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Faith on display in Vincennes as jubilee pilgrims travel back in time, page 9.

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'Taking care of the whole person'



Photo by Sean Gallagher

Dr. Thomas Brown, an obstetrician and gynecologist, speaks on March 19 with medical assistant Emily Linville at his office in Greensburg. Brown, a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville, is a natural family planning-only doctor who has chosen not to prescribe hormonal birth control for the purpose of preventing pregnancy. Linville is a member of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County.

Natural family planning-only doctors find peace in integrating faith and science

By Sean Gallagher
Second of two parts

GREENSBURG—Prescribing hormonal birth control to women who want to avoid pregnancy has been commonplace in American medicine for more than a generation.

It has become so routine that the medicine has simply become known as “the pill.”

So when physicians refuse to prescribe the pill for both medical and religious reasons, it can cause turmoil in their

practice, with patients leaving for other doctors. It can also lead their medical colleagues to question their decision.

But for four such doctors in the archdiocese, the choice has given them peace of mind and, ultimately, has had a positive influence on their practice and the patients they treat.

These physicians have sought to integrate their professional competence with their faith, and thus have chosen to become what are sometimes called “NFP-only doctors,” a reference to natural family planning, a Church-sanctioned way of regulating

conception that is in harmony with the natural cycle of a woman’s fertility.

‘Taking care of the whole person’

When Dr. Thomas Brown was studying obstetrics and gynecology in the late 1980s in medical school in Ohio, it was a given assumption that hormonal birth control was “a gift” that women could use to avoid pregnancy.

“Anyone who thought otherwise was an alien, basically, according to the way we were trained,” said Brown, a member

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USCCB comments cite reasons for HHS to keep conscience regulation

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Rather than working to rescind a regulation that gives federal protection to the conscience rights of health care providers and institutions, the Obama administration’s proper role is to enforce the will of Congress as already expressed in existing statutes, said attorneys for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Anthony R. Picarello Jr., USCCB general counsel, and Michael F. Moses, associate general counsel, filed public comments on behalf of the USCCB on March 23 with the Department of Health and Human Services.

HHS opened a 30-day comment period on March 10 on whether it should rescind a regulation that took effect two days before President Barack Obama took office. The rule codifies three longtime federal statutes prohibiting discrimination against health professionals who decline to participate in abortions or other medical procedures because of their religious or other moral objections.

“The question is not whether the policy to be pursued is the strong protection of conscience in health care—Congress has already decided that question repeatedly and decisively by a series of statutes—but how best to enforce the policy of conscience protection already expressed in those statutes,” Picarello and Moses said.

The USCCB comments also said rescission of the regulation would conflict with the administration’s stated goals of promoting “choice” and reducing abortions, reduce health care options for the poor and other underserved populations, and perpetuate the “undisguised hostility to conscience rights” and widespread ignorance of existing law that are already rampant.

“If the administration’s policy is one of ‘choice,’ it cannot, consistent with that policy, refuse to accommodate a health care provider’s choice not to participate in abortion,” the USCCB said. “Otherwise, the policy is simply one of unmasked coercion.”

Similarly, it makes no sense to contend that one is working to reduce abortions by increasing access to abortion, the comments said.

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Despite criticism, Notre Dame is firm on President Obama as commencement speaker

WASHINGTON (CNS)—University of Notre Dame officials were standing firm on their choice of President Barack Obama as commencement speaker at the institution’s May 17 graduation, in spite of a large number

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend bishop will not attend Notre Dame commencement. See Bishop John D’Arcy’s statement, page 16.

of Catholics calling on them to rescind the invitation. The Indiana university, run by the Congregation of Holy Cross, and the White House announced on March 20 that Obama would be Notre Dame’s 2009 commencement speaker and confirmed he will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree at the graduation.

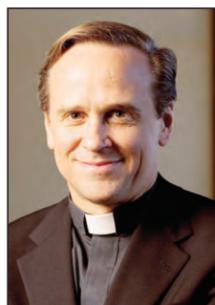
“The invitation to President Obama to be our commencement speaker should not be taken as condoning or endorsing his positions on specific issues regarding the protection of

human life, including abortion and embryonic stem-cell research,” said Holy Cross

Father John I. Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame.

“Yet, we see his visit as a basis for further positive engagement,” he said in a March 23 statement.

The announcement on Obama was promptly followed by a flurry of criticism from Catholics, who said the president’s support of legal abortion and embryonic stem-cell research makes him an inappropriate choice to be the commencement speaker at a Catholic university.



Fr. John Jenkins, C.S.C.

Shortly after the announcement, the Cardinal Newman Society—a Manassas, Va.-based Catholic college watchdog group—began collecting signatures in an online petition that calls for Notre Dame to rescind its invitation to Obama to be this year’s commencement speaker.

“We fully expected some criticism and have received it, though nothing more than we anticipated,” said Dennis K. Brown, a spokesman for Notre Dame. “I can’t foresee us rescinding the invitation.”

