lebanon and listened as a prayer was read in Arabic asking God to inspire people to commit themselves as a contribution to peacemaking.

In his homily, the pope said he imagines Mary often asked herself: “Why did Jesus want to come into the world in a stall and want to be born of a simple and humble Mary?”

Pope Benedict focused on the 2009 World Peace Day theme of “Fighting Poverty to Build Peace.”

“The key to supporting people and families from living according to their poverty, a poverty that offends justice and equality and, as such, threatens peaceful coexistence,” he added. While AIDS and other diseases spread, while children live without basic necessities and millions of families struggle to find food, the pope said, “this unacceptable poverty” continues.

“One on hand, there are celebrations for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while on the other hand there is an increase in military spending in violation of the United Nations’ charter, which commits nations to reduce them to a minimum,” he added.

“Solidarity, not a weapons system, is the key to protecting people and ensuring peace, the pope said.

Turning to the current global economic crisis, the pope asked: “Are we ready to read it, in all its complexity, as a challenge for the future and not just as an emergency needing short-term responses? A re readiness to conduct together a profound revision of the dominant model of development in order to correct it in a concerted and farsighted way? “

“Even more than the immediate financial difficulties, the ecological state of the planet and, especially, the cultural and moral crisis whose symptoms have long been evident in many parts of the world require an ‘ecological conversion’,” he said.

The solution, Pope Benedict said, must be based on adopting a moderate lifestyle and making a commitment to living in solidarity with those whose dignity is threatened by poverty and by war.

A dressing pilgrims in St. Peter’s square after the Mass and greeting hundreds of people who had participated in a march for peace sponsored by the Rome-based Sant Egidio Community, the pope said Christians are called to live with hope for the future.

“It is not a matter of trusting in better luck or in modern maneuvers of the market and of finance, but of each one of us making a commitment to being just a bit better and more responsible and to counting on the goodness of the Lord,” he said.

Survey finds most people support some restrictions on abortion

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A new online survey conducted for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops finds a majority of participants support at least some restrictions on abortion.

The survey conducted online on Dec. 10-12 asked 2,341 people about the circumstances under which they would favor or oppose legal abortion or regulations about what kind of restrictions of regulations about abortion they would support or oppose. Among its findings were that 78 percent favor regulations that prevent the use of taxpayer funds for abortion providers performing abortions, and 72 percent favor requiring that abortions be performed only by licensed physicians, and that 72 percent favor requiring that women seeking abortions be told of the potential physical and psychological risks and about alternatives such as adoption.

It found 11 percent think abortion should be illegal in all circumstances, and 38 percent said it should be legal only under limited circumstances, such as in cases of rape or incest or to save the life of the mother. Forty-two percent said abortion should be legal for any reason.

A mong those who said it should be legal for any reason, 9 percent would place no limits on abortion through all nine months of pregnancy, while 27 percent would allow unrestricted abortion only in the first trimester, and 6 percent through the first six months.

A mong the possible restrictions or regulations on abortion about which participants were asked:

• 55 percent said they strongly or somewhat strongly favor laws requiring the use of taxpayer funds for abortions, • 58 percent at least somewhat strongly favor laws protecting medical personnel from being required to participate in abortions, • 60 percent favor laws that, such as those requiring parental notification for minors who have abortions or making partial-birth abortion illegal, only 11 percent of the survey participants said they would not support any of these regulations, • 47 percent of the participants said they would not oppose any of the six mentioned restrictions. Between 7 percent and 9 percent of the participants in the survey declined to answer some of the questions.

The survey questions on abortion were part of an online omnibus questionnaire on a wide range of topics. Participants could click on “decline to answer” as they chose, said Deirdre M. Quinn, assistant director for policy and communications at the USCCB’s Office of Public Affairs.

The news release from the USCCB noted that Harris Interactive, which fielded the study for the USCCB, said the data was weighted using a propensity scoring system to be representative of the total U.S. population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income information, race/ethnicity and propensity to be on the Internet. Harris said no estimates of sampling error could be calculated, according to the USCCB release.

David K. Kane, vice president for public affairs and policy for Harris Interactive, told CNS that Harris considers such surveys to be at least as accurate as the traditional phone polling of random samples of the public. He said the database from which the survey participants were chosen includes several million people who have agreed to be part of occasional surveys on a range of topics.

“We know quite a lot about them based on their demographic profiles,” Kane said. He explained that Harris compares the results of the weight method of choosing survey participants against other sources such as census reports, election results and exit polls also are used to compare with Harris’ data to determine whether the participants represent the range of demographic variety and opinions of the overall U.S. population, he said.

“We take the position that it is as accurate as traditional surveys,” he said. The findings are generally similar to those of other polls conducted recently. The Web site www.pollingreport.com compiles data from major poll releases, where the following results were presented.

A September survey by NBC News and The Wall Street Journal found 25 percent said abortion should always be legal and another 24 percent said it should be legal most of the time. In that survey, 10 percent said it should be illegal without exception and 37 percent said it should be illegal with few exceptions.

A Time magazine poll released in August found 46 percent said abortion should always be legal in the first three months of pregnancy.

A 2005 survey by CNN/USA Today/Gallup found that 69 percent favored laws requiring minors to get consent from their parents before an abortion. A 2006 Gallup Poll found 38 percent of Americans favored making abortions more strict, 20 percent wanted them to be less strict and 39 percent wanted them to be kept the same.
Priesthood: Not for wimps

The priesthood is not for wimps. Nor is the life of deacons and non-ordained men and women religious. It is a demanding life for both the men and women in this week’s Religious Vocations Supplement. You have to conclude that non-ordained men and women face incredible challenges. It takes strong and dedicated men and women to face them. Wimps need not apply.

To be honest, that wasn’t always true, perhaps 75 to 100 years ago. At that time, Catholics were almost always among the poorest in the U.S. population. They had hard manual jobs. In addition, they usually had large families, making it difficult for the fathers to support their families. Of course, the mothers were rarely employed.

In a situation like that, the priesthood or religious life could be appealing for other than religious motives. For a large number of priests and religious, the life was often quite pleasant and comfortable. It meant upward mobility in our society. Wimps, even if they were a minority, could get along quite well. Vocations were plentiful.

Obviously, those days are long gone. Those entering the priesthood or religious life today know full well that they are going to have to put long hours and meet heavy challenges. It would be hard to prove it, but the result might be that we will have a higher percentage of dedicated men and women serving the Church and its members today than ever before.

What are the greatest challenges modern priests have? Steven J. Rolfes recently surveyed a number of priests and asked them what is. In the Nov. 16, 2008, issue of Our Sunday Visitor, he wrote about five of those challenges.

Perhaps not surprising, the top challenge is finding enough time to do all that needs to be done. Morden parishes are busy places and priests in those parishes spend a lot of time in administration, leading a large staff of full-time and part-time employees and volunteers. A 2006 study of clergy of various Christian denominations found that priests work the longest hours per week—an average of 56.

It is not just administration that takes so much time. Priests must also find time to do the work for which they were ordained in the first place—celebrating Mass, administering the sacraments, preparing and delivering good homilies, visiting the sick, preparing couples for marriage, and maintaining a presence among children and teens. While doing all this, they must also find time for their own life of prayer: the Liturgy of the Hours and other prayers, meditation and study.

A second challenge priests identify is the church administration. Priests naturally worry about the large percentage of Catholics who no longer consider themselves of the church and its sacraments.

The Catholic Church’s conflict with our modern American society is a definite challenge. The Church’s values—the life issues, concern for immigrants, sexual issues—are not those advocated by the pervasive media. How can priests get the Church’s message across, especially to young people, when they are bombarded by opposite views?

Personal health can also be a challenge, especially when priests work that average of 56 hours a week. It is not just finding time for exercise, either. They are supposed to have a day off each week, but sometimes that doesn’t happen, and planning a real vacation requires much planning. Priests frequently have to cook for themselves and eat on the run so their diets suffer.

Finally, there is the matter of finances. Priests are seldom trained for handling the finances of a parish, but they must do it, and keeping a parish financially sound is a constant challenge. Sure, they rely on the advice of members of the laity, but the responsibility is still the priest’s.

We desperately need more dedicated men and women willing to accept these challenges of religious life. As the saying goes, it is a hard job, but someone has to do it. However, it is true that the rewards are great, both in this world and in eternity.

—John F. Fink

Parish Diary/ Fr. Peter Daly

Achieving ‘critical mass’ with our parish confirmation class

Like most parishes, we have a youth program. It has the usual components of prayer, service, formation and finances. But the core of our youth program is the confirmation class. We didn’t plan it that way. It just evolved.

Every week, about 110 young people show up for a two-hour confirmation class. This is odd because only 45 of them are actually going to be confirmed. The rest come just because they want to.

Our director of religious education, Jan Pedone, is a genius. She figured out long ago that the thing that moves teens is friendship. If their friends are there, that is where they will want to be.

So she started something called the “advocates” program. Older teens mentor younger teens. They make sure that the confirmation students show up and participate. Some advocates all come through school; others are just jumping in the confirmation program two, three or four times. It doesn’t hurt them. Repetition is the mother of learning.

Especially for younger teens, it is cool if older teens are there. At a certain critical mass, it even becomes “cool” to go to confirmation class. We have achieved critical mass.

Like everyone else, teens want to be known personally and have their voices heard. So confirmation class included a period of small-group discussion after the presentation. The adult leaders get to know their small group very well.

In addition to class, every teen must come to Mass as well. We take attendance by having confirmation students, advocates and the adult leaders sign in at the entrance of the church. If they miss Mass at our parish, we expect them to go elsewhere. For required proof, they are supposed to produce a bulletin signed by the priest or deacon from the parish where they went to Mass.

