May 3 Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium will culminate 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

By Sean Gallagher

On May 6, 1834, Pope Gregory XVI established the Diocese of Vincennes. At the time, it comprised the entire state of Indiana and the eastern third of Illinois, including Chicago, which was then a small village.

The pope appointed then-Father Simon Bruté as the first bishop of Vincennes. He, along with three priests, shepherded some 25,000 Catholics across more than 50,000 square miles. At 3 p.m. on May 3, approximately 35,000 to 40,000 Catholics from across central and southern Indiana will worship together with 20 to 30 bishops and more than 100 priests and deacons during a Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis to culminate a yearlong celebration of the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of Vincennes, which later became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“This huge gathering of Catholics from around the archdiocese will be an exciting demonstration of how the Church in central and southern Indiana has grown in the past 175 years,” said Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general. “We will give God thanks for his marvelous gifts to us all these years.”

During the Mass, approximately 2,500 teenagers and 300 adults will receive the sacrament of confirmation. Among those being honored at the Mass will be Teresa Hildebrand’s compassion for people in need guides her as the director of the Good Samaritan Program at St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute.

Teresa Hildebrand will soon share the story of the adopted child and how that lonely, little girl still affects her and her work at one of the most remarkable parish outreach programs in the archdiocese.

Yet right now Hildebrand is busy reacting to the steady ringing of the doorbell at the St. Joseph University Parish Center in this western Indiana community. Every time the doorbell rings on a Monday or Wednesday afternoon at the parish center, it usually signals the arrival of a destitute or struggling person, couple or family who is seeking even the smallest glimmer of hope in an economy and a world that has turned against them.

Notice the disabled couple walking down the hall toward Hildebrand’s office. The husband and wife will soon tell her about their three children as they ask for help to pay their utility bills.

Look at the battered face of the woman whose jaw has been wired shut—a victim of domestic abuse who seeks Hildebrand’s help to get a room in a women’s shelter.

See the heartbroken young mother who sits in front of Hildebrand, holding her 13-month-old child, who has just been diagnosed as mentally handicapped—the result of unknowingly being exposed to four times the acceptable level of lead poisoning in the run-down rental property where the young woman scraped by to live. The devastated mother hopes Hildebrand can help with a deposit to move to another place.

“That was heartbreaking to me,” Hildebrand would say later after helping the young mother. “It was one of the most touching stories I’ve heard recently.”

She hears a lot of those stories as the director of the parish’s Good Samaritan Program, a program that offers an unusual yet basic approach to helping people in need.

The story of an adopted child

Two collections are always taken at the three weekend Masses at St. Joseph Church. The first is for the parish. The second is for the Good Samaritan Program, a collection that usually totals between $4,500 and $5,000 a month to help people in need pay for utilities, rent and prescriptions.

“We do it because of the need—and give God thanks for his marvelous gifts to us all these years.”

During the Mass, approximately 2,500 teenagers and 300 adults will receive the sacrament of confirmation.
the generosity of our parishioners,” says Conventual Franciscan Father Richard Kiley, who has been the parish’s pastor since 2001. “Because of this downtown location, the parish has always attracted the poor. The parishioners have chosen this way to give to the poor.”

And Hildebrand has chosen to lead the Good Samaritan Program ever since Father Kiley asked for help with it eight years ago.

“I’ve always been a volunteer,” says Hildebrand, 62, and the mother of two grown children. “I was a court-appointed special advocate for neglected and abused children before this. That was the best preparation I could have for this. I see people from the same socioeconomic situation. My whole life has prepared me to do this.”

She then tells the story of an adopted child and how that little girl is always at the heart of her efforts.

“I was born to a single mother in Ireland,” she recalls. “I was adopted by a family who lived outside of Chicago. It was hard for me to find a great understanding of people who are rejected, who are alone, who feel they don’t belong anywhere. That stayed with me until I got married and had my own family.”

Hildebrand pauses before adding, “Because of everything I went through, I made it hard for my mother who adopted me. The funny thing is she was always the person helping others. What I got from her was a sense of kindness.”

She smiles and sighs.

“We are all so much more similar than we’re different. All the stories I hear here are just a variation of a similar theme: not loving, not being nurtured. I was always felt like an outsider, but I felt blessed when people reached out to me.”

“I’m doing what I’m doing because of the people who were there for me.”

“I’m doing what I can”

As St. Alphonsus is said to have said, “I was adopted by a family who lived outside of Chicago. It was hard for me to find a great understanding of people who are rejected, who are alone, who feel they don’t belong anywhere. That stayed with me until I got married and had my own family.”

Hildebrand’s assistant marvels at the time and care she gives to the 20 or more people who come to the office every time it is open.

“She understands people, feels for them and tries her utmost to help them,” Barb Buti said. “She doesn’t like to say no to anyone.”

“This philosophy is so profound, so changed my image and likeness means that each person has something to teach us, ” Father Kaley said. “It’s a blessing to be part of the parish’s longstanding commitment to serve the poor and other people in need.”

Hildebrand’s work with the poor and needy has taken her to the tough, sometimes seedy places that many people avoid in daily life. “All the people who are in the alleys picking up cans or riding bicycles because they can’t afford a car, I know them and love them all,” she says.

Hildebrand’s work with the poor and the needy has also taken her to a place that even she steered away from for long stretches of her life: the importance of faith in life. “Catholics of my generation aren’t of comfort talking about their faith,” she says. “I remember the first time a woman came in here and asked me to pray over her. I wasn’t comfortable doing that, but I knew I had to do it for her. I asked God to look over her and give her strength. Now when people leave, I say, ‘God bless you’ and I tell them they will be in my prayers. I give them hugs, too. They want our hugs.”

She smiles and continues, “A lot of these people have nothing, but they have faith. They look to us to be God’s hands and eyes to them. There’s a spiritual aspect to what we do. I’ve deepened my faith. I pray with people. I ask, ‘Lord, help me here.’”

The help has been needed more and more as the economy has faltered. The funds for the Good Samaritan Program were exhausted in October and November before each of those months ended. In December, about 200 people showed up at the parish center seeking help.

Sometimes people come back to say thanks. One recipient gave Hildebrand a ceramic angel. A mother offered a set of framed pictures of butterflies. A huge framed drawing of the Good Samaritan is another gift that has a prominent place in Hildebrand’s office.

“People say that this is so depressing,” Hildebrand says. “That’s not the way I see it. The satisfaction is in the action. You can’t be depressed when you’re helping. You know that old saying. ‘You’re either part of the problem or you’re part of the solution. It’s a blessing to be part of the solution. It’s a thrill to be doing this.’”

Rabbi says trip to Israel can help pope show his respect for Judaism

Rabbi Michael Schudrich, pictured with the Good Samaritan Program’s director, Teresa Hildebrand. Schudrich said Pope Benedict XVI’s trip to Israel will be an opportunity for the pope to demonstrate to the world his knowledge of and respect for Judaism.

ROME (JNS)—Poland’s chief rabbi said he hopes Pope Benedict XVI’s trip to Israel will be an opportunity for the pope to demonstrate to the world his knowledge of and respect for Judaism.

Rabbi Michael Schudrich, the U.S.-born chief rabbi of Poland, said the May trip can be “very enlightening and helpful for Poland.”

“Pope Benedict XVI can show the world how he learned from ‘the life and actions’ of Pope John Paul about the importance of interreligious dialogue and of being willing to learn from members of other religions,” Schudrich said.

But the rabbi said he could not talk about Catholic-Jewish relations without acknowledging that “it clearly was very painful” when Pope Benedict lashed out at the Jewish religious community.

“Pope Benedict XVI’s attitude toward the Vatican what they should or should not do,” the rabbi said. “The incident has demonstrated that 40 years of improving relations make it possible for Jews and Catholics to speak openly when we face our hurt, he said. “It is just because of the past 40 years of dialogue and discussions that we were able to face this dark moment,” he said. “It was a test for us, but it also taught us that we have no other option than to redefine ourselves to dialogue in an even deeper and more meaningful way.”

In an interview after the speech, the rabbi said the Williamsburg affair caused many people to “jump to the conclusion” that Pope Benedict was not sanctioned by Holocaust denial. But Rabbi Schudrich said he and others who know the writings of the pope know that is not true.

“I feel I am open to other religions, the better Jew I become,” he said. “Furthermore, when I close myself off from the outside world, I limit my access to the rays of light, truth and wisdom” present in others.

“The less I am used to living like this, the more I respect and understand my faith. And the more I respect and understand my faith, the less I feel the need to think about the role I play in that respect.”

Still, Hildebrand insists she is not a saint. “You know that old saying, ‘You’re either part of the problem or you’re part of the solution.’ It’s a blessing to be part of the solution.”