Brown told Catholic News Service on March 23 that he has heard anecdotally that most students are pleased with this year’s choice of Obama as the commencement speaker and feel honored that the first black U.S. president would accept Notre Dame’s invitation from among the many he has received.

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FAITH

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of St. Louis Parish in Batesville who practices medicine in Batesville and Greensburg.

For his first eight years of practicing medicine in southeastern Indiana, Brown worked according to that assumption.

But in 2000, after a powerful spiritual experience in Rome, he began his return to the Catholic Church, in which he had been raised, but which he left after marrying his wife, Lisa, who was Episcopalian at the time of their wedding.

His return to the faith led him to question and, eventually, end his practice of prescribing the pill for the purpose of preventing pregnancy, which, he said, caused "a total ruckus" in his office.

"My entire staff melted down," he said. "Patients were mad. I had people yelling, hanging up because they wanted a refill on birth control and [I wouldn't do it]. It was ugly."

But his choice to stop prescribing the pill wasn't related solely to his re-discovered faith. Brown also studied its side effects and spoke about them with his patients.

"I couldn't [persuade] people from a religious basis because they don't care, and half of my patients are Protestant," he said. "I needed to [tell them] how the pill was bad for you medically—the risk of breast cancer, the risk of cervical cancer."

Although Brown persuaded some of his older patients to stay with him and welcomed new patients who appreciated his stance, it took three or four years before he was again treating enough patients to make his practice sustainable.

Through it all, he has had no regrets, seeing his choice as a means to fully harmonize all spheres of his life, including his life of faith and his life as a medical professional.

"By understanding my faith and being able to integrate that with the way I treat my patients medically, [using] faith and reason, it's just made such a big difference because I feel like I'm taking care of the whole person now," Brown said. "I'm not just taking care of a part of a person."

'A big leap of faith'

For her first 18 years as a physician, Dr. Melanie Margiotta spent a lot of time

teaching residents in family medicine at Methodist Hospital and the Community Hospital network, both in Indianapolis.



Dr. Melanie Margiotta

As a Catholic, she accepted the Church's teaching on natural family planning, but was hesitant to talk about this approach to fertility with her students.

"I avoided trying to teach about NFP because I was never in a Catholic hospital, and didn't feel supported and actually was a little discriminated against," said Margiotta, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. "I myself practiced it on my own, but I never went to the next step of teaching it."

That changed when she established her own practice called the Kolbe Center in Indianapolis in 2006. She had originally planned on specializing in addiction medicine, but was persuaded to be open to treating Catholic couples practicing NFP by Daniel Sarell, then the director of the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries.

She had never heard of the term "NFP-only doctor." But when Margiotta saw the great desire in many Catholic couples for a physician with such principles, she felt called to go that route.

Now she is receiving training at the Pope Paul VI Institute in Omaha, Neb., in its Creighton method of NFP, and in ways of treating infertility that are in accord with the Church's moral teachings.

Margiotta is amazed by the amount of scientific research behind the institute's treatment methods, and thinks that it goes into far more depth in treating infertility than the way it is done conventionally in the medical community today.

"The amount of data that I collect for each patient is just incredible," she said. "[The institute] has volumes of patient data sitting there just waiting for whoever wants

to research more."

But when she started learning about the many treatments that the institute and its founder, Dr. Thomas Hilger, pioneered, Margiotta was actually angry.

"I've become more and more angry the more [that] I learn," she said. "I've had a hysterectomy, and the main reason why was because I had fibroid tumors.

"And now I'm learning that, all along, I could have been most likely treated with the progesterone-estrogen balance and been able to preserve my own fertility ..."

As much as Margiotta personally regrets not knowing about these treatments earlier, she is happy to be an NFP-only doctor and using the science behind it to benefit the infertile couples that she treats.

"It was the right thing to do because, from the moment I said 'Yes,' couples have been just so incredibly grateful," Margiotta said. "It's absolutely amazing how grateful they are."

Bringing faith and medicine together

When Margiotta taught residents at non-Catholic hospitals in Indianapolis, she didn't feel free to teach her students about NFP and other bioethical issues.

Bringing the faith and medicine together in his practice and while mentoring residents hasn't been a problem for Dr. Brooks Bolton, who is an associate director of St. Francis Family Medicine in Beech Grove.

Even before entering the full communion of the Church in 1998 when he was finishing his residency, Bolton was convinced while still in medical school that he wanted to work at a Catholic hospital.

"I only interviewed at Catholic hospitals ... precisely because of their role in putting life first at both ends of the spectrum, be they the elderly and infirmed or the very young," said Bolton, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.

Bolton, an NFP-only doctor, had the chance to help a resident apply her faith to her medical practice in a way similar to his own in 2004 when Dr. Maria Bajuyo came to his office in the middle of a crisis of

conscience.

A lifelong member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, Bajuyo hadn't given serious consideration to the Church's teachings on natural family planning until she got married during her final year in medical school.



Dr. Brooks Bolton



Dr. Maria Bajuyo

As a new resident physician, she was finding it difficult to honor her patients' request for hormonal birth control, but found little time to reflect on the question due to the typically long work hours of a resident.