The highlight of our “year’s out” is our annual retreat. It has grown into a major production. Every year, we pack up two buses and several pickup trucks for an Avent experience.

The older teens give the witness talks. The adult leaders do the skills and build the sets. There is a chosen theme with a motto. This year it was “Go make a difference.”

The retreat is marked by a lot of tears. One of the most moving experiences is when we distribute “pallanca” letters (support letters).

Once, this was the first time in a long time that our teens have heard from their parents or siblings that they are loved. It gives them hope. Everyone needs to hear that kind of thing.

If it had been up to me, the confirmation program would never have become this demanding. I hesitate to ask so much from them. But our adult leaders know teenagers better than I do. Our director of religious education says that if we set the bar high, they will stretch to reach it.

I think that is maybe what the Holy Spirit wants.

(Father Peter Daly writes for Catholic News Service.)

Reflection/Fr. David Blanchard, O.Carm.

‘I want to be a missionary like Beth’

I was sitting in my office, wading through a pile of correspondence and reviewing what bills we could afford to pay when I was startled by the approach of a member of our youth social pastoral group knocking on my door and asked to speak with me.

Welcoming the reprieve, I said, “Come on in.”

“You will call her Maria, out of respect for her anonymity, Maria is 15, and she is in eighth grade in the local public school here in El Salvador.

She was confirmed this year, and immediately joined the social pastoral youth group. This team spends their time helping others, and it is inspired and advised by Elizabeth Riehle, a Franciscan lay missionary from Sunman, Ind. who is known here as “Beth.”

“Father David, I want to talk to you because I have been thinking a lot and I have decided that I want to be a missionary and spend the rest of my life helping others like she does,” Maria said.

This was Maria’s problem. I congratulated her, but suggested that she should first graduate from high school and then consider her options.

Crestfallen, Maria said, “No, I want to start now.”

Maria’s problem is a common one. She is in eighth grade and needs to do schoolwork. The unique part of Maria’s escape plan is that she wants to help others. Last year, she was raped by her uncle, an unruly character who has been in and out of jail. Maria is a sign and instrument of God’s grace.

In the parish center, we have lunch for the elderly every Friday and Beth is always present. When she walks among the elderly men and women who gather for a bowl of soup and bread, I have noticed how their faces light up just because Beth is present. She gives everyone a hug, and everyone whom she touches feels special. In this way, Beth Riehle is a sign of God’s grace.

She is more. She is also an instrument of God’s grace. Young people like Maria could easily become embittered by the indignities that they suffer. But Maria is a primitive Spanish, her jubilant smile and compassion. Beth inspires these young people to become active in church and to share in God’s justice.

Countless numbers of our young men and women are lost to the Church, and we want to do more for others. Her crew of builders is now building their second home, and more are building.

“We’ll do more as resources become available,” Beth says. And trusting in the infinite mercy of God, she lifts up two by four and begins her descent to the floor, a family is waiting.

“I want to spend the rest of my life doing good like Beth,” Maria said.

“Me, too,” I could have replied.

(Carmelite Father David Blanchard is the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Calle Real, El Salvador.)
Sólo la oración puede ayudarnos a descubrir qué quiere Dios para nosotros

Durante la Semana Nacional para la Conciliación sobre las Vocaciones resulta importante recordar el llamado genérico que Dios nos hace a todos en el texto bíblico: “El Señor está a mi lado y me dio fuerzas” (2 Tm 4:6-8). Nuestra fe es el obsequio más preciado que tenemos. Todos tenemos montones de preocupaciones e inquietudes sobre el futuro. No debemos olvidar nunca que tenemos a Jesús a nuestro lado. Al dirigirse a un grupo de jóvenes adultos en Nueva York, el Papa Benedicto XVI dijo: “Les insto a que profundicen su amistad con Cristo. Hablen con Él de corazón a corazón.” Nadie en el mundo puede darles más garantía sobre el futuro. Pero podemos estar seguros de esto: Si rezamos todos los días, a nuestra manera, todo saldrá bien. ¡Que todos ustedes puedan estar seguros de esto en su llamado vocacional!

**La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en enero**

El Arzobispo Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., es el líder de la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis, Indiana. Durante el mes de enero, el Arzobispo Buechlein invita a todos los católicos a rezar una oración especial para vocaciones. La intención de este mes es que la Iglesia nos invita a rezar para obtener una respuesta generosa al llamado de Dios a amar y a la santidad, especialmente mediante el sacerdocio y la vida consagrada.

**La vocación es un camino espiritual que provee**

La vocación es un camino que nos conduce a entrar en una relación más profunda con Dios y que nos ayuda a descubrir nuestra vocación en la vida cotidiana. La vocación es una llamada interior que nos guía hacia el servicio de Dios y los demás. Es importante recordar que la vocación es personal y que cada persona tiene un camino diferente. No hay una única vocation que pueda seguirse. Es importante escuchar la llamada de Dios en nuestra vida y responder de forma justa y equitativa.

**La oración es un camino espiritual que provee**

La oración es el camino espiritual que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La oración nos ayuda a estar en contacto con Dios y a escuchar su llamada. La oración es un acto de amor y devoción hacia Dios y nos permite estar en comunión con él. La oración también nos ayuda a discernir nuestra vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en nuestra vida.

**La vida es un camino espiritual que provee**

La vida es un camino que nos conduce a descubrir nuestra vocación. La vida es un viaje que nos lleva a encontrarnos con nosotros mismos y a descubrir nuestras fortalezas y debilidades. La vida es un camino que nos ayuda a crecer y a madurar. La vida es un camino que nos lleva a descubrir nuestra vocación y a seguir el camino que nos guíe en esta dirección.

**La comunidad es un camino espiritual que provee**

La comunidad es un camino que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La comunidad nos ayuda a estar en contacto con otros católicos y a escuchar su vocación. La comunidad nos ayuda a estar en comunión con Dios y a discernir nuestra vocación. La comunidad nos ayuda a descubrir nuestra vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en nuestra vida.

**La practica es un camino espiritual que provee**

La práctica es un camino que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La práctica nos ayuda a estar en contacto con Dios y a escuchar su llamada. La práctica nos ayuda a estar en comunión con Dios y a discernir nuestra vocación. La práctica nos ayuda a descubrir nuestra vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en nuestra vida.

**La devoción es un camino espiritual que provee**

La devoción es un camino que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La devoción nos ayuda a estar en contacto con Dios y a escuchar su llamada. La devoción nos ayuda a estar en comunión con Dios y a discernir nuestra vocación. La devoción nos ayuda a descubrir nuestra vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en nuestra vida.

**La reflexión es un camino espiritual que provee**

La reflexión es un camino que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La reflexión nos ayuda a estar en contacto con Dios y a escuchar su llamada. La reflexión nos ayuda a estar en comunión con Dios y a discernir notre vocación. La reflexión nos ayuda a descubrir nuestra vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en nuestra vida.

**La meditación es un camino espiritual que provee**

La meditación es un camino que provee para descubrir nuestra vocación. La meditación nos ayuda a estar en contacto con Dios y a escuchar su llamada. La meditación nos ayuda a estar en comunión con Dios y a discernir notre vocación. La meditación nos ayuda a descubrir notre vocación y a tomar decisiones adecuadas en notre vie.

**La oración es un camino espiritual que provee**

La oración es un camino que provee para descubrir notre vocación. La oración nos ayuda a estar en contacto avec Dios y a escuchar notre appel. La oración nous aide à être en communion avec Dieu et à discerner notre vocación. La oración nous aide à découvrir notre vocación et à prendre des décisions adéquates dans notre vie.

**La práctica es un camino espiritual que provee**

La práctica es un camino que provee para descubrir notre vocación. La pratique nous aide à être en contact avec Dieu et à écouter notre appel. La pratique nous aide à être en communion avec Dieu et à discerner notre vocación. La pratique nous aide à découvrir notre vocación et à prendre des décisions adéquates dans notre vie.

**La devoción es un camino espiritual que provee**

La devoción es un camino que provee para descubrir notre vocación. La dévotion nous aide à être en contact avec Dieu et à écouter notre appel. La dévotion nous aide à être en communion avec Dieu et à discerner notre vocación. La dévotion nous aide à découvrir notre vocación et à prendre des décisions adéquates dans notre vie.

**La reflexión es un camino espiritual que provee**

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Events Calendar

January 9
St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Natural Family Planning (NFP) class, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-422-2246.

January 17
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Helpers of God’s Precious Infants Pro-Life Mass, Father Eric Johnson, celebrant, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-292-6690 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1569.

January 18-45
St. Gabriel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. “English as a Second Language,” 8:45-10:30 a.m., $20 for 12-week session. Information: 317-291-7014, ext. 27, or lvaneel@diocesefaultem.com.

January 19
Roncalli High School, auditorium, 3300 Prague Road, Indianapolis. “Teens and Sexuality,” program for parents, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-787-8277.

January 20
P. Ruen X School, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. Open house, 6-8 p.m., 317-253-4534.

January 23-25
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Retreat weekend for married couples experiencing trouble in their relationship. Information: 317-236-1559 or 317-357-3316.

January 24
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “A Church to Believe In,” 9-11:30 a.m, free-will offering. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

January 25
Our Lady of Lourdes School, 305 S. Downey St., Indianapolis. Open house, 1-3 p.m. Information: 317-537-3116.

Programs and Retreats

January 9-11

January 11
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Women’s Prayer, “A Morning of Grace,” Benedictine Sister Carol Falchner, presenter. 8-26 a.m. 1 p.m., $25 includes lunch. Information: 317-787-7580 or benedictinoinn@benedictin.org.