In his speech, the rabbi said Pope Benedict’s trip to Israel will be a great opportunity to connect with Jews and other religions helped him discover a teaching present within Judaism as well: The fact that God created each person in his image and likeness means that each person has something to teach us.

“If God created us all as his children and created us to that all of us would learn to love him and each other, then it must be the fulfillment of God’s plan when we seek inspiration and truth from each other,” the rabbi said.

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Proposed laws increase penalties for terminating unborn life

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Is terminating the life of an unborn baby a crime? The answer to this question depends on the part of the Indiana Code; the body of laws that govern the state, which a person is reading.

In one section, terminating an unborn baby’s life through abortion is legal but, in another section, terminating the life of an unborn baby is a crime called feticide.

Despite this contradiction in the law, state lawmakers voted overwhelmingly in support of two measures recognizing greater rights of unborn children.

One measure increases criminal penalties for persons committing feticide, and the other expands wrongful death civil lawsuits, allowing parents to collect damages when the life of their unborn child is ended.

Senate Bill 236, authored by Sen. James Merritt (R-Indianapolis), would increase the penalty for feticide from a Class C felony to a Class B felony.

Similar to the crime of homicide, if a person kills an unborn baby while committing or attempting to commit murder or another crime, he or she commits feticide.

A person found guilty of causing the death of a child in utero at any stage, including the gestation period, may be sentenced to death, or he or she may be imprisoned for 60 years.

A measure similar to Senate Bill 236 is expected to be introduced in the House.

The Indiana Catholic Conference supports both Senate Bill 236 and House Bill 1195, which would increase penalties for pregnant women who endanger the lives of their unborn children.

The Conference supports legislation providing greater recognition, value and respect for the unborn human person.

For the purposes of feticide, Senate Bill 236 defines an unborn baby as “child in utero at any stage.” Senate Bill 236 passed the Indiana Senate by a 47-2 vote.

In the event of criminal abortions, penalties for killing an unborn child would be increased under Senate Bill 236.

Wrongful death suits in civil lawsuits would be expanded under another proposal, the wrongful death or injury of a child bill.

Senate Bill 341 was authored by Sen. Brent Steele (R-Bedford).

The bill would expand wrongful death to include an unborn baby that has reached viability. Under the bill, viability is defined as a fetus that could survive outside the womb, which is about seven months gestational age.

The bill passed the Senate by a 47-2 vote.

The proposed legislation addressing fetal death was prompted by an incident that occurred in Indianapolis in April 2008. A bank teller, who was pregnant with twins, was shot during a bank robbery.

She survived the gunshot wound, but her unborn twins did not. The woman was five months pregnant.

Marion County prosecutors were unable to prosecute for manslaughter, a criminal charge, because the babies needed to be seven months old under criminal law. The couple was unable to collect damages under Indiana’s wrongful death statute because the children were unborn.

Under Senate Bill 341, they would still be unable to file a wrongful death civil lawsuit because the bill would only allow for this for viable fetuses. However, in a criminal action, the perpetrator could have received a different sentence under Senate Bill 341.

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), the Church’s official representative on public policy matters, supports the bill.

“The Church is supportive of legislation that provides greater recognition, value and respect for the unborn human person,” said Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director.

Senate bills 236 and 341 now move to the House. The Senate bills correct problems that have occurred with services provided by the Family and Social Services Administration, and improve access for the poor and unemployed to receive benefits.

The Church supports this legislation.

• Senate Bill 528 passed by a 35-15 vote and now heads to the House.

The bill expands school choice for lower-income families by providing scholarship tax credits. The Church supports this legislation.

• Senate Bill 90 passed by a 39-11 vote and now heads to the House Public Policy Committee. The bill holds physicians more accountable for the death of their patients. The Church supports this legislation.

• Senate Bill 89 passed by a 44-6 vote, and now heads to the House Public Policy Committee. The bill requires better access to health care and pays more for the care of the most vulnerable, including the unborn. The Church supports this legislation.

• Senate Bill 528 passed by a 37-13 vote and now heads to the House. The bill would create harsher penalties for employers who hire undocumented workers. The Church opposes this legislation because the bill would negatively impact immigrant families and children.

• House Bill 1286 passed by an 89-9 vote and now heads to Senate. The bill would allow parishioners to participate in parish festivals when they are not working a charitable game or raffle. Current law prohibits participation in festival activities if a person is working the festival.

• House Bill 1693 passed by a 75-25 vote, and House Bill 1195 passed by a 54-45 vote. Both bills now head to the Senate. The bills correct problems that have occurred with services provided by the Family and Social Services Administration, and improve access for the poor and unemployed to receive benefits.

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For more information call 1-800-844-8649 or log on to www.indianacc.org
Priorities for the new administration and Congress

S
hortly before he was
inaugurated as the
44th president of the
United States, Barack Obama received a letter from Cardinal
Francis George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic
Bishops.

The cardinal wished our new president well, and attached the prayers and support of the U.S. Catholic bishops “to make this period of national change a time to advance the common good and defend the life and dignity of all, especially the vulnerable and poor.”

Cardinal George assured the
new president that the U.S. bishops want “to work constructively with the new administration and Congress and others of good will to pursue policies which respect the dignity of all human life, and bring greater justice to our nation and peace to our world.”

The cardinal then proceeded to outline 10 priorities that the bishops of the United States would like to pursue in their collaboration with the leaders of our nation.

The first priority can be seen as the most immediate, or urgent. It is “to support strong, prudent, and effective policies to address the terrible impacts and injustices of the economic crisis.”

The last priority, discussed by Cardinal George is the most fundamental, or essential, of all. It is “to protect the lives of the most vulnerable and voiceless members of the human family, especially unborn children and those who are disabled or terminally ill.

In between these two critically important priorities, the cardinal listed health care, a responsible transition out of Iraq, peace in the Holy Land, and the fight against terrorism and other diseases worldwide, immigration reform, support for marriage (“a faithful, exclusive, lifelong union of a man and a woman”), educational choice for parents and support for faith-based initiatives.

This outline of priorities is not complete, Cardinal George says. “There are many more issues of concern and advocacy for the Church and the USCCB especially: religious freedom and other civil and human rights, news media and communications, and issues of war and peace.”

“We seek to work together with our nation’s leaders to advance the common good of our society,” Cardinal George says. “And our message is one of disagreeing respectfully and civility where necessary but preserving that same common good.”

Respectful disagreement has already been voiced on the administration’s decision to provide government funding for international agencies that are pro-abortion.

As Cardinal George’s letter warned President Obama, the U.S. bishops will continue to vigorously oppose legislative and other measures to expand abortion.

Toward this end, all Catholics in the United States are being urged to join with other people of good will to: 1) retain essential, widely supported policies which show respect for unborn life, protect the conscience rights of health care providers and other Americans, and prevent government funding and promotion of abortion.”

Each of the priorities outlined by Cardinal George merits the strong support of Catholics in central and southern Indiana and nationwide.

But it should be especially attentive to the challenges faced by the new administration and Congress in the two most urgent and fundamental priorities outlined by Cardinal George: to renew our economy and to safeguard human dignity, especially the rights of the unborn and the most vulnerable members of our society.

Our task, as Catholics and as citizens, is threefold: 1) to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in governmental affairs; 2) to urge civil leaders at local, state and national levels to seek workable solutions that are truly in the best interests of all; and 3) to support the U.S. bishops in their efforts to engage in public policy as pastors and teachers called “to advance the common good and defend the life and dignity of all, especially the vulnerable and poor.”

In the Lord’s life, God sustains our new administration and Congress, and all of us, in these difficult times.

—Daniel Conway

Editorial

Be Our Guest/Gary Diehl

Legalized killing of innocent children will continue on us path of self-destruction

Recently, I had the ghastly experience of viewing an abortion procedure that had been recorded within the mother’s womb. I also viewed the results of this and several other abortions as well.

It was not something that I wanted to see, but felt was necessary in order to share the truth about this horrific procedure.

Though it was what I expected, it was far more than what I documented. I have seen war or the Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

I could not perceive a “physician” performing such a procedure. I was outraged and moulous, with these actions cycling over and over.

If the truth of abortion were to be broadcast on television, the debate would be over, and ended once and for all. The killing of innocent human lives, tiny arms and legs the size of a dime severed from their body with minute detail of fingers and toes, is a vision that I will not soon forget.

The expression on the baby’s face depicted the horrific torture, and I understood the “silent scream.” This is the profound and rightly committed against God and humanity.

How long do you think our Creator will allow such destruction of his greatest gift of love? How long will he allow us to “spit in his face” and destroy this image of human creation? I pray not much longer. Our punishment actually began over three decades ago, but the majority of the American people were not even aware.

These last 36 years have brought us to our current economic crisis. We have taught our children greed, instant gratification regardless of cost, violence, immorality and pornography, and they all relate to the legalization of abortion, which is a total disrespect for life and the worst oppression against humanity.