January 12
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Meet Me at The Shack,” Father Jim Farrell, presenter. 7-30 a.m. $15 per person includes light sandwich dinner. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.


January 17

Parish reaches out to non-practicing Catholics

St. Malachi Parish in Brownstown will host an ongoing series called “Catholics Returning Home” at 7 p.m. on six consecutive Wednesdays beginning on Jan. 14. The sessions are for non-practicing Catholics who are seeking answers to questions about returning to the Church. There will be informal sharing and presentations about the Catholic faith. For more details, call 317-650-5751.

St. Charles Borromeo parishioners Mary Dedek, left, and her children, Tessa, Tommy, Jenna and Mikey, pose for a photograph on Nov. 30 outside St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington, where all four youth volunteer as altar servers.

Sibling servers

IRL driver supports St. Vincent de Paul

On Dec. 17, Sarah Fisher, a driver in the IndyCar Series and owner of Sarah Fisher Racing, accompanied by her race crew, delivered a truckload of food and a $1,000 donation to the Pratt-Quigley Food Center, the food pantry of the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The pantry currently serves approximately 2,900 families per week, up 1,000 families per week from a year ago.

For more information about the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, log on to www.svdpindy.org.

Catholic educator to be featured on Catholic radio

Annette “Mickey” Lenz, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Education and Faith Formation, will be featured in January on Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 FM’s show “Faith in Action.” Lenz will be interviewed by Brigid Cutsis Ayer, the show’s host. The interview will be broadcast at 6 a.m. on Jan. 12, Jan. 16, 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 13, Jan. 15, and 10 a.m. on Jan. 17.

For those outside the Indianapolis listening area who would like to listen to “Faith in Action” or other shows on Catholic Radio Indy, log on to www.catholicradioindy.org.

Serra Club announces vocations essay contest

“Hearing God’s Call” is the theme for the 2009 Vocations Essay Contest sponsored by the Serra Club of Indianapolis.

Packet with contest rules and procedures were mailed recently to pastors, principals, parish administrators of religious education and Catholic school religion teachers across the archdiocese. Contest materials can also be accessed by logging on to www.archindy.org/peace and clicking on “Faith at Work,” which can be found in the “Public Archives” heading.

Students in grades seven through 12 are invited to write an essay that answers the question, “How do priests, deacons, and religious brothers and sisters help us to hear God’s call in our lives?”. The deadline for essay contest entries is Feb. 13.

Teachers and catechists for each grade may choose one or two essays from each grade to be submitted to the contest. A Serra committee will review and judge the entries.

One winner from each grade will receive and cash prize, be invited to read his or her essay at a recognition luncheon and have the essay published in The Criterion.

The Indianapolis chapter of Serra International, a Catholic organization dedicated to promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

(Full information about the Serra Club of Indianapolis, log on to www.serraindy.org)
Catholics called to action as government resumes business

By Bridgit Curtis Ayer

Catholics have citizenship responsibilities beyond the voting booth that they must exercise, say U.S. Catholic bishops.

And there will be plenty of opportunities to do just that in the coming months as a new administration takes the helm in Washington, D.C., and as newly elected federal and state lawmakers head to their respective Capitol buildings to resume business.

Every January, 150 state lawmakers—better known as the Indiana General Assembly—descend upon the state Capitol in Indianapolis to conduct some of the state’s most important business. Passing a new two-year state budget will be one of those items this year.

And every year, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), the Church’s official public policy watchdog and advocate, gears up to bring Catholic principles to the public square by sharing a consistent life ethic that every human being, created in the image and likeness of God, deserves dignity.

But the Indiana bishops and the ICC staff cannot do it alone. Catholics in the pew also have a role and responsibility in the public square as citizens.

These responsibilities are outlined in a November 2007 statement released by the bishops called “Forming Consciences for Action.”

It says, in part, “This obligation to participate in public life is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all aspects of our lives. The nature of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, commands us to bring a consistent life ethic to Hoosier government officials.”

An invitation from Indiana’s Catholic bishops

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us “it is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent to the dignity of the human person... As far as possible, citizens should take an active part in public life” (CCC, #1913-1915).

Indiana’s bishops are inviting all Catholics in the state to join the Indiana Catholic Action Network. The bishops encourage people to do it today at any computer with Internet access. Those who sign up are asked to bring “a servant’s heart” to the process.

To R.S.V.P., go to www.indianacc.org and click on “Legislative Action Center.” Free membership benefits include:

• A weekly electronic newsletter titled Legislative Update.
• Periodic electronic action alerts.
• Electronic access to state and federal government officials.
• Electronic access to statewide newspapers, radio and television stations.

They are broadcast at 11:05 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings on WISH TV 41.

To join the ICC, including its mission and purpose, go to the ICC Web page at www.indianacc.org and click on “Legislative Action Center.”

Bridgit Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.

Who is God?

This course focuses on God as Trinity for unity in the worldwide Church and the effect of the Trinity in the life of the Church and the world.

Students will relate basic experiences of God to:

• The baptismal call to ministry and service,
• The nature of the human person as a relational being living in community with others.

For more information about ELM, contact Ed Isakson at 317-236-1594 or log on to www.archindy.org/layministry

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Galileo’s jubilee: Vatican takes part in star-studded celebrations

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As more than 130 countries celebrate the International Year of Astronomy, the Vatican also turned its gaze toward the heavens.

The year, which began on Jan. 1, was established by the United Nations to coincide with the 400th anniversary of Galileo Galilei’s first use of the telescope to observe the cosmos.

The Vatican also is celebrating the star-studded jubilee year, as the Vatican Museums, the Vatican Observatory and other Vatican offices participate in several special initiatives. In late December, Pope Benedict XVI rang in the year of astronomy early by sending his greetings to those participating in the yearlong celebration.

The pope repeatedly has praised Galileo, calling him a man of faith who “saw nature as a book written by God.” The pope also has said the discoveries of science and astronomy can help people better appreciate the wonders of God’s creation.

As part of the astronomy year, Vatican astronomer Jesuit Brother Guy Consolmagno is one of more than 50 scientists from around the world who will be featured in a new Cosmic Diary blog The U.S. Jesuit and other contributors reveal in the blog—sponsored by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to honor the 17th-century scientist. So far, there has been no word yet on when the blog will move into its new home.

The Vatican Observatory also will help organize a week on astrophotography at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in November.

Astronomy studies life in the universe and is hot on the hunt for extraterrestrial life and the so-called “Goldilocks planet.” Like the porridge, this childhood storybook character gobbles up, it is a theoretical planet that is not too hot and not too cold, but just the right distance from the sun to sustain life.

The observatory also is partnering with the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State to publish a book on the history of astronomy and the Vatican. In June, a weekend international symposium will cover the role of astronomy in the 21st century, science education and the dialogue that is needed between science and culture.

A special exhibit will open in October at the Vatican Museums to display historical astronomical instruments. It will showcase antique instruments, spanning time from Galileo to models of the enormous telescopes used in astronomical research today.

Lastly, a large statue of Galileo is supposed to be erected somewhere on the Vatican grounds. Paid for through private donations, the work of art was commissioned by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to honor the 17th-century scientist. So far, there has been no word yet on when the statue will move into its new home.

Some Church leaders expressed how the celebrations finally will put to rest the long suspicion that the Church is hostile toward science.

Only 16 years have passed since Pope John Paul II formally acknowledged that the Church erred when it condemned the Italian astronomer for maintaining that the Earth revolved around the sun. Even though it happened some 400 years ago, “the dramatic clash of some Churchmen with Galileo has left wounds that are still open,” wrote Jesuit Father Jose Funes, director of the Vatican Observatory, in the Vatican newspaper L’Osservatore Romano.

He said the Galileo case may never be closed in a way that would make everyone happy. “The Church in some way recognized its mistakes” regarding Galileo, but “perhaps it could have done better: One can always do better,” he wrote, adding that he hoped the year would help smooth strained relations between faith and science.

One Vatican official recently proposed that Galileo would make “the ideal patron saint for dialogue between science and faith.” A archbishop Gianfranco Ravasi, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, told Vatican Radio that Galileo, as a man of science and faith, showed the two were compatible as long as each operated within its specific field.

The good that came from the “dark shadow” of Galileo’s condemnation was discovering theology should never, as it had during Galileo’s time, use science to prove religious objectives, especially in ways that hinder scientific study, he said.

But, he added, science must also not look down on theology as intellectually inferior—as if it were a kind of depository for a “Paleolithic intellect of the past.”

The archbishop made the comments while he was participating in the culture council’s congress on “Science 400 Years After Galileo Galilei.” Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state, also participated in the November congress.

Cardinal Bertone said Galileo helped transform the nature of knowledge so that it would no longer be based on the certainties established by tradition, but on the truth derived from scientific experimentation.

However, he added, science must not completely divorce itself from moral traditions and laws which can help ensure that scientific developments remain ethical and at the true service of humanity.

This image shows Galileo Galilei’s original telescope. Between 1608 and early 1610, he developed the first instrument that combined glass lenses for a closer view of the cosmos. The International Year of Astronomy coincides with the 400th anniversary of the first use of the telescope. 
"I have called you by name, you are mine" (Is 43:1). These beautiful words of God to his people speak to the knowledge, intimacy and love that God has for each one of us. They serve as an invitation to trust in his promises, and to follow wherever he leads us. They are words that summon us to come to know God’s will for us, and to see in that will our own life and happiness. God’s call is personal, addresses us by name, makes us his unique possession and, through this, leads us in service to other people. It is from this original call that our own unique vocation is born.

Whether married, single, deacon, priest or religious, our vocation is a response to Christ’s word of salvation and promise. It is a call that leads us into a deeper knowledge, love and service of God, and summons us to love and service of others.