By his action, President Barack Obama confirmed what we have believed from the beginning of his campaign for presidency.

During his first week in office, his actions resulting in the allocation of hundreds of millions of dollars to support abortion in the United States but also in foreign countries, has revealed his true priority. How does funding abortion, especially in another country, help Americans who have lost their home or job? He has been true to his word, but few does this help our people in this economic crisis? If we don’t stop our own terror of genocide, we will never recover.

If the “Freedom of Choice Act” becomes law and we do not stop the legalized killing of children, we will surely continue on our path of self-destruction.

During my first years as a leader do not realize that our children are our greatest national treasure.

(Gary Diehl lives in Lawrenceburg, and is a member of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County.)

Letters to the Editor

Unless we act, senseless Freedom of Choice Bill may become reality

My husband, Paul, and I have five children. As parents, we are obligated to be responsible caretakers. It’s a job that we love and take seriously.

Our society and educational institutions have wisely placed limits on what children can and cannot do without their parents’ consent. For example:

• If one of our minor daughters wanted her ears pierced at the shopping mall, she would need our permission.

• If she wanted to attend a class field trip, or take an aspirin for a headache while at school, or have my sister take her to the doctor for a sore throat, she would need our permission.

• If she wanted her eyes examined for near-sightedness, she would need our permission.

• If she wanted to participate in a new pair of glasses, or to buy and finance a car, or to go to court to pay for a speeding ticket (CODPS! I hope not...), she would need our permission.

• If she wanted a tattoo or to see an R-rated movie—let’s not go there! However, she will need our permission.

• If she wanted to participate in softball, volley ball or basketball, she would need our permission... yes, even in Indiana.

• If she wanted to freshen up her tan for the high school prom at the local tanning salon, she would need our permission.

—Tracy Burch

Logogotee

Reader: In war, moral conscience often loses out to the expediency of the result

In regard to the Perspectives piece in the Jan. 30 issue of The Criterion with the headline, “That was then, and this is now,” I was surprised that the following quotation was dropped at the end of World War II it was moral.

So the end justifies the means? I know women, children and innocent civilians are killed in war. How horrible is war? And to target many innocent people with a massive weapon, what justifies that? The end justifies the means?

Often abuse, violence and killing becomes more easily accepted when a nation engages in war.

I believe that in war, the moral conscience most often loses out to the expediency of the result.

Ron Stegman

Guilford
El pecado de la envidia nos causa division en la comunidad.

La envidia puede ser una gran fuerza que nos divide. Algunas personas envidian a sus compañeros que parecen tener la vida perfecta, pero en realidad, a veces, no es así. Es importante recordar que la envidia no nos hace mejores, sino que nos hace sufrir.

La envidia puede llevar a acciones que nos llevan a la división en lugar de la unidad. Esto es porque la envidia nos hace sentir mal contigo mismo y con los demás. Es importante luchar contra la envidia y fraternizar con los demás.

En el Catecismo Católico de los Estados Unidos para Adultos, se dice que "el pecado de envidia es una forma de querer desafiar a los demás, no aceptar lo que otro posee o considera que deberíamos tenerlo". Esto es una forma de dividirnos en lugar de unirnos.

Durante esta semana, debemos luchar contra la envidia y buscar la unidad. Los buenos amigos son aquellos que a la vez que nos hacen sentir bien, también nos ayudan a ser mejores.

La envidia es un pecado que puede llevarnos a la división entre nosotros. Es importante luchar contra el pecado de la envidia y buscar la unidad en nuestra comunidad.
California woman to be baptized by pope at Easter Vigil

WASHINGTON (CNS)—This year, parishioners at St. Joseph Church in Modesto, Calif., are more excited than usual about Easter.

That’s because 40 of them, along with their pastor, Father Joseph Illo, will be in Rome during Holy Week, and one person in their group, Heidi Sierras, will be baptized by the pope during the Easter Vigil at St. Peter’s Basilica.

Sierras will be in a group of five—representing different areas of the world—who will be baptized by Pope Benedict XVI on April 11. The 29-year-old mother of four will represent North America.

It’s hard to put into words how I feel,” Sierras told Catholic News Service in a March 2 telephone interview from her home in Ceres, Calif. “I feel honored. It’s an amazing opportunity.”

Father Illo said the whole parish was caught up in the excitement. “If she were a different type of person, they might be envious,” he added, but because she is so nice they are glad for her.

Getting picked for an event of this magnitude falls somewhat in the “it’s all about who you know” category, because each year, just in the United States alone, tens of thousands of people are baptized during the Easter Vigil.

Sierras learned of the possibility of the papal baptism more than a year ago after a St. Joseph parishioner who frequents Rome found out from a friend of a friend of a Vatican official that there was an open slot for a North American representative to be baptized by the pope in 2009.

The parishioner gave this news to Father Illo, who in turn asked the director of the parish’s Rite of Christian Initiation of adults program to choose someone.

The candidate who would have to stay in RCIA for an additional year. After several letters were exchanged between the parish and the Vatican, Sierras was told it was official.

Sierras, who had no religious upbringing, began attending Mass with her husband, who is Catholic, about three years ago.

When she started asking him questions about the Catholic faith, he advised her to partake in RCIA at St. Joseph.

Now, after more than two years in the program, her questions have been answered.

She said the weekly classes reviewed “every aspect of the Catholic faith,” which confirmed her desire to join the Church. “I have no doubts this is what I want to do,” she added.

Sierras is one of 34 people in RCIA this year at St. Joseph. The Easter Vigil, during which catechumens and candidates are received into the Church, is the culmination of what is typically a yearlong RCIA program.

Father Illo described the Easter Vigil as the “mother of all vigils.”

He told CNS on Feb. 25 that there have been many years when he has remained in the quiet church afterward, long after the congregation has gone home, just to “be in the glow” of the newly baptized.

This year’s Easter Vigil at St. Peter’s Basilica will hold even more significance for the priest. He said it would be “an affirmation of my priesthood” in which he will have the opportunity to “almost be a collaborator with the pope and the RCIA process—working together to bring people to the sacraments.”

A double blessing, he said, is that while he is in Rome, his bishop, Stockton Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, will celebrate the Easter Vigil at St. Joseph.

Sierras planned to leave for Rome on April 2, with her husband and two of their children. The group of parishioners joining her has obtained tickets to many of the papal liturgies during Holy Week. Sierras, along with others to be baptized at the Easter Vigil, will attend morning catechesis sessions and afternoon tours of churches.

“I think I’m going to have a lot of opportunities to think, prepare, pray and reflect on all this and not get too caught up,” she said.

And in the meantime, she has already talked a fair amount about her faith. News of her upcoming baptism and unique, baptism has put her choice to become Catholic in a public spotlight and has raised all kinds of questions from friends, family members and co-workers at the veterinary clinic where she works.

“It’s incredible,” she told CNS. “I’m so excited. I tell everyone about Jesus, but I have no thought about who you know” category, because each year, just in the United States alone, tens of thousands of people are baptized during the Easter Vigil.

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Father Illo described the Easter Vigil as the “mother of all vigils.”

He told CNS on Feb. 25 that there have been many years when he has remained in the quiet church afterward, long after the congregation has gone home, just to “be in the glow” of the newly baptized.

This year’s Easter Vigil at St. Peter’s Basilica will hold even more significance for the priest. He said it would be “an affirmation of my priesthood” in which he will have the opportunity to “almost be a collaborator with the pope and the RCIA process—working together to bring people to the sacraments.”

A double blessing, he said, is that while he is in Rome, his bishop, Stockton Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, will celebrate the Easter Vigil at St. Joseph.

Sierras planned to leave for Rome on April 2, with her husband and two of their children. The group of parishioners joining her has obtained tickets to many of the papal liturgies during Holy Week. Sierras, along with others to be baptized at the Easter Vigil, will attend morning catechesis sessions and afternoon tours of churches.

“I think I’m going to have a lot of opportunities to think, prepare, pray and reflect on all this and not get too caught up,” she said.

And in the meantime, she has already talked a fair amount about her faith. News of her upcoming baptism and unique, baptism has put her choice to become Catholic in a public spotlight and has raised all kinds of questions from friends, family members and co-workers at the veterinary clinic where she works.

“It’s incredible,” she told CNS. “I’m so excited. I tell everyone about Jesus, but I have no thought
Archdiocesan parishes schedule annual Lenten penance services

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of penance services that have been reported to The Criterion.

Due to space constraints, penance services scheduled later during Lent may be omitted from this list in this week’s newspaper. However, the entire schedule is posted on The Criterion Online at www.criteriononline.com.

Batesville Deanery
March 8, 7 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhouse
March 10, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
March 15, 7 p.m. at St. Maurice, Napoleon
March 17, 7 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, New Albion
March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greentown
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Dover
April 7, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood

Bloomington Deanery
March 17, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
April 2, 7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery
March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Andrew, Richmond
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
April 2, 7 p.m. at St. Bridge, Liberty

Indianapolis East Deanery
March 16, 7 p.m. for St. Therese of the Infant Jesus
March 18, 7 p.m. at St. Simon the Apostle
March 18, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas, Fortville
March 24, 7 p.m. for St. Peter and Paul Catholic, Cathedral, Holy Cross and St. Mary at St. Mary

Indianapolis North Deanery
March 22, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
March 24, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
March 25, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 10, 7 p.m. for Good Shepherd and St. Roch at St. Roch
March 16, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
March 19, 7 p.m. at Holy Name, Beech Grove
March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
March 28, 9:30 a.m. at St. Bambas
April 1, 7 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Joseph at St. Joseph
April 6, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
March 7, 10:30 a.m. for Holy Trinity and St. Anthony at St. Anthony
March 9, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
March 24, 6:30 p.m. at St. Monica
March 29, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
April 2, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels

New Albany Deanery
March 9, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
March 10, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
March 10, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Sellersburg
March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Corydon
March 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
March 14, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd’s Knobs
March 16, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
March 17, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, North Vernon
March 19, 7 p.m. at Holy Name, Beech Grove
March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, North Vernon

Seymour Deanery
March 10, 7 p.m. at Church of the American Martyrs, Tell City
March 15, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
March 18, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
March 26, 1:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute
March 31, 6:30 p.m. at St. Ann, Jennings County, and St. Joseph, Jennings County

Tell City Deanery
March 22, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Paul, Tell City
March 25, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad

Terre Haute Deanery
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
March 18, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
March 26, 1:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute
March 31, 6:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Rosary, Seelyville

Lenten activities available online
Be sure to visit The Criterion’s Lenten Web page at www.archdiocese.org/ent. The page consists of links to daily readings, a Lenten column by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features.

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The Criterion Friday, March 6, 2009
‘40 Days for Life’ spring prayer vigil is under way

By Mary Ann Wyand

Bitterly cold wind stung the faces of several dozen pro-life supporters and brought tears to their eyes as they huddled together in prayer on Feb. 22 in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility in Indianapolis.

It was also extremely cold the last time that the “40 Days for Life” prayer group gathered to pray in front of the state’s largest abortion center at 8590 N. Georgetown Road during Audent last December.

Now it is Lent—a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving—and the “40 Days for Life” spring prayer vigil is under way. St. Thomas Aquinas parishioner Shawn Carney of College Station, Texas, the national coordinator of the “40 Days for Life” spring prayer campaign, spoke to pro-life supporters during the kick-off rally on Feb. 22 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged Chapel in Indianapolis.

Carney, who at 26 is known for his smile, enthusiasm, sense of humor and Eternal Word Television Network talk show “Being Human,” turned his keynote address at the rally into an inspirational call to action in the pro-life prayer vigil.

He told the gathered that pro-life supporters must work together to help end the lie of abortion—the lie that abortion providers tell each woman who is experiencing a crisis pregnancy to convince her that she does not have the capacity to love her baby because of her difficult life circumstances.

“This is the lie that is sold to 4,000 women every single day in our nation,” Carney said. “Today, the word ‘abortion’ is the second most controversial word in the English dictionary, according to Webster. Number one is a derogatory term for African-Americans. Number two is the most common surgery in America.”

Carney said the woman who has an emotional abortion cry because they believed that he, he said, then realized the truth after it was too late. “No matter how many abortions are done,” he said, “... the most basic, fundamental bond—the most beautiful bond in our humanity—between a mother and a child can never be ripped apart, and called ‘freedom’ and called ‘liberty’ and called ‘rights,’ no matter what laws we have, no matter who is in the White House.”

People who support abortion can only do that by dehumanizing the life of the unborn baby, he said, and becoming numb about the killing of a human life.

“Prayer and fasting is the hope of our world,” Carney said, “and that is what inspired 40 Days for Life... When we were gathered around that table in 2004, and we talked about 40 days of prayer and fasting, 40 days of community outreach, 40 days of going door to door, 40 days of a nonstop peaceful vigil, we had no idea that we were doing something effective.

‘Now that 40 Days for Life has spread, there is only one reason why it is successful,’ he said, ‘and that is not because of us. It’s because you cannot justify an abortion in the face of Jesus Christ. You cannot do it..." When we take Christ to the sidewalks, get out of the way. He will work miracles.”

Challenge grant will help Cristo Rey strengthen educational programs

Special to The Criterion

Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis has been awarded a $405,000 challenge grant to support the school’s mission of providing a quality education for Indianapolis youths from families with limited financial means.

The challenge grant was awarded by The Glick Fund, a fund of the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Family Foundation, and the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

This year’s effort is the third “40 Days for Life” prayer campaign in Indianapolis and the fourth national pro-life prayer vigil. As part of the campaign, more than 175,000 people throughout the U.S. have participated in prayers outside abortion centers and helped save the lives of 1,128 unborn babies, including 32 babies in Indianapolis.

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Catholic Ritter High School presents “Success in Parenting Our Children” Seminar

Open to the Public—All Welcome—No Charge

March 12, 2009

In the Cardinal Ritter Gym

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Questions 7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.)

Refreshments provided by CRHS Parent’s Club

March 12, 2000 - MYTHS THAT ENDANGER OUR CHILDREN

Unfortunately we often find that our parenting choices are based on popular myths vs. values and reality. This workshop will explore myths around teen alcohol and drug use, adolescent decision making, use of technology and bullying behavior.
children from parishes across the archdiocese who will have recently received their first Communion, couples who have been married 50 years or longer, and men and women religious who are celebrating significant anniversaries of entrance into religious life or profession of vows.

In order to make the anniversary Mass run smoothly, approximately 400 to 500 volunteers will be needed to carry out a variety of ministries, an archdiocesan official said.

Stephen James, director of the archdiocesan Office of Purchasing, is coordinating the recruiting of volunteers. He said that the Mass will give volunteers a greater appreciation for the Church as it is spread out across the state. “It will be about community,” James said. “A Mass like this will help us experience that the Church goes far beyond the pews in our own parish.”

Those interested in volunteering at the Mass, including Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from across the archdiocese, should contact James at 800-382-9836, ext. 1451, or at 317-236-1451, or by sending him an e-mail at steve.james@archindy.org.

That community experience will begin before the Mass when a choir made up of approximately 125 students from Catholic high schools from across the archdiocese will sing a variety of selections for approximately an hour.

Eddie Guanajuato, who directs bands and choirs at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, will lead the choir. “What better way can students use their God-given talent to help make the stadium a house of worship before the liturgy begins,” Guanajuato said. “The music to be selected will be from a wide range of styles and genres that offer praise to God and is fun to sing.”

During the Mass, the St. Monica Spanish Choir from St. Monica Parish and the Holy Angels Mass Choir from Holy Angels Parish, both in Indianapolis, will add their voices to a choir expected to be made up of hundreds of Catholics from across the archdiocese.

Those interested in singing in this choir should contact Charles Gardner, archdiocesan executive director for spiritual life and worship, at 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or at 317-236-1483 or by sending an e-mail to worship@archindy.org.

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(Pope Benedict XVI) — Shortly before beginning his annual Lenten retreat, Pope Benedict XVI encouraged Catholics to invoke the protection of angels, and he exhorted politicians and business leaders to give priority to saving jobs as they face the global economic crisis.

Reciting the Angelus on March 1 with visitors in St. Peter’s Square, the pope spoke about the day’s Gospel story about Jesus being tempted in the desert. But instead of highlighting Satan’s efforts to trick Jesus, he focused on the line that says the angels served Jesus during his 40 days in the desert.

Throughout the Bible, he said, angels, “luminous and mysterious figures,” are sent in the name of God to help and to guide people, showing them the path to safety and proclaiming good news to them.

“Dear brothers and sisters, we cut out a significant part of the gospel if we set aside these beings sent by God to announce his presence among us,” the pope said.

“At the end of the Angelus, the pope greeted a group of workers from Italy’s Fiat car manufacturer, who came to the Vatican to demonstrate their concern for the future of their jobs. In addition to entrusting them to the protection of St. Joseph, patron of workers, the pope said, “I want to express my encouragement to both political and civil authorities as well as to business leaders to that with the cooperation of everyone this delicate moment can be faced.”

“Let us invoke them often so that they would support us in our commitment to following Jesus,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict XVI also prayed that the angels “would watch over me and my collaborators” during their weeklong Lenten retreat at the Vatican.