At its heart, our unique vocational call is a reflection of who we are and who God intends us to be. It is a relationship with the one who calls us each by name, and desires our fulfillment and happiness. This means that part of our task as Christians is to open our heart to hear God’s call in our lives. We need to humbly ask: “Lord, what are you calling me to do?” This is true as we seek to discover our vocation, but it is also important as we strive to live our vocation. We are called to be people of prayer, seeking to discern God’s will in all that we do and to respond faithfully with all that we have.

God calls each of us by name and makes us his own. But while this call is deeply personal, issued to us in the silence of our hearts, I also believe that it often comes to us through the tangible help and invitation of others. It was Eli who recognized the voice of God in Samuel’s experience and instructed him to respond: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Sm 3:10). In my own life, I am reminded of parents, family and friends who wrestled with how they were being called to live out their own vocation. I think of the example of so many priests and religious who lived faithful lives of prayer and service, and those who encouraged, supported and nourished my own vocational call to the priesthood.

Part of hearing God’s call is opening our hearts to the invitation of others, learning from their example, and allowing them to share in our discernment. The following pages are filled with stories of men and women who have heard God’s call and responded by embracing a vocation to the priesthood, the permanent diaconate or the religious life. Each of their stories is unique, a reflection of God’s personal invitation, shaped by their relationships with others.

These stories are still being written, as these men and women continue to listen, continue to trust and continue to joyfully respond to God’s invitation to service. Such a response is a unique gift to the Church. Through their own lives and ministry, priests, deacons, and men and women religious help us to remember God’s call in our own lives.

It is good that we remember them. They teach us to listen, call us to service and witness to the God that calls each of us by name. Their vocation reminds us of the importance of discovering and living out our own. As we read, may we more faithfully strive to hear God’s call.
Sister of Providence senses God's presence in her ministries

By Dave Cox

Sister Therese Whitcomb once thought it was her idea to enter the Sisters of Providence, go to Bolivia and Peru, spend a summer ministering at a migrant farm camp, work at an Indian reservation in North Dakota, become certified as an English as a New Language teacher, and now use her skills as an E.N.L. staff member at an Indianapolis parish school in a high-crime area.

“At one time, I wanted to be a Maryknoll missionary, then I didn’t want to be a sister at all. Then I thought I’d like to be a teacher. I knew I would like to serve the Church,” said Sister Therese. “In those days, in the 1960s, there weren’t many options for women. You were a nurse, you were a mother or you were a nun.

“I originally started out thinking it was my idea to come to the convent to be a sister, but I grew up with the idea of God, and you realized it was more than that. God had a lot do with it. As I grew older, my relationship with God deepened, as it should.”

She added, “Religious life has a whole different meaning now when I first entered. It’s the ministry that shows me God. I think the experiences I have had in community life, and the many good sisters I have lived with, have taught me a lot about that.”

Sister Therese also took a trip up to St. Anthony Parish on Indianapolis’ west side in a devoted Catholic family with nine children.

“I had Sisters of Providence for teachers all through my elementary school years,” said Sister Therese. “I liked watching what the sisters were doing. They seemed like they were a happy group of people. I liked how they taught me.

“My family was very religious. We prayed the rosary every night after supper. It was like I almost had my novitiate started for me in those days. It was easy for me to consider being of service to the Church because my family was very involved in the Church.

“The desire to be a missionary appealed to Sister Therese.

“I used to read books about the missionaries. It was something out of the ordinary, giving your life to go far away. I would have been like an adventure to do something heroic,” she said.

She entered the Sisters of Providence in 1962. In 1969, she went to Bolivia to learn Spanish and later spent 18 months ministering at a Jesuit elementary school in Peru.

Sister Therese returned to the United States for a transition ministry in an elementary school then spent a summer ministering at a migrant farm camp in southeastern Indiana in Summar.

“That changed my life forever,” she said. “I got acquainted again with the Spanish community.”

Providence Sister Peggy Nau called and asked her to join a Native American reservation in North Dakota.

“Every mission I have been on has changed me. You do not have to leave the United States to be a missionary,” Sister Therese noted.

She used her Spanish skills again when she returned to the same area in a parish community heavily populated by Hispanic and Puerto Rican families.

After a sabbatical at the University of Notre Dame and an interim teaching ministry, she joined Providence sister Marilyn Duffy at the Hispanic Education Center in Indianapolis, which has since merged into La Plazza, a centralized service agency for Hispanics in Indianapolis.

“They are so welcoming and very loving. The parents are very appreciative. I can also help the teachers with strategies and materials for students who need more help with English.”

Working at the migrant camp was the awakening.

“I know that I have heard God’s call. When I was invited to come to the migrant camp, it touched me,” Sister Therese said. “Life is a wonderful blessing. I would never have had these experiences otherwise. Being with these other cultures has really enriched my life.”

“Now I know it was God calling me all the time. I have allowed God to have more credit,” she said with a laugh. “I thank God every day for the gift to be a Sister of Providence.”

(professional information about the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, log on to www.sistersofprovidence.org)
Seminarian from El Salvador inspired by Archbishop Romero

By John Shaughnessy

As he walks the halls of Saint Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad, seminarian Oscar Vasquez carries a book bag that reminds him of the hero who serves as an inspiration for his life—and his desire to become a priest.

The image on the book bag depicts Archbishop Oscar Romero, the bearded, balding Church leader in El Salvador whose vocal support of the poor and human rights caused him to be assassinated in 1980 as he celebrated Mass.

“My vocation became stronger when I read about his life and his work,” says the 30-year-old Vasquez, who was a toddler in El Salvador when Archbishop Romero was shot and killed during that country’s civil war.

“He’s not only a model of my faith, but a model of my life in all ways. I also lived during the civil war in El Salvador.

My family had to flee from one city to another city because it was attacked. Archbishop Romero inspired hope, to give yourself for others. He did it with his life. He always was for the poor people.”

In Archbishop Romero, Vasquez sees a man who “gave himself to the Church, who gave himself to God.”

“It’s an approach that Vasquez has adopted, an approach that helps to explain the unusual journey that has led him from El Salvador to a seminary in southern Indiana.

“I can see the hand of God in my life,” Vasquez says. “I really can’t explain why I came here. I just truly want to serve the Catholic Church. Whether it’s in my country or another country, it doesn’t matter to me. God is moving me where he wants me to be.”

His faith journey began as a teenager when he was part of a youth group at his parish in San Salvador. As the years passed, he led the youth group and also directed several mission trips.

During those years, Vasquez met Father Kenneth Davis, a member of the Conventual Franciscan Province of Our Lady of Consolation based at Mount St. Francis. Francis in the New Albany Deanery, who was serving in El Salvador. Father Kenneth asked him if he had thought about becoming a priest, but Vasquez didn’t feel called at that point in his life. Instead, he wanted to college then worked as a supervisor in a company for more than three years.

“After that, I was talking to Father Ken,” Vasquez recalls. “He was still talking to me about becoming a priest. He said, ‘I will leave you with one idea. Ask God in your prayers if he wants you to be a priest.’

Vasquez prayed. This time, he heard God’s call.

“I asked if he would consider serving in the United States,” says Father Kenneth, who now teaches at Saint Meinrad School of Theology and resides at Mount St. Francis Friary. “When he agreed, I began to look for a place where he would be well come, and found the then-vocation director of the archdiocese—Father Joseph Moriarty—very open and supportive. Oscar went through the same process for acceptance as any other seminarian.”

Vasquez came to the United States in 2005, finding a spiritual home at St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

“My parish in El Salvador was the Immaculate Conception,” Vasquez says. “When I came here, I was happy my parish was St. Mary’s. I dedicated myself to the Virgin Mary. St. Mary’s is my home parish. I feel I belong to that place. I see their needs. I see their fruits, too.”

Vasquez has been a blessing for Father O’Mara, who says his parish, St. Mary Parish, is his family.

“Both of his parents are deceased. I have a very special bond with him. I feel like he’s a brother or a son to me. Here at St. Mary’s, we are his family.”

Since August, Vasquez has been trying to make a new home at Saint Meinrad School of Theology.

“The beginning was a little hard,” he says. “Now, I feel comfortable. I feel much better. I really like the spiritual life.”

He talks again about his life “being in the hands of God.” Then he adds a twist to that phrase, a twist that gives a hint of the future he sees for himself.

“We are the hands of God,” he says. “If we do something, it has to be for God. I would like to help the poor people. If we are open to serve God, the work will be easy for us.”

(For more information on archdiocesan seminarians, log on to www.heargodsbuild.com.)

Photos by Sean Gallagher
Doctor deacon brings together physical and spiritual healing

By Sean Gallagher

GREENSBURG—As he works as a physician from day to day in Greensburg, Deacon Arthur Alunday doesn’t just attend to his patients’ physical ailments. He also cares for the health of their spirit and the interplay between body and soul.

“(Being a deacon) just seems to be a natural extension of my practice and the healing process,” said Deacon Aunday. “I’ve been addressing the physical ailments. Now I feel more confident to recognize the spiritual component.”

Joan Mokany is a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, where Deacon Aunday ministers, and has been one of his patients for many years. She also cares for Mokany’s son, Darren, who suffers from severe migraine headaches.

Long before Deacon Aunday entered the archdiocesan deacon formation program in 2004, Msokany was confident in her attentiveness to the spiritual aspects of physical illnesses.

“We when we were trying to find help for Darren and everybody was saying there was no help out there, Doctor Aunday kept saying, “Keep the faith. Keep praying. Keep going. We’ll find it somewhere.” Msokany said. “... it really helps to know that your doctors are religious men, and they know there is a higher [power] than what they are.”