In addition to entrusting them to the protection of St. Joseph, patron of workers, the pope said, “I want to express my encouragement to both political and civil authorities as well as to business leaders to that with the cooperation of everyone this delicate moment can be faced.”

A common and strong commitment is needed” to overcome the economic crisis, “remembering that priority must be given to workers and their families,” Pope Benedict said. 1

Pope highlights importance of angels, offers prayers for jobs

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www.svdpindy.org

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Eight Providence sisters celebrate longtime jubilees

Citation staff report

Eight Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods are celebrating the anniversaries of their religious profession 80, 75 or 70 years ago. They are Sisters Rita Lerner, Eleanor Shaw, Sr. Mary Esther Lane, Sr. Frances Alma McNamara, Sr. Agnes Eileen O’Brien, Sr. Conrad Monrad, Sr. Marie Eleanor Shaw, Sr. Marie Mattingly, and Sr. Alexa Suelzer.

A native of Quincy, Ill., Sister Frances Alma McNamara is celebrating her 80th year as a Sister of Providence. She entered the congregation on June 7, 1928, from St. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis and professed her perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1936.

Sister Frances Alma earned a bachelor’s degree in English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in Latin at Indiana University in Bloomington, and a master’s degree in education and secondary administration at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

In the archdiocese, Sister Frances Alma taught at the former Holy Trinity School in New Albany from 1932-35, from the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1945-48 and the former Ladywood Academy in Indianapolis from 1961-62.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Fort Wayne, Ind., as well as in Illinois, California, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.

Sister Frances currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

A native of Logoootee, Ind., Sister Mary Esther Lane, formerly Sister Francis Gertrude, is celebrating her 75th year as a Sister of Providence. She entered the congregation on Aug. 15, 1933, from St. Peter’s Parish in Logoootee, Ind., and professed her perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1942.

Sister Mary Esther earned a bachelor’s degree in English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Butler University in Indianapolis.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Esther taught at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington from 1940-41, St. Anthony School in Indianapolis from 1943-44, the former St. Joseph School in Terre Haute from 1952-57, and Paul School in Sellersburg from 1957-58, the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1967-69 and the former Ladywood-St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1972-75.

Sister Mary Ester also taught at Catholic schools in Logoootee, Ind.; Hammond, Ind.; as well as in Illinois and California. She also ministered at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis from 1977-84, and the former St. Mary-of-the-Woods in community services from 1995-96 and residential services from 1996-2005.

Sister Mary Esther currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. A native of Henderson County, Ky., Sister Mary Esther matriculating is celebrating her 75th year as a Sister of Providence.

She entered the congregation on Feb. 10, 1933, from St. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis and professed her perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1941.

Sister Mattingly earned a bachelor’s degree in English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in biology at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mattingly taught at St. Anthony School in Indianapolis from 1938-40, St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis from 1942-46, St. Mary School in Terre Haute from 1940-41, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1966-68 and Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville from 1968-70.


She also taught at Catholic schools in Fort Wayne, Ind., as well as in Illinois and Washington, D.C.

Sister Mattingly currently ministers as a ministry of care volunteer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

A native of Chicago, Sister Agnes Eileen O’Brien is celebrating her 75th year as a Sister of Providence. She entered the congregation on Aug. 21, 1933, from St. Mary of the Woods Parish in Chicago and professed her perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1941.

Sister Eileen earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

In the archdiocese, Sister Eileen taught at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis from 1936-38 and St. John of Arc School in Indianapolis from 1938-45.

At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Sister Agnes Eileen served on the infirmary staff from 1974-76, as a spiritual director for the Providence Health Care Services, and as a supervisor of non-medical personnel from 1981-82, on the telephone staff room from 1988-98 and on the residential health care services from 1989-93.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Washington, Ind., and Lafayette, Ind., as well as in Illinois, Oklahoma, California and Florida.

Sister Agnes Eileen currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. A native of Chicago, Sister Eileen Shaw is celebrating her 75th year as a Sister of Providence.

She entered the congregation on Aug. 22, 1933, from St. Peter Parish in Chicago and professed her perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1942.

Sister Agnes Eileen earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education administration at Illinois State University in Normal, Ill.

In the archdiocese, Sister Agnes Eileen taught at the former Catholic School in Brazil from 1936-37 and St. Anthony School in Indianapolis from 1949-53.


She also taught at Catholic schools in Jasper, Ind., Fort Wayne, Ind., and Whiting, Ind., as well as in Massachusetts, California and Washington, D.C.

Sister Marie Eleanor currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

A native of Chicago, Sister Rita Lerner, formerly Sister Edward Clare, is celebrating her 70th year as a Sister of Providence.

She entered the congregation on Jan. 21, 1941, from St. Sylvester Parish in Chicago and professed her perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1946.

Sister Rita earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

In the archdiocese, Sister Rita served as a librarian and on the audio-visual staff at Saint Matthew School in Indianapolis from 1965-67.

At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Sister Rita ministered in outpatient care as a nurse’s aide from 1983-86, director of activities from 1986-87, on the health care services staff and as a librarian from 1987-96, and on the residential services staff from 1999 until 2006.

She also ministered in Evansville, Ind., as well as in Illinois, California and Washington, D.C.

Sister Rita currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

A native of Chicago, Sister Conrad Monrad is celebrating her 70th year as a Sister of Providence.

She entered the congregation on July 22, 1938, from St. Cyril Parish in Chicago and professed her perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1947.

Sister Conrad earned a bachelor’s degree in Latin at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in mathematics at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

In the archdiocese, Sister Conrad taught at the former St. Joseph School in Indianapolis from 1947, Nativity School in Indianapolis from 1955-56, the former St. Joseph School in New Castle from 1951-54, and the former Holy Trinity School in New Albany from 1954-55.


She also taught at Catholic schools in Fort Wayne, Ind.; Evansville, Ind.; and Lafayette, Ind., as well as in Illinois, Pennsylvania, California and Florida.

Sister Conrad currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

A native of Fort Wayne, Sister Alexa Suelzer is celebrating her 70th year as a Sister of Providence.

She entered the congregation on Feb. 14, 1943, from St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne and professed her perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1946.

Sister Alexa earned a bachelor’s degree in English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in English at Marquette University and a doctorate in English at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

In the archdiocese, Sister Alexa taught at the former St. Patrick High School in Terre Haute from 1941-45 and the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1946-50.

At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, she served as an instructor at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1962-65, on the juniorate staff from 1965-68, as a professor from 1992 until 2002, as a provincial councilor from 1972-76, in community services from 2002-03, or as a volunteer at the motherhouse in 2006.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Evansville, Ind., and Washington, Ind., as well as in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C.

Sister Alexa Suelzer currently ministers as a volunteer in the telephone room and the central office at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

St. Francis’ 400-year-old Christmas Life is relevant today, professor

CENTER VALLEY, Pa. (CNS)—Four hundred years after its publication, an introduction to the Devout Life St. Francis de Sales still offers a message about living a faith and devotion even in the midst of worldly pursuits, according to Father Thomas Morningstar, OCSO.

“There is a timeless wisdom and gentleness to this man who lived more than 400 years ago,” said the priest, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, who is director of the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture at DeSales University in Center Valley, Pa.

“Regardless of one’s current state in life, Francis’ words are universal and powerful because they offer encouragement, strength and wisdom for a gentle, happy, everyday life,” he said.

The center and DeSales University, run by the Oblates of St. Mary of the Angels, recently celebrated the 400th anniversary of St. Francis’ book during the school’s annual Heritage Week.

This week honors the saint and his legacy as a doctor of the Church, a scholar, lawyer and bishop in his lifetime, and as the patron saint of journalists.

In his book, published in 1609, he addressed friendship, courage, daily living, war, peace and hope, Father Dalton said.

The essence of St. Francis’ work, he said, was to “instruct those who live in the world how to live an ‘ordinary life’ that even ‘ordinary’ can be holy. One of the saint’s most famous directives was ‘Be who you are and that will.’”

Copies of the book are available at most major bookstores and online at www.amazon.com.
Cross Recognized, Endorsed by U.S. Catholic Bishops

As Cross International Catholic Outreach has continued to extend the range of its relief work to help the poor overseas, a growing number of Catholic bishops in the United States are taking notice and commending the organization for its efforts.

“We’ve had many endorsement letters come in the last year or so, and our staff is encouraged by the kind words and well wishes these bishops have shared,” explained James Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. "It motivates us to want to push harder and do even more.”

Most Reverend Gerald Barbarito shared: “Seeing Christ in the poor and extending assistance in His name is the very core of what we are about as Church. You are to be commended.”

Most Reverend Timothy Dolan was equally enthusiastic, saying: “I am pleased to wholeheartedly endorse Cross International Catholic Outreach. It is my wish that the clergy will familiarize themselves with Cross and its outreach Cross' message with their parishioners.”

Most Reverend Tod Brown has a similar position, explaining: “As a universal Church, it is our duty to become aware of and support the missionary works of the church. I heartily endorse Cross International Catholic Outreach, its worthwhile mission and its dedicated preachers.”

Most Reverend Curtis Gilly, singled out the ministry’s great stewardship of funds, saying: “I realize the great assistance that Cross International Catholic Outreach provides for the poor at a very cost effective rate. I want to be supportive of Cross in whatever way we are able to do so.”

Cavnar is inspired by these endorsements and the notes of encouragement coming in from other U.S. bishops, but he feels the praise really should be aimed at the thousands of American Catholics who contribute to Cross and make the ministry’s work possible.

“None of what we do would be possible without the donations we receive from the men, women and children in parishes from across this country. Those gifts, large or small, are what give us the financial power to send the food, dig the wells for water, build the houses, deliver the medicines, open the schools — everything,” Cavnar said.

“I say, God bless those benefactors. God bless their generosity and their willingness to sacrifice for the benefit of others. Their commitment to helping the poor has made all of this possible.”

Amazing “Before & After” Photo Illustrates Impact of Catholic Outreaches Serving The Poor Overseas

Jim Cavnar looked at the two photographs on this desk and found it hard to believe they were taken of the same boy. One child is gaunt, glassy-eyed and limp in the arms of a caretaker. The other boy is healthy, alert and focused on play.

“...doctors didn’t think he would survive through the week.”

James Cavnar, President of Cross

How could this possibly be the same child — Javier from Honduras?

“We see before and after photos like this often, but I never cease to be amazed by them. It makes you marvel at the human body’s ability to rebound from trauma. It makes you realize that even someone who appears to be at death’s door can be rescued and revitalized,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “When Javier was brought into the Prince of Peace Nutrition Center that Cross supports, he was 10 months old and weighed less than 9 pounds. The doctors didn’t think he would survive through the week, but the staff at Prince of Peace did a marvelous job in nursing him back to health. The before and after pictures were taken only four months apart — you can see the profound difference their care made for yourself.”

As one of America’s leading Catholic relief agencies, Cross International Catholic Outreach is literally in the business of creating success stories like this one in developing countries around the globe. Cross achieves this goal by enlisting support from U.S. Catholics who share Cavnar’s concern for the poor and his passion for rescuing children from needless suffering and death. It channels its support through Catholic partners already in place overseas — outreaches like the Prince of Peace Nutrition Center that cared for Javier.

“Prince of Peace is a wonderful organization with a committed staff, but their programs would be paralyzed without a regular stock of food, medicines and other supplies. They couldn’t properly feed or care for the children,” Cavnar explained. “Providing those resources is Cross International Catholic Outreach’s role. Our support helps them obtain the food and other supplies they need to treat children like Javier. It’s all about teamwork. The churches overseas provides the daily services, and Cross and its donors help provide the material resources needed for their outreaches.”

Cavnar is clearly grateful to the American Catholics who have chosen to support the Cross International Catholic Outreach’s work. He emphasizes them often, pointing out that they are the real key to every success.

“Dramatic turn-arounds like Javier’s are only possible because people step forward and offer a helping hand. The donor is the catalyst or trigger. Their financial support is critical in turning a tragic ‘before’ into a triumphant ‘after’ for a child like Javier. So I don’t take their role lightly. I give the credit where the credit is due — to those who contribute to make success stories like this possible,” Cavnar said. “In the simplest terms, without the donor there wouldn’t be a ‘before and after’ story at all. Javier wouldn’t have recovered. He wouldn’t have survived.”

According to Cavnar, the scope of work being funded by American Catholics has been growing in recent years. As more and more people learn about Cross International Catholic Outreach in their local parish or through stories in Catholic newspapers, they add their support, allowing Cross to further expand its outreach into new countries, touching more lives.

“With more support from American Catholics, we can take this outreach to whole new levels,” Cavnar said. “When a parish wants to launch a new feeding center, we can partner with them and supply the food. When a poor rural village is facing problems with an unsafe water source, we can dig the well or tap the spring to bring relief. Whether the need is for a clinic to treat the poor or for a school to serve an impoverished community, we can be there to help.

“Whatever their need, Cross has the potential to turn a tragic situation into something wonderful,” he added. “We offer American Catholics the same opportunity. It’s a chance to do something meaningful and profound in God’s name and for His glory.”

Readers interested in supporting Cross International Catholic Outreach, can use the brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to: Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00553, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.
In the stifling heat of a Mozambique summer dawn, the shrill cry of a hungry baby startles the young man from his dreamless sleep. It is still dark outside the flimsy hut, and his body screams for more sleep. But there are hungry children who will soon awaken, and he needs to prepare what little food is available. Suppressing the momentary temptation to escape from the overwhelming responsibility of this new day, he takes the baby a rusty cup half-filled with the last of the milk.

He still grieves the loss of the baby’s mother, and wishes she were here to help him. It isn’t a selfish wish. At age 14, Camal Tila only wants what any young teenager in Mozambique would crave — a few less responsibilities, more time with his friends in the village and a decent education, the starting point for greater opportunities in his life. He wasn’t yet ready for this role of head of household to his younger siblings.

Camal Tila, whose own father, mother and three younger siblings all died of AIDS within the last six years, now cares for 12 younger siblings and child relatives, including his baby sister. Hardly beyond childhood himself, Camal must now struggle to keep the family intact and alive. His dreams of independence and a family of his own fade with each passing day, leaving him to pray for a miracle and some small beacon of hope.

“Tangentially, Camal’s heartbreaking story is repeated across much of Africa, where AIDS is decimating the population in many countries — and we are determined to help as many of these poor orphans as possible,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach, one of the nation’s leading relief ministries to the poor. “Thankfully, it’s possible for us to make a difference. Serving as a tool in God’s hands, we can help answer the prayers of these children — spark a miracle, if you will, on their behalf.”

As Cavnar explains it, the “miracle” came to Tila family giving of American Catholics who responded to Cross’ plea for help in diocesan newspapers and on Christian radio.

“We explained to the plight of the children and the contributions we received enabled us to partner with a Catholic orphan-care ministry in Mozambique called Reencontro. Among other things, the support allowed us to build a safe, concrete block house for Camal and his family, and to supply food and medical care to meet their basic human needs,” Cavnar says. Sponsoring mentoring and building simple houses to keep orphan families together is just one of several creative solutions that Reencontro has employed since its inception in 1988, when a devout Catholic woman, Olinda Mugabe, was compelled by a love of Christ to do what she could for the orphans in Mozambique. She and her group are a treasure and a blessing to the poor, and it’s our privilege to help them with their outreach.”

Describing the support provided by Cross as “help” is an understatement. When the ministry first encountered Reencontro, it served 600 to 700 children. The support from Cross has allowed the group to expand its capacity significantly in a few short years — it now is a lifeline to more than 7,000 children like Camal. For this, Cavnar again credits the many American Catholics who make up the Cross family of benefactors.

“You could say that Cross International Catholic Outreach is one of God’s funnels. He pours resources through us to help the poorest and neediest people on earth. The orphan crisis in Africa staggers our imagination and at times almost defies belief. But we remember that this is God’s work and we are simply His channel. So we continue to do everything we can with the gifts God gives us,” he says.

“Seeing things this way also helps us to keep the correct perspective on our work. Helping just one orphan family may not seem like a world-changing accomplishment to a skeptic... but we know Camal Tila and his brother and sisters. We know that the help they received changed their world forever, and we can celebrate that human triumph.”

Ultimately, the goals of Cross International are to further expand its outreach to AIDS orphans through other partnering ministries and to avoid putting these children in institutions if at all possible. As Cavnar explains, “keeping orphans in their own culture and in the homes of relatives or family friends is really the best option, and most Christian ministries are committed to that strategy. That’s why we give a priority to supporting organizations that integrate orphaned children into existing families within their own villages or districts.”

The problem is that most poor African families are already struggling under the weight of poverty and find it difficult to add one more mouth to feed, let alone two or three. If they hesitate to accept another child, it isn’t because they are unwilling — they are simply unable to make ends meet on their already limited resources.

One director of a program in Zambia described how ministries found a solution: “We have made the care of orphans a partnership in which we all share the responsibility and burden. We assure the families that if they will provide basic shelter, we will provide what they can’t give the children: the extra food, the access to health care, additional clothing and fees and supplies needed to provide an education.”

Because the costs are shared, the amount needed to provide food, clothing, health care, education or other services is surprisingly small — just $68 per child per year. “It is amazing what can be done for so little. Most people are also shocked to learn how little it can cost to supply a house and keep a family of orphans together. It’s just $3,500 to $5,000 to build a multi-room, cement-block house,” Cavnar said. “This is another value to the Tila family and many others like them. We can help the poorest and neediest people on earth. The poorest of the poor. Use the enclosed postage-paid brochure to mail your gift or send it to: Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00553, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.