Deacon Aunday is definitely aware of a “higher power” at work in his life. He believes it was the “hand of God” that led him to practice medicine in Indiana after being born and raised by Filipino immigrants in southern California, studying medicine and getting married in the Philippines, and doing his residency in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Deacon Aunday first became familiar with the diocesan formation while living in New York, and started to grow in his life of faith after he and his family moved to Greensburg in 1994.

A little less than a decade later, he was spiritually ready to consider a possible call to ordination when the archdiocese announced that it would be starting its first deacon formation program.

“I look back on that as a planned event for me,” Deacon Aunday said. It was a time when God made his plans abundantly known during a patient visit about 10 years ago that started Deacon Aunday considering more completely the spiritual aspects of his medical practice.

At the time, he was treating a patient with physical problems who was also coping with depression.

“Something [inside] said to me, ‘Talk about God.’” Deacon Aunday said. “What? There was this push I felt inside to talk about God. I’m having this conflict [inside] and I can’t do that. I didn’t want to do it. But then it came out.”

After that first instance, talking about God with his patients became easier and more natural for him.

Msgr. Kueven said, “Deacon Aunday went to nearly all of the deacon formation weekends with her husband, sitting in on the classes and getting to know the other deacon candidates and their wives.”

On the day of the ordination last June, she was brimming with joy.

“I was crossing the street to go to the cathedral and I just kept hearing in my head the song, ‘This is the day that the Lord has made.’” she said. “There were people who were driving by looking at us. And I thought, ‘I wonder if they can feel how happy we are.’ There was so much happiness in the air.”

Deacon Aunday said he is still “on a spiritual high” from his ordination. He experienced that elation in a special way that brought his ministry and his medical practice together.

An elderly woman who was dying of a blood disorder was admitted last July to Decatur County Memorial Hospital. While Deacon Aunday was caring for her, she mentioned that she wanted to be baptized.

“I came back that afternoon and I baptized her there in the hospital,” he said. “The nurse was my witness. I asked her if I could read some prayers for the sick and she said that would be fine. So I read the prayers and I blessed her.”

“I thought it was great that I could be there and do that for her.”

For more information about the archdiocesan deacon formation program, log on to www.archindy.org/deacon

Guardian angel helps sister continue vocation tradition

By John Shaugnessy

BEECH GROVE—Before she heard it from her future sister-in-law, Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick never knew there was a way for people to learn the name of their guardian angel.

Even when she learned the way, Fitzpatrick never imagined it would help her decide whether or not she should pursue a religious vocation.

“In late 1994, after a couple of vocation retreats, I went to visit my brother and his fiancée who were just engaged,” she recalls. “She told me I could pray to God for the name of my guardian angel. I did and, incredibly, it came to me.”

It was a name she never expected, a name that wasn’t exactly among the most popular female names at the time: Gertrude.

“My name is Gertrude. I did and, incredibly, I could pray to God for the name of my guardian angel.” Msgr. Kueven said.

“I was crossing the street to go to the cathedral and I just kept hearing in my head the song, ‘This is the day that the Lord has made.’” she said. “There were people who were driving by looking at us. And I thought, ‘I wonder if they can feel how happy we are.’ There was so much happiness in the air.”

Deacon Aunday said he is still “on a spiritual high” from his ordination. He experienced that elation in a special way that brought his ministry and his medical practice together.

An elderly woman who was dying of a blood disorder was admitted last July to Decatur County Memorial Hospital. While Deacon Aunday was caring for her, she mentioned that she wanted to be baptized.

“I came back that afternoon and I baptized her there in the hospital,” he said. “The nurse was my witness. I asked her if I could read some prayers for the sick and she said that would be fine. So I read the prayers and I blessed her.”

“I thought it was great that I could be there and do that for her.”

For more information about the archdiocesan deacon formation program, log on to www.archindy.org/deacon

Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick, left, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, talks with Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, provincial, about scheduling a meeting at the Benedict Inn, a retreat and conference center operated by the monastic community.
ST. MEINRAD—Dec. 4 was the next-to-last day of classes in the fall semester at Saint Meinrad School of Theology for the 2008-09 academic year.

Seminarians from the archdiocese, and scores of other dioceses and religious communities from across the country and around the world, were scurrying to finish their academic work and prepare for the following week’s final exams.

At the same time, the school community was in the midst of a 40-hours eucharistic adoration devotion led by retired Benedictine Archabbot Lambert Reilly. Final preparations were also being made for the seminary’s festive St. Nicholas Banquet, which was to be held that night.

In the midst of all this activity, Benedictine Father Denis Robinson, the newly installed rector of the seminary, told students in a class he was teaching that everything that goes on at the seminary ultimately contributes to a seminarian’s formation into a future priest, and is ultimately rooted in and flows from the Eucharist.

Saint Meinrad School of Theology is the primary place where the Archdiocese of Indianapolis educates seminarians who have already graduated from college.

Currently, there are 12 archdiocesan seminarians enrolled in the southern Indiana seminary.

(For more information on Saint Meinrad School of Theology, log on to www.saintmeinrad.edu. For more information about archdiocesan seminarians, log on to www.heargodscall.com.)
Adopt-a-Sis program helps students get to know Franciscan sisters

"Hearing God's call in people and situations appears to be natural to Julie," Sister Ruthann said. "Many qualities of Julie are evidence of the God-centered spirit of her family. She is open-minded, joyful, humble intelligent and particularly helpful to the poor. Her positive personality often moves others to help where there is need."

The Adopt-a-Sis program also helps keep the historic connection between the academy and the Oldenburg Franciscans with the students who now fill its halls. "Our history is through the sisters, and they sponsor us," said Alicia Tilly, who teaches religion at the academy and is the program's moderator. "We're only here because of them and the work that they've done. It's a way to pay them back, in a sense."

That history is written into the family of Oldenburg Academy senior Cassondra Hebauf of West Harrison. Her great-grandmother, aunt and cousin all attended the academy.

Participating in the Adopt-a-Sis program strengthens those ties for her. "It kind of gives you an idea of how the academy was when they did have nurses teaching," Cassondra said. "And it helps you get to know the Franciscan ideals, which is what Oldenburg Academy is about."

Cassondra has been paired with Franciscan Sister Lorraine since the fourth grade for the past four years. "Sister Lorraine describes Cassondra as 'a gentle, interested person, who uses her potential and is determined to reach her goal.' In getting to know Sister Lorraine, Cassondra has also gained an appreciation for her counterpart's vocation to religious life."

"It makes you realize how much hard work she puts into [her vocation] and how much she enjoys it, too, and how much she gets out of it," Cassondra said.

Oldenburg Academy senior Julie Martin of Aurora feels the same way about Sister Ruthann Boyle. They have gotten to know each other over the past four years through the academy's Adopt-a-Sis program.

"You see things from a different perspective, and you learn more about the past," said Sarah Lierman, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, appreciating having that connection to the past through her friendship with Franciscan Sister Claver Ehrn. But she also gets direction for the present through her, saying that she's "shined a light for me."

"You see things from a different perspective, and you learn more about the past," said Sarah. "Since she's older, she has more experiences and has more to tell you. And you have a new friend."

Over the year and a half that she has gotten to know Sarah, Sister Claver has seen a deeply spiritual side to this young woman.

"God comes into our conversation every time Sarah and I meet," Sister Claver said. "She is looking for God when she comes to visit the sisters."

"Julie is a very determined young lady," said Alicia Tilly, who runs the Adopt-a-Sis program. "She's very involved in the school and in the community. I think she's a very good role model for other young people."

"It's a way to pay them back, in a sense."

"It's a way to pay them back, in a sense."

"It's a way to pay them back, in a sense."

"It's a way to pay them back, in a sense."
Conventional Franciscan brother looks forward to ordination

By Mary Ann Wyand

Conventional Franciscan Brother John Bamman credits St. Clare of Assisi for leading him to his religious vocation and formation for the priesthood. During a pilgrimage to Italy in 1996, Ann Doherty—who is a friend of his mother, Joanne Rizzardi—told him that St. Clare would “visit him in a special way” and have a profound influence on his life. At the time, he thought she meant that he would marry a woman named Clare.

After a decade of discernment and a life-changing experience on her feast day, he realized that God was calling him to follow the way of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Clare as a Conventual Franciscan. Looking back on his childhood in Toledo, Ohio, at St. Joseph School, staffed by Franciscan sisters, and his teenage years at St. John’s Jesuit High School, Brother John laughed as he recalled how many times adults and teenage friends told him that he would be an excellent priest.

“I think I first heard God’s call when I was in grade school,” he said. “I had this sense of being called to the priesthood. I got a lot of attention from being the class clown, and spent many days in [Franciscan] Sister Maria Goretti’s principal’s office. We are very good friends today. “In high school, when I was on senior retreat, all my friends told me they thought I would make a great priest,” he said. “They asked me if I had thought about it, but I was afraid to go down that path.”

He earned a bachelor’s degree in natural resources, parks and recreation management at Ohio State University then moved west to Washington to work as an emergency medical technician for a teens encounter Christ retreat center in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

His employment contract stated that a driver who ran out of fuel on a tour bus filled with people could be fired. “I have visited the shrine for a Teens Encounter Christ retreat when he was a junior in high school, and again felt drawn to the Franciscans’ spirituality and love for nature as an adult. “God had clearly led me there,” he said. “I knew it was time to say ‘yes’ to God.”

At the age of 41, he felt his life “coming full circle” on Aug. 8, 2008— the day he refers to as “08-08-08, a day of crazy eights” — when he answered God’s call and professed his solemn vows as a Conventual Franciscan at the basilica.

Conventional Franciscan Brother James Kent, provincial vicar who resides at Mount St. Francis Friary, described Brother John as “very dedicated to St. Francis, to a simple life, to witnessing the Gospel in word and deed.”