How to Help: Your help is needed for Cross International Catholic Outreach to bring Christ’s mercy to the poorest of the poor. Use the enclosed postage-paid brochure to mail your gift or send it to: Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00553, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.
Physicians take legal, educational steps to defend conscience rights

WASHINGTON (CNS)—To combat what they see as threats to the conscience rights of health care professionals who oppose abortion, the Catholic Medical Association and other organizations are taking both legal and educational steps.

The Philadelphia-based Catholic Medical Association, which has some 1,100 members nationwide, has joined with the Christian Medical Association and the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists in an effort to intervene legally against laws filed by the attorney general of the state of Missouri in late December. The suit alleges that the Missouri Parenthood of America and the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association are violating the law.

The suit’s purpose is to overturn a Department of Health and Human Services regulation that codifies several existing federal statutes prohibiting discrimination against health professionals who refuse to perform or assist in abortions or other medical procedures because of their religious or other moral objections.

On Feb. 7, the Obama administration announced it was reviewing a proposal to rescind the regulation, which took effect two days before the inauguration of President Barack Obama. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, in a Jan. 15 comment on the proposed rule, said the proposal to be published in the Federal Register was a 30-day period for public comment.

Without the regulation, members of the groups taking steps to keep it in place would be subject to “the imminent threat of legal force ... to perform abortions, assist in abortions, train for abortions and refer individuals for abortions despite their religious, moral and ethical objections to the practice of abortion,” said court papers filed by the Center for Law & Religious Freedom.

“Physicians must defend their right to practice medicine in accordance with their conscience,” said John Brehany, executive director of the Catholic Medical Association. “It’s a very important principle that every physician should support.

Without conscience protections, for example, physicians or other health care professionals could be subject to government conscription to participate in the executions of death-row prisoners. As long as these protections are not in place, health professionals are forced to carry on without their health care setting and without free choice.”

The regulations would allow government conscription of health professionals to carry out abortions, which has been the case in Oregon, where the legislature recently mandated that medical professionals perform abortions as part of their license to practice medicine. “Those who are faithful to the letter and the spirit of the Hippocratic oath don’t perform medicine,” she said. “Those who are faithful to their conscience don’t perform evil.”

Brehany said that 30 years ago, when the Bush administration was in office, the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat of Pro-Life Communications sponsored a successful campaign to publicize conscience rights.

“People who have never been there before. It’s not the new and the middle class is getting whacked,” said Toepel. “We think they’re under a tremendous strain as we are,” said Tom Mulhearn, president of the archdiocese’s Catholic Charities system.

Without conscience protections, for example, physicians or other health care professionals could be forced to locate in jurisdictions that respect their conscience rights or face professional sanctions.

“People who have never been there before. It’s not the new and the middle class is getting whacked.”

Without conscience protections, for example, physicians or other health care professionals could be forced to relocate to jurisdictions that respect their conscience rights or face professional sanctions.
Lent is a time to renew baptismal commitments

By James Schellman

Lent is about baptism. Our ancestors in faith have passed Lent down as the Church’s season to prepare to celebrate baptism at Easter, the high point of the Church’s year. Taken together, Lent and the Easter season constitute the great 40 days during which Christians are literally immersed again through baptism in the central mystery of our faith: the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Early on, our Christian ancestors developed Lent as a time to prepare for people through baptism who are dedicated to Christ’s saving mission in this world. This was the catechumenate process for new converts to the faith, what today our parishes know as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

By introducing these newcomers (or catechumens) to this life, we learn to live it more conscientiously. It is not unlike the way that most of us learn to be parents. As we parents labor to pass on our deepest values to the next generation, we learn to make those values more truly our own.

This is why Lent has two beginnings, one for those of us already baptized and members of the Church, the other for those preparing for baptism at Easter.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning for those already baptized, and the first Sunday of Lent is the beginning for those to be baptized at Easter. Thus, “in the liturgy and liturgical catechesis of Lent, the reminder of baptism already received or the preparation for its reception, as well as the theme of repentance, renew the entire community along with those being prepared to celebrate the paschal mystery ... through the sacraments of initiation” (RCIA, ¶38).

The catechumens become “elect” for the Easter sacraments on the first Sunday of Lent through the Rite of Election and Enrolment of Names. On the Sunday following Ash Wednesday, we who are already baptized gather up our elect for this mutual journey to the waters of new life.

There, they will be reborn in Christ through baptism during the Easter Vigil. Showered with those same waters, we who have faithfully accompanied them formally recommit ourselves to the same baptismal covenant by the solemn renewal of our baptismal vows.

The Ash Wednesday liturgy—through its Scripture readings, psalms, prayers and ritual gestures—expresses our central spiritual task during Lent: growing in heartfelt repentance and a renewal of the baptismal way of life.

What else is the cross of ashes placed on our forehead on this day but a penitential reminder of the cross first traced on us at baptism?

In the first reading, the prophet Joel announces a solemn journey that will help us turn back to God (Joel 2:12-13). This God longs for a people whose hearts are so broken by sorrow for their waywardness that they long in turn for God.

Lent cannot go on as it has. We admit that we have turned from God’s ways, have broken our baptismal promises. We ask to enter anew into the paschal dying and rising of our Lord so that God’s ways are once again our ways.

Joel shows us how with the threefold spiritual practice of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, fasting puts us in touch with our hunger for God and in justice frees resources to share with others. This sharing shows the world the same charity and justice that God has first shown us.

Prayer places all of this before the God of mercy and justice who makes it bear fruit. The Gospel reading (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18) makes clear that this discipline is to be authentic, the product of broken hearts and not external display.

The traditional practice of the sacrament of penance during Lent helps to ensure this authenticity.

This journey of repentance that leads to baptismal living is fully voiced in the responsorial psalm. Psalm 51 is one of the great psalms of repentance in the Church’s tradition.

It is prayed every Friday in the Church’s Liturgy of the Hours. It was the final prayer of St. Thomas More on the scaffold and has nurtured many people before and since. In its words, we beg of God clean hearts and steadfast lives.

The second reading (2 Cor 5:20-6:2) expresses the full theological weight of our Lenten journey. The world and its people await us, long for us as the ambassadors of God’s great reconciling purpose. Christ, who entered into the broken heart of our world, became “sin” itself so that our very sinfulness could be transformed into the holiness of God.

This great reconciliation is God’s gift and our baptismal vocation. Through sharing Christ’s death, our lives are to announce his Resurrection to a world that hungered for such Good News.

By James Schellman is executive director of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate. More information about it can be found at www.naforum.org.

Many resources available to learn about the Bible

This Week’s Question

Other than Sunday Mass readings, how do you learn about the Bible?

“I use the magazine Magnificat ... [for] the daily readings and the page on the saints and meditation every day at breakfast before going to work.”

(Verdy Verges, Merrimac, Wis.)

“I just open it and read it on my own. It’s fairly new to me because I’m from the generation where the Bible sat on a shelf. I started using it after I went through a Christ Renewes His Parish retreat and formation period. That’s where we delved into it every week and I learned how to use it in all areas of my life.”

(Anne King, D’Alllon, Ill.)

“I have a series of books that I read. I don’t go to Bible studies because I don’t want to know other people’s opinions [on passages]. I want to know what the catholic Church teaches and interprets.”

(Kathy Redle, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio)

“I’m taking an eight-week ‘Journey through the Bible’ course with my 14-year-old daughter ... to get a better grip on how to read the Bible.”

(Lisa Bishop, Prairie du Sac, Wis.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: How do you define “obedience” in your faith life and in your everyday life? Are there different kinds of obedience?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to carene@catholicnews.com or write to FaithAlive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
Basic Catholicism: Belief in original sin (Fourth in a series of columns)

As Catholics, we believe that Jesus suffered and died for our salvation, and I’ll discuss that in detail in later columns. For now, first we must ask the question: Why do we need salvation? Because, Catholics believe, we were born with original sin. This sin is the sin of Adam and Eve and is a part of us from our very first breath.

Adam and Eve was a major event in our history and one of the most important times in our history. It marks the beginning of our human race and the first time that we became aware of sin.

As a result of original sin, we are not created in the image of God, but in the image of Adam and Eve. We are not perfect, but we are capable of loving and serving God.

The beauty of this is that we are not alone. We have a family who lovingly and patiently guide us through life. This family is the Church, and it is through the Church that we are able to experience the fullness of grace.