Father Jim added that “he is a fine friar and will make a fine priest. He is a happy witness, and brings joy to people. It’s a joy, I think, that is rooted in his faith.”

During his formation, Brother John studied Spanish with friars in Costa Rica and took a sabbatical to spend time with his parents, Bill and Joanne Bamman, when his father was dying. He completed his novitiate at St. Francis Friary in Powell, Ohio, and has helped with youth retreats at Mount St. Francis.

He lives at St. Joseph Cupertino Friary in Prior Lake and is finishing his final year of theology studies at St. Paul Seminary at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., in preparation for his ordination as a transitional deacon in 2009 and his ordination to the priesthood in 2010. “I am discerning working at one of our order’s three retreat centers, which is exciting,” he said. “I never even thought of retreat ministry until the friars saw it in me. ... It’s a humbling call and a little nerve-racking to imagine myself at the altar leading the great sacrament of the Eucharist. … There is an amazing joy of life expressed in the Franciscan lifestyle. I have been pleasantly surprised by God.”

(To listen to Franciscan Brother John Bamman’s reflection on his vocation, log on to francois.org/f/o/othrProf.cfm.)

Conventional Franciscan Brother John Bamman, a native of Toledo, Ohio, poses for a portrait at St. Joseph Cupertino Friary in Prior Lake, Minn., where he is preparing for his ordination as a transitional deacon in 2009 and his ordination to the priesthood in 2010. He has assisted with youth retreats at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center in southern Indiana.
Total consecration
Franciscans of the Immaculate serve Jesus and Mary

By Mary Ann Wyand

MONROE COUNTY—“Ave Maria.” From throughout the United States and many countries around the world, men and women have answered God’s call by joining the Franciscans of the Immaculate missionary order, whose members greet people by praying the Blessed Mother. Several Franciscans of the Immaculate priests and sisters serve Jesus, Mary and God’s people in central and southern Indiana through their retreat ministry at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center on State Road 48 west of Bloomington.

They begin each day at 6:30 a.m. by praying God at Mass, which is open to the public, and honoring Mary with the rosary at the scenic retreat center built around a hill large in rural Monroe County. Every Thursday, the public may participate in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 9 a.m. until the holy hour at 6 p.m.

As the Franciscan friars and sisters climb the steep and winding path every morning, they pray the mysteries of the rosary on their way to the chapel built in the woods on the summit.

It is a holy place, a sacred space, a peaceful retreat in the country for people to spend time in prayer and reflection as they offer thanks and petitions to God, grow closer to Jesus and Mary, and find healing in their lives.

Franciscan Father Elias Mary Mills, father guardian of the Marian Friary of Our Lady Coredemptrix at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center on Nov. 6 at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center near Bloomington. Franciscan Father Joachim Mary Mudd and five Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate also minister at the retreat center. The friar’s order was founded in Italy in 1979 and granted pontifical status in 1998. The sisters’ order was founded in 1985.

It was at that time he and his companions were seeking to respond to the Church’s call for new evangelization. Just as the star didn’t have to look for a star in the sky, we have Our Lady, who guides us to Christ.”

St. Maximilian Kolbe was a Conventual Franciscan priest in Poland who was martyred by the Nazis at Auschwitz concentration camp in 1941.

“He dedicated his life to evangelizing people to bring about the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,” Father Elias Mary said, “so our mission is to follow that same ideal of St. Maximilian to spread total consecration to our Lady and, first and foremost, to live out in our own lives, to be her instruments, her missionaries, and to do it in a Marian way, and to use all means possible to evangelize, weighing the mass media.”

The Franciscans of the Immaculate operate Catholic radio and television stations in Italy as well as a Web site and blog at www.AveMaria.com as evangelization tools, he said, and the Marian order will begin a new radio ministry in Bloomington during 2009.

“We’ve already gotten permission—we have the license—from the Federal Communications Commission,” Father Elias Mary said. “We hope to begin broadcasting in the Bloomington area sometime next year if everything goes well. We hope to use programming to reach out to the [Indiana University] students and [residents of] the area. It’s important to get the Catholic truth out. We’ll be using part of the Eternal Word Television Network programming, and hope to have local programming for four hours every day.”

Franciscans of the Immaculate friars and sisters came to the archdiocese to staff the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in February of 2005 at the invitation of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

Since then, the friars and sisters have expanded retreat programming, and opened a Catholic bookstore and gift shop as another tool of evangelization.

Father Elias Mary said he started thinking about a religious vocation during his college years.

“I earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and computer science at the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 1985,” he said. “After college, I helped a priest at a parish in Wyoming as a volunteer. I was looking for a religious community. ... He helped me get started at Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Conn., and that’s where I met the friars.”

He finished his priestly formation with the friars at their seminary in New Bedford, Mass., and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz on May 27, 2000, in Lincoln, Neb.

“At that time, the friars were taking care of the security at the Basilica of St. Mary Majors in Rome,” Father Elias Mary said. “As a deacon and up until my ordination to the priesthood, I was serving at the sacristy. Then I went from there in July of 2000 to Perth and Toodyay in Australia, where I served for three years.”

In November of 2003, he was assigned to minister in Connecticut followed by brief assignments in Italy and again in Connecticut. He arrived in Indiana in June of 2007.

“When our Lord says, ‘He who gives everything to serve him will be rewarded in this life and the next,’ it’s true,” Father Elias Mary said. “I would say to whoever is thinking about a religious vocation that they should pursue it because it is a great gift that God gives us to serve him as a consecrated religious, and as a priest even more so, and to do it in a way that is promoting Our Lady is a very great gift, a blessing, an honor and a privilege. ... God works through you, and it’s obvious that he can take men who are fragile vessels and use them to do wonderful things. It’s very humbling to serve God.”
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Thousands of pro-life marchers are expected to rally in Washington Jan. 22 to commemorate the 36th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion, just days after President-elect Barack Obama is inaugurated.

A portion of the protesters also will hold multiple events in the nation’s capital and throughout the U.S. in the day before and on the day of the official 2009 March for Life as well as the following days.

The main event will begin with a noon rally on the National Mall, followed by a march along Constitution Avenue that will end at the U.S. Supreme Court. From there, participants are encouraged to meet with members of Congress to lobby on abortion-related issues.

“The first session of the 111th Congress will convene in January, with all newly elected members of the House and many newly elected members of the Senate,” organizers of the march wrote on the official Web site at www.marchforlife.org. “We shall be a large group of Americans to bring our message to this new administration and new Congress.”

We estimate that 12,000 people were at the vigil last year,” McQuade told Catholic News Service on Jan. 5. “If we have such a crowd this year, we may not be able to accommodate everyone in the basilica. So we’re making sure they have a place to worship close by. We want everyone to have an opportunity to participate.”

Earlier on Jan. 21, the Sisters of Life will host an afternoon of prayerful remembrance and intercession at the Crych Church of the basilica from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to allow men and women whose lives have been affected by abortion to pray and seek God’s healing and forgiveness, McQuade said.

Several other events will take place in Washington and around the country to mark the anniversary of the Supreme Court’s 1973 decision. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 21, the Cardinal O’Connor Conference on Life will be held at Georgetown University in Washington. The conference is intended to educate college and high school students.

On the morning of the annual March for Life, the Washington Archdiocese expects more than 20,000 Catholic teens and young adults from all over the U.S. to attend its youth rally at the Verizon Center, Washington’s largest indoor sports arena, from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., with a 30 a.m. Mass celebrated by Washington Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl.

The Filipino Family Fund and Culture of Life Foundation will host the third annual “Champions for Family” awards reception on Jan. 22 at the Phoenix Park Hotel in Washington. Honorees include U.S. Rep. Joseph R. Pitts, R-Pa.; Dr. Rene Buller, who heads Human Life International in the Philippines; and Father Jerome M agar, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in A rlington, Va., and founder of the Guadalupe Free Clinic, a free medical clinic for the poor.

Speakers at the conference will include Judie Brown, American Life League president; Catholic political commentator and sometime candidate Alan Keyes; and David Bereit, director of the nationwide “40 Days for Life” campaign that combines prayer, fasting, vigils and community outreach in 204 U.S. cities and 49 states, said Marie Hahnenberg, project director for the Jan. 21-23 “training and activism week” sponsored by the American Life League in Washington.

“David Bereit is a hero in the pro-life movement,” Hahnenberg said in a statement. “His dedication to ending abortion through regular, peaceful presence outside of Planned Parenthood facilities and other abortion clinics has sparked a passion in thousands of people for protecting and defending the pre-born.”

Events across the U.S. will include the ringing of all Catholic church bells within the Diocese of Wichita, K an., at 3 p.m. on Jan. 22, said Tama Dutton, director of the diocese’s Respect Life and Social Justice Office.

“We hope that as the bells are ringing that the faithful will stay to pray for all the women, fathers and families who have been affected by abortion,” Dutton said.

The Walk for Life West Coast will begin at 11 a.m. on Jan. 24 at the Justin Herman Plaza in San Francisco. The 2.5-mile journey will end at the city’s Embarcadero’s S 6 Marina Green.

Founded in 2005, the event drew 25,000 people from across the country last year. The Walk for Life West Coast group was promoting the 2009 walk with a 20-foot-by-60-foot billboard in front of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, said Eva M untañ, who co-chairs the event.

“San Francisco is a beautiful city, but there is a lot of interest in our message. In the background,” M untañ said. “Until recently, we had more abortions than live births, and a high percentage of our population has experienced abortion. We need to reach these women and men who are hurting, and this seemed like the most effective method.”

Young people carry the March for Life banner in Washington on Jan. 22, 2008, during the 35th annual demonstration against the legalization of abortion.