So, as Catholics, we believe that the Church is the body of Christ and that we are called to be part of it. We are called to live a life of love and service, to love and serve God through the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

As Lent nears, I invite you to consider the sacrifices you are able to make for the needs of the poor and hungry throughout the world, to fast in solidarity with them, and to learn more about the needs of our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

For example, five percent of the funds raised through Operation Rice Bowl are used to fund hunger relief programs outside of the United States while the remaining 25 percent remain here in our own country to feed the hungry in our own communities. Operation Rice Bowl is a way for each of us to be a part of our global family and to remember that we are all in this together.

As Catholics, we are called to be part of the Church, to live a life of faith, and to love and serve God through the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. This is the message of the Church, and it is the message of the Gospel.

As we journey through Lent, I invite you to consider the sacrifices you are able to make for the needs of the poor and hungry throughout the world, to fast in solidarity with them, and to learn more about the needs of our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

For example, five percent of the funds raised through Operation Rice Bowl are used to fund hunger relief programs outside of the United States while the remaining 25 percent remain here in our own country to feed the hungry in our own communities. Operation Rice Bowl is a way for each of us to be a part of our global family and to remember that we are all in this together.
**The Sunday Readings**

**Sunday, March 8, 2009**

- Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
- Romans 8:31b-34
- Mark 9:2-10

This weekend’s first reading is from the Book of Genesis. Abraham was a very important figure in the process by which Jews reach a sense of ethnic and personal identity. He is regarded as the father of the Hebrew people. Genetic links, however remote, between Jews of any age and Abraham are not the only consideration. He is seen as the great example of faith in God and of obedience to God.

For this reason, Abraham is a person whom Christians venerate. Scholars believe that Abraham, who is revered also by Muslims, actually lived at one time bet the far-off that lived thousands of years ago. In this reading, God promises divine protection to all of Abraham’s descendants. Seventy years ago, Pope Pius XI said that Christians fall within the category of children of Abraham, who, as Christians descend from him as a spiritual father. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading.

It was written amid a context similar to the circumstances surrounding each of the other Pauline letters. While Christians certainly were increasing in number in the last quarter of the first century A.D., they still at this time were increasing in number in the last quarter of the first century A.D., they still at this time in the great majority of their population of the Roman Empire.

Genetic links, however remote, between Jews of any age and Abraham are not the only consideration. He is seen as the great example of faith in God and of obedience to God.

**My Journey to God**

I am the clay and you are the potter. Take me and shape me and make me, O God. For I am the clay and you are the potter. From the womb before I was born you knew me. My life was pre-destined by you as the master potter.

I am the clay and you are the potter. Give me the strength to accept what you send. Shaped in your image although I was male, I was lost in my pride and my self-centered ego. Molded on the outside but hollow on the inside.

I am the clay and you are the potter. Shape me and mold me and teach me humility. Scrape away all the arrogant ways that I have. Help me search deep inside for weakness and greed.

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington and a Benedictine Oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. He was inspired to write this poem following a homily given by his pastor.)

**Daily Readings**

**Monday, March 9**

- Francs of Rome, religious
- Daniel 9:4-10
- Psalm 79:8-9, 11, 13
- Luke 6:36-38

**Tuesday, March 10**

- Isaiah 1:10, 16-20
- Psalm 50:5-9, 10b, 17-18
- Matthew 23:1-12

**Wednesday, March 11**

- Jeremiah 18:18-20
- Psalm 31:5-6, 15-16
- Matthew 20:17-28

**Thursday, March 12**

- Jeremiah 17:5-10
- Psalm 1:1-4
- Luke 16:19-31

**Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen**

More than half of bankruptcies result from huge medical bills

Q A few weeks ago, you wrote that declaring bankruptcy can be a legal and moral way for people to deal with financial crises confronting them. I totally disagree. In my mind, this is cut and dry. Most likely, the person is a victim of his own indiscretions. For most people who suffer tragedies through no fault of their own, there is insurance—medical, auto and mortgage.

M any people decide to do without insurance since it deprives them of other more pleasant wants. This has become the American way. I view taxes given to others as extortion. I view wealth redistribution as immoral.

A some of the points that you bring do certainly fail to address. For example, many economists claim that mortgage policies and manipulations in the past 10 years or more have induced people into buying homes that they could not possibly afford, a major factor leading to our present economic meltdown.

H owever, I disagree with you when you say: “It is time to respond further to your comments.”

Q I think you did in your previous response.

Fr. John Dietzen
**Benedictine Sister Bernette Wildeman died on Feb. 19 at the Hildreth Health Center at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind. She was 94. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 23 at the monastery church. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery at the monastery.**

Sister Bernette was born on Oct. 14, 1914, in St. Philip, Ind. She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in 1930, and made her first profession of vows in 1932 and her final profession of vows in 1939.

Sister Bernette taught at Catholic schools for more than 50 years. In the archdiocese, she taught in Tell City and Indianapolis. Sister Bernette also ministered religious education at several parishes in the Evansville Diocese before serving as the diocesan director of religious education in the monastery. She retired nine years ago and began her ministry of prayer full-time with the senior sisters.

Surviving are a brother, Anthony Wildeman of Evansville, Ind., and a sister, Poor Clare Sister Mary Elizabeth Wildeman of Evansville, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Benedict at 1087 East 20th St., Ferdinand, Ind. 47532.

**Father Gary Kayler ministered at parishes in Oklahoma**

**NEW YORK (CNS) — Although geographically the world’s smallest independent city-state—with an area of 110 acres—has a great deal of importance, its cultural influence far beyond its little proportion.**

A comprehensive look at this long-established cathedral city, the seat of the Pope, is underway.

The discovery of St. Peter’s tomb—an extraordinary archaeological find—will be the centerpiece of a new documentary series to be broadcast on many PBS stations and airing on PBS stations throughout the network’s network’s March pledge drive. Check local listings for dates and times.

**The Priests in Concert at Armagh Cathedral**, which will be broadcast at 5:30 p.m. on March 8 on WFYI Channel 20 in central Indiana, celebrates music and the faith that is inspired in people. (Check local listings to verify the broadcast date and time on other PBS stations.)

Father Eugene O’Hagan, Father Martin O’Hagan and Father David Delany are diocesan priests from Northern Ireland who were brought together by their shared faith and passion for music.

Three men, all in their late 40s, are tenors who grew up singing together as they studied for the priesthood. They have spent their lives using music to spread the word of God by finding time between their busy parish ministries to sing together.

Trained vocalists from an early age, the brothers and the third cleric, have spent years singing performances in “The Priests in Concert at Armagh Cathedral,” filmed at one of Ireland’s most prestigious cathedrals before a specially invited audience.

The New Dublin Voices Choir and St. Patrick’s Cathedral Choir, with the Irish Philharmonic Orchestra, presents the Knights of St. Patrick and the old missionary unit, “The Priests.”

The Priests’ self-titled debut album (Sony BMG) is available in more than 30 countries, including the U.S., mainland Europe, Brazil, Argentina and the Philippines, fulfilling an unprecedented global demand.

The Priests,” which was recorded in Ireland and in the Choir Chapel of St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, features spiritually inspired tracks, such as “Pie Jesu,” “Ave Maria” and “Paris Angelicus” as well as classical arias, traditional Irish tracks and Irish blessings.

They have stipulated that a portion of the proceeds from CD sales will go to a charity or charities of their choice.

Growing up, the brothers and their closest friend shared an interest in music, enjoyed singing together and were devoted to the Catholic faith. The three boys—who were nicknamed “Holy, Holy, Holy” by schoolmates impressed by their piety—answered God’s call to the priesthood.

Intent on using music to spread the word of God, and armed with a million-dollar-plus music contract. Their debut recording was being released in the Philippines, fulfilling an unprecedented global demand. "The Priests," which was recorded in Ireland and in the Choir Chapel of St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, features spiritually inspired tracks, such as “Pie Jesu,” “Ave Maria” and “Paris Angelicus” as well as classical arias, traditional Irish tracks and Irish blessings.

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History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

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

— Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein
Local priests have close connections to Archbishop Dolan

By Sean Gallagher

“The archbishop of the capital of the world,” that is how Pope John Paul II once described the shepherd of the Archdiocese of New York.

That is the ministry to which Pope Benedict XVI appointed Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of Milwaukee on Feb. 23.

In leading the Archdiocese of New York, Archbishop Dolan, 59, will potentially be the most public Church leader in the United States for the next 15 years or more.

Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, remembers “Timmy Dolan” from back when they were seminarians at the Pontifical North American College in Rome in the mid-1970s.

“I can remember just how joyful he was,” said Msgr. Svarczkopf.

He is a man of great compassion.”

As drug violence rises, Mexican bishops urge reconciling with God

MEXICO CITY (CNS)—Catholic bishops in the Mexican state of Chihuahua urged local residents to reconcile with God during a pre-Lenten message to urge residents to depend more on God during drug crackdowns in February, and the federal government are being deployed to Ciudad Juarez to restore law and order to the country’s most violent city.

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