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Michel Sabbah of Jerusalem said the Israeli December, the heads of Christian Churches in elsewhere in Israel and the West Bank to pray attended the Mass at St. Stephen’s while local in Gaza.”

“...the light of Christianity continues to shine hear us. I am asking God for mercy and pray like animals in Gaza. We cry and nobody that the new church is “so warm and so welcoming” even though it is much larger.”

The new St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg seats 1,500 people.

“...the beauty of this sanctuary is truly the patronage of St. Malachy in the faith who founded this parish” in 1869. “...the walls of brick and mortar represent your church,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “These lamps and candles symbolizes both the crown of thorns and the halo of the resurrected Christ.”

Gaza priest’s message at Mass for peace: ‘We cry and nobody hears us’

JERUSALEM (CNS)—The pastor of the Catholic parish in Gaza City described Gaza as a “drowning in blood” as hospitals overflowed with patients.

In a message to participants in a special Mass in honor of St. Stephen Church in Jerusalem on Jan. 4, Msgr. Marzouk, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Gaza City, wrote: “What you see on television cannot be compared to what is happening. The word love is choking in my throat... We are living like animals in Gaza. We cry and nobody hears us. I am asking God for mercy and pray that the light of Christianity continues to shine in Gaza.”

Church leaders from the Holy Land attended the Mass at St. Stephen’s while local and international Christians gathered elsewhere in Israel and the West Bank to pray for a halt to the violence in Gaza. While Israel began its military operation in Gaza in late December, the heads of Christian Churches in the Holy Land called for an end to violence and prayers for peace.

At St. Stephen’s, retired Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah of Jerusalem said the Israeli incursion into the Gaza Strip means death for both sides.

“What is happening now is death for Palestinians as well as Israelis,” Patriarch Sabbah said at the Mass. “What is happening in Gaza is the worst war ever... It is time to come to a prayer that says stop the massacre. We are calling to God to look at Gaza and see what is happening there can happen to all of us.”

Peace only can come through justice, not war, he said.

“We are looking at ourselves and we are not doing our best. Israel should stop this and will stop, but then after this destruction there won’t be more destruction,” he said.

He called on Palestinians to realize that the only way to regain their freedom is by nonviolent means. Earlier in the day at St. Catherine Church, adjacent to the Gaza Strip, the Archdiocese of Bethlehem, West Bank, Christians attended a special Mass. Israel launched a ground attack in Gaza on Jan. 1. After several days of airstrike to stop the Palestinian militant group Hamas from launching rockets into Israel. Since the start of the airstrike on Dec. 27, at least four Israelis and more than 500 Palestinians, including 100 civilians, have been killed.

Israel says that during the past year Iranian-backed terrorist groups in Gaza have fired more than 3,000 rockets, missiles and mortar rounds at civilian targets in the southern Negev region of Israel.

In a center pew of St. Catherine’s, Victoria Zoughbi knelt in prayer. She said after M as he praying “not just for the people in Gaza but also for those in Tel Aviv. Every (Israeli) soldier going into Gaza now has a mother who is sitting glued to the television with her heart in her hands. He who truly has God in his heart loves everybody.”

Zoughbi said he did not understand the purpose of Hamas’ rockets, given their inaccuracy, and he emphasized the fact that there is only one Palestinian government headed by Palestinian Prime M insder Mahmoud Abbas. In June 2007, Hamas split with a Ba’th movement and took control of the Gaza Strip. A Ba’th government still controls the West Bank.

“What are we fighting over—for a piece of land? Take the land. In the end, the land will swallow us all,” he said, noting that, “We will take the land, and the land will take us. That is the way we have to think.”

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein celebrates the Mass of Dedication for the new St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg on Dec. 16 at 4 p.m. Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, center, and Father Daniel Staublin, pastor, right, assist as concelebrants. Deacon Daniel Collier stands at the left of the circular altar, knotted thongs, back left, and Scott Kelly were among the altar servers. Priests with connections to St. Malachy Parish and pastors of other Indianapolis West Deanery parishes also concelebrated the historic Mass.

Mary sits on a bench in an alcove looking at her son hanging on the cross, which has a circular Celtic knot pattern symbolizing both the crown of thorns and the halo behind the corpus. A huge stained-glass window behind the altar and adjacent to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel symbolizes the Resurrection. During his homily for the Mass of Dedication, a Chorbishop Deacon D. Buechlein thanked St. Malachy Parish’s 2,500 households for their part in making the largest church in the archdiocese possible. He also thanked Father Daniel Staublin, St. Malachy’s pastor for 12 years, for his pastoral leadership.

“...heartfelt congratulations for this splendid church,” a Chorbishop Buechlein said. “These will of brick and mortar represents you coming together in faith. This magnificent church testifies to your vitality and hope. It is important to think of those who have built your faith who founded this parish” in 1869. “Here, in prayer, especially in Eucharist, you are most visibly the local Church under the patronage of St. Malachy in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis,” he said. “...let’s remember that our foundation is Jesus Christ.”

Incense and oil mark this new church as God’s house, a holy and sacred place, he said. “We will consecrate this house to God. We will place the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Truly it is the sacramental presence of Jesus that hallows and consecrates this beautiful church forevermore.”

After the Mass, Father Staublin said he felt both happy and relieved to see the completion of the 18-month construction project for the $8.8 million church. “It’s been a long time coming and it feels that we’ve worked hard,” he said. “It’s an early Christmas present... a blessing that the Lord has visited his people. Emmanuel, God is with us.”

He said Catherined Louden, St. Malachy’s music director, wrote the songs “Growing in Faith,” “Building in Hope” and “I’m in Your Image for the Mass.”

Fundraising for Phase II of the parish relocation project may begin in late 2009 or early 2010. Father Staublin said that phase will include a daily Mass chapel next to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel as well as moving the parish office and school to the new address. Providing Sister Barbara Reder, pastoral associate, said after the Mass that the new church is “so warm and so welcoming” even though it is much larger.”

“...the generosity of the people is overwhelming,” she said. “This parish is so much in tune with justice ministries. One of our charisms is ‘love, justice and mercy,’ and I think our parish does that well.”

Sister Barbara said there are no more Masses instead of five Liturgies every weekend. M asses are celebrated at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday and at 8 a.m. and noon on Sunday.

The M as program included a letter to St. M alachy, which thanked the Irish saint for parishes for their part in making the church a reality. “...the spirit of St. M alachy is forevermore,” they wrote.

A huge stained-glass window behind the altar. Jason Kippenbrock, back left, and Scott Kelly were among the altar servers. Priests with connections to St. Malachy Parish and pastors of other Indianapolis West Deanery parishes also concelebrated the historic Mass.

Gaza priest’s message at Mass for peace: ‘We cry and nobody hears us’

Longtime St Malachy parishioner Marie Quinn Berset of Brownsburg, fourth from left, poses with relatives after the Mass of Dedication on Dec. 16 for the new St. Malachy Church. With her am, from left, Ron Staublin, Mary Feeney, Rosie Feeney, Patty Green and Mary Feeney.
Have faith in Providence during hard economic times

By Fr. Robert Kinast

My grandfather had a saying when it seemed there wasn’t enough food or money or clothes to get through a tough time: “There’s lots more in the kitchen.”

According to family legend, he first used that expression when he brought home a half-dozen co-workers for dinner—unannounced.

My grandmother had barely enough food for her family of nine, but as the story goes, everyone ate to their satisfaction. And from then on, that’s how the adults in my family responded when faced with a shortage of anything that threatened the security and well-being of their lives.

My grandfather’s homey expression was not couched in theological language, but it was faith-inspired. As a devout Catholic, he trusted in the almighty love and presence of God to get him through any difficulty.

I’ve been reminded of this recently as the economy in the U.S. and throughout the world has nosedived and threatened millions of people with the loss of their home, their job, their savings and their retirement.

The memory of my grandfather’s confidence recalls two important lessons which give me hope during this current economic crisis.

The first is to put financial concerns in a faith perspective. All the times I heard my grandfather announce that there was lots more in the kitchen, I never had the impression that he was indulging in false hope or a denial of reality. Rather, he was treating the present situation, whatever it was, with an assurance that there was more than I was aware of.

His confidence was grounded in the conviction that God has a stake in our happiness and the world’s development, and that God always sees more, offers more and accomplishes more than we can grasp, especially in the midst of a crisis.

This conviction gives Christians the hope they need to “face the economic struggles of the world today” (#125). In addition, it binds Christians together as a community, responding collectively and creatively to the financial challenges of the time.

In a Christian perspective, no one hopes alone.

The second lesson I derive from my grandfather’s memory is to keep my priorities clear. For all its stress and turmoil, the current economic crisis is an opportunity to reassess the relative importance of wealth.

Obviously, in our economic system, people need money or monetary value like credit to function. But function in what way, with what lifestyle, with how much debt, for what purpose?

These are priority questions. They arise when:

• You have to budget more carefully, eliminating some things you want or need but can’t afford.

• You have to postpone purchases or vacations or other optional items.

• But priorities are not just about what you do without or must do with. They are also about what is most important in your life.

I don’t know whether my grandfather intended this or not, but in many families’ experience there is a lot more in the kitchen than food.

The kitchen is a center of activity where family and guests come together, bringing and preparing food, cleaning dishes, sharing conversation and kidding with one another.

God gives us strength to endure

This Week’s Question

How does the state of the economy affect your faith life, or how does your faith life affect your outlook on the economy?

“Having faith makes you look at it differently because your faith is in God, not the economy. No matter what the economy does, with faith you have your own goals ... and the economy would not shake that.” (Ben Mol, Lejune, N.C.)

“I really believe that God gives me the strength to go through whatever I have to go through. Faith is the key to getting through any downturn in my life.” (Lynnette Nelson, Rockton, Ill.)

God is there to provide for me. I’ve never wanted or needed a lot. I do what I have to do and know he’ll be there to make it all right in the end.” (Faye LaM arca, Biloxi, Miss.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: How do you interact with those who are “elderly” in your life, or do you prefer to refer to them in another term?

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**From the Editor Emeritus/John F Fink**

(Thirty-first in a series of columns)

With Father Walter Ciszek, born in 1904, was growing up in Shanghai, China, was named an unlikely candidate for the priesthood. He lacked the usual "thump, stubborn, a bully, the leader of a group of tough right-handers." So his father was amazed when Walter with all that in mind, retired from the seminary in 1941 and home to Poland, where he waited for a chance to minister in Russia. When Germany and the Soviet Union invaded Poland in 1939, Father Ciszek hopped a railroad boxcar for the Urals in Russia. Using the alias Vitali Voronely, he slipped 200 miles from the border, following the river and piling on shore. He confessed Mass on a tree stump. Gradually, believing his identity was still secure, Father Ciszek ministered to them at night.

In 1941, the Soviet Union’s KGB arrested him. He was surprised to learn that the KGB knew his real name, national origin and the fact that he was a priest. However, they thought he was a German spy. They sent him to the infamous Lubjanka Prison in Moscow. For four years, he was confined to a cell measuring six feet by 10 feet, and allowed out 20 minutes daily for exercise. He spent his time praying the Mass, saying rosaries and other prayers.

He also undertook relentless questioning. Eventually, after being given drug-laced tea, he confessed to being a Vatican spy. When he was granted with an agreement to work as a spy for the Soviet Union, he refused and was beaten. He was then sent to Siberia, where he spent 15 years at two slave-labor camps at hard labor—coal miner, log-remover, construction worker. In those camps, too, he worked as a priest among his fellow prisoners.

In 1955, after 15 years, he was released, but told to remain in Norilik, Siberia. There he celebrated Mass, performed baptisms and weddings, and visited the sick. Later, he was sent to two other cities, where he continued his ministry.

In 1963, he and another American were exchanged for a Russian couple who had been convicted of spying in the United States. He returned to the United States, where he taught at Fordham University until his death in 1984 at age 80.

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**Perspectives**

Possible U.S. saints: Father Walter Ciszek

** Faithful Lines/From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink**

(Thirty-first in a series of columns)

**It's All Good/Patti Lamb**

**Addressing the care of our souls in the New Year**

The week between Christmas and New Year’s is traditionally the time when we see a slew of self-help gurus and gurus, whether advertisers pitch prevention and teeth whitening strips or serums to prevent hair loss.

Within a week, the message the world promotes changes dramatically. This time it is, “Peace on earth; goodwill to men.” The next week becomes less heart-warming and less “holly-jolly”. “What really matters in the New Year is how you look.”

It is important to take care of our bodies. We don’t think God wants us to neglect them. But when we consider New Year’s resolutions, it seems the human tendency is to focus on the body, on our physical selves. We think it is about what everyone can see.

What if this year we started from the inside out? Instead of resolutions that put the body first, we could start from the soul and set out our souls (and the souls of others) first. I imagine that it would make for a better year to come.

There are innumerable ways to do this. Here are just a few suggestions for some soul care:

• Say night prayers together as a family.

If only once a week. In addition to gathering as a family with petitions and praise, night prayer also allows us to stay in the family in the loop on things that are happening.

“Please bless Rachel as she takes her chemo shots every few weeks at the hospital.”

• Say blessings to your family in the morning. Commit each child to God’s care Thursday.”

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• Give thanks for the blessings you’ve received.

“Thank you for every blessing you’ve given us this year. We know you will give us even greater ones.”

• Acknowledge God. Give credit where it is due.

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Salvation is in Jesus. The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus as the Savior. God was with Jesus as the Lord went about “doing good works” and healing all who were ill. St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading.

This feast is great in the Church’s calendar because it reveals to us the Lord’s identity. He is the Son of God. It is not even a prophet of John’s holiness and tenacious faith was the Lord’s equal. Second, Jesus assumes the sinlessness of us all. In this sense, as stated elsewhere in the Scriptures by St. Paul, Jesus is a new Adam, a new and perfect representative of the human race. But Jesus is a representative, and Creator, of union with God, rather than a sign and cause of estrangement from God, as was a Adam. Using its own words the Peter, who spoke for the other Apostles, for the Christian community, and most importantly for Jesus, the Church calls us to the Lord and Savior. We are sinners. However, Jesus, the Son of God, has assumed our sins, reconciling us with God. Reconciliation through Jesus to God is perfect, unbroken and absolute. This reconciliation brings eternal life.

Reflection

Biblical genealogies are symbolic way to place Jesus in human history

Q My question concerns the lineage of Jesus. The accounts of his ancestors in Luke and Matthew do not agree. Which one is correct? I heard one interpretation that the name designated as Joseph’s father was probably his father-in-law, thus tracing Mary’s ancestors. Since Jesus did not have any of Joseph’s genes, why do the evangelists bother to trace Joseph’s lineage instead of Mary’s? Joseph should not be called the father of Jesus. He was merely the stepfather, and the writers were well aware of this. (North Carolina)

A Genealogies in ancient times normally differed considerably, in nature and purpose, from the family trees that we know today.

Most obviously, for ordinary people—like Joseph—for example—records going back even a few generations became extremely tangle. Thus, among the Jews, except for the priestly families, almost no one could trace family histories back very far; even a person going back 2,000 years or more. Some rabbis held that all this confusion would be resolved only when the prophet Elijah returned. Also, genealogies often were constructed for symbolic, instructive purposes, emphasizing the prowess or special significance of an individual, with no particular concern for historical accuracy.

These realities, among others, are relevant to the many differences between the ancestry of Jesus given by St. Matthew (M 1:1-17) and Luke (Lk 3:23-38). Obviously, each of these evangelists had partially different sources as well. For example, Luke’s list contains 36 names not found in Matthew or the Old Testament.

This brief background can help us approach these interesting if puzzling genealogies. A little more specifically, we ask that Mattle’s listing, from Abrahahm to Christ, is focused on David, in whom God’s promise to Abraham seemed to be fulfilled. But that covenant was broken by David and the people, leading to exile and decline, until the true “son of David” the Messiah, arrived in the person of Jesus. Luke’s much longer list starts with Jesus and Joseph—whose father is different, by the way, in the two accounts—and extends back to “Adam, the son of God,” which suggests perhaps the major interest of Luke in presenting his list.

Immediately before his genealogy, he reports the voice from heaven identifying Jesus as the Son, of God. Immediately after it, the tempter in the desert calls him the Son of God. This theology therefore places Jesus and his ministry in the context of human history, emphasizing his dignity and role as coming from, and acting as, God’s Son.

In Hebrew culture, the number seven was the “perfect” and therefore somewhat sacred number. Both genealogies play on that symbolism. Matthew himself observes (v. 17) that he has arranged his list in three sets of 14 (2 x 7) generations each though, in fact, the list does not total exactly 42. In Luke, we find 11 sequences of seven “fathers,” the final one God himself, who is listed as No. 77, super-perfect as it were. Thus Jesus begins the 12th—another number of special significance for the Jewish people—and final age of history.

Again, these numbers serve to emphasize the pre-eminence of the person being introduced through the genealogies. The more universal title for Jesus is the foster father of Jesus. I stepfather is the husband of one’s mother by a subsequent marriage, which was not true, of course, in this case. Mary herself, incidentally, calls Joseph “the father of Jesus” (Lk 2:48) so it can’t be too bad as long as what we mean is clear.

Q The Gospel says the Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ Child. I understand the reason for the gift of gold. But why give frankincense and myrrh? (Texas)

A Both myrrh and frankincense are resins commonly used as incense and as ingredients for incense. Myrrh was also used for perfumes and embalming. Both were produced particularly in Arabia as “myrrh berries” and were highly prized and very costly. They would have been gifts at least as precious as gold. 1
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication: be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan work are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious listed by name and order; those are the separate obituaries on this page.


ANDREWS, William, 87, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Father of Nancy, Thomas and Rick. Great-grandfather of 14.


BAYNARD, James, 88, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Father of John, Brian and Mary. Great-grandfather of 23.


BROCHIN, Edna E. (Hedges), 70, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 3. Mother of Richard, Susan and Thomas. Great-grandmother of 16.

BROWN, Mary, 81, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Wife of Edgar. Great-grandmother of 12.


CARTER, Thomas, 75, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Thomas and Elizabeth. Great-grandfather of 21.


COBB, Melvin, 75, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Son of Elmer and Ethel. Great-grandfather of 16.


DANIS, John, 86, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Husband of Terry. Great-grandfather of 12.

DANISH, Carl, 70, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Mary, Linda and Carl. Great-grandfather of 11.


DANIELS, James, 87, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Pat and Tom. Great-grandfather of 12.

DANIELS, Melvin, 94, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Husband of Mary. Great-grandfather of 11.


DAVIS, Pearl, 80, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 23. Mother of E. Davis. Great-grandmother of 11.

DEAN, Robert, 85, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Father of Jeannie and Tom. Great-grandfather of 15.


DERRICK, Terry, 87, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Mary. Great-grandfather of 10.


DURST, James, 83, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Nancy. Great-grandfather of 12.


DURKIN, Mary, 75, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Sister of Mary and Betty. Great-grandmother of 14.

DUSKO, Michael, 92, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Mary. Great-grandfather of 12.

DUNN, John, 84, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Father of Terry. Great-grandfather of 12.

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