Bajuyo was finally able to consider the role of her faith in her medical practice while on vacation.

"It was when I came back from that [trip] that I found myself in Dr. Bolton's office, teary-eyed and pretty beside myself," she said. "But he was like, 'No worries. No worries. It's going to be all right. We'll be fine.'"

Her choice to become an NFP-only physician was supported by Bolton and the rest of the faculty at St. Francis Family Medicine.

But Bajuyo is especially grateful for having had the chance to learn from Bolton.

"I definitely think that God put me there and wanted me to get to know him," she said. "It's absolutely had a huge impact on me and on my formation as a physician."

Since completing her residency, Bajuyo has found that being an NFP-only doctor has limited her employment opportunities. But she eventually was hired at Honey Grove Family Medicine in Greenwood, which is owned by the Sisters of St. Francis Health System.

"I just have a great deal of peace now, knowing that there's no inconsistency," Bajuyo said. "Whether at home or at work, there's no question of who I am."

(For more information on the Kolbe Center, log on to www.kolbecenter.com.) †

'[using] faith and reason, it's just made such a big difference because I feel like I'm taking care of the whole person now. I'm not just taking care of a part of a person.'

—Dr. Thomas Brown

USCCB

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"Increasing abortion access increases abortion rates," the USCCB lawyers said. "The administration cannot coherently—or in good faith—claim to stand for both policies at the same time."

In soliciting public comment on the proposed rescission, HHS asked whether the regulation "reduces access to information and health care services, particularly by low-income women," as some groups such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America have charged.

The USCCB attorneys said rescinding the conscience regulation "would have uncertain effects on access" to abortion and sterilization, but "would certainly reduce access to life-affirming health care services, especially for poor and underserved populations."

Faced with a lack of conscience protections, health care

providers and institutions opposed to abortion or sterilization could be forced out of business, thus reducing access to all health care, they added. "Indeed, the poorest and neediest patients will suffer the most from such reduction in access to life-affirming health care.

"Those who allege a conflict between conscience and 'access' neglect to ask why rural and other underserved areas are so frequently served only by a Catholic or other faith-based provider," the USCCB comments said. "This occurs because for-profit providers see no profit margin in serving poor or sparsely populated areas, while religiously affiliated providers ... see those patients as having inherent human dignity and human rights.

"If these providers were barred from acting in accord with the moral and religious convictions that motivated them to provide life-affirming health care in the first place, the result will not be more comprehensive health care for these areas but, in some cases, none at all," they added.

As evidence of the need for the current regulation, the USCCB attorneys said negative public reaction even before the

rule took effect "demonstrates, at best, a deplorable lack of understanding about the federal legislative rights of conscience on which the regulation is based, at worst outright hostility to those statutory rights."

They also cited actions by groups such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Civil Liberties Union, NARAL Pro-Choice America and various state and local governments to ignore or override conscience rights in violation of the current federal statutes.

The USCCB called for outreach and educational efforts by HHS about the regulation "in addition to, rather than in lieu of, vigorous regulatory implementation of the existing conscience statutes."

(Comments on the proposed HHS rule change may be submitted through an action alert at www.usccb.org/conscienceprotection, on the Web site www.Regulations.gov by entering 0991-AB49 in the search box or via e-mail to proposedrescission@hhs.gov.) †

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In Africa, pope challenges attitudes and cultural trends

LUANDA, Angola (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI's in-flight statement opposing condom distribution in AIDS prevention drew sharp criticism and was seen by many people as a distraction from his main message in Africa.

But a closer look reveals that very little of what the pope had to say during his March 17-23 African journey was easy or accommodating. On issues ranging from abortion to corruption, from women's rights to economic development, he preached the Gospel in a way that took issue with common practices and prevailing attitudes.

His conviction, expressed on his first day in Cameroon, is that Christianity is the answer—the only real answer—to the chronic problems plaguing Africa. His fear is that Africa, caught up in economic and cultural globalization, will follow the secularized West and lose touch with its own best values.

Condom campaigns are, to Pope Benedict, a small but very real part of this threat. But his concern extends to virtually every area of social, economic and political life.

"At a time when so many people have no qualms about trying to impose the tyranny of materialism, with scant concern for the most deprived, you must be very careful," he told Africans in Cameroon.

"Take care of your souls," he said. "Do not let yourselves be captivated by selfish illusions and false ideals."

News accounts usually leave out the words that inevitably followed these papal warnings, but for the pope they were the most important part of his message in Africa: "Only Christ is the way of life." "The Lord Jesus is the one mediator and redeemer." "Christ is the measure of true humanism."

The transformation the pontiff asked of Africans was, as he described it, one that must begin with a radical conversion to Christ that redirects every aspect of life.

"The Gospel teaches us that reconciliation, true reconciliation, can only be the fruit of conversion, a change of heart, a new way of thinking. It teaches us that only the power of God's love can change our hearts," he said at an outdoor Mass in Angola.

The pope kept reminding listeners that, in his view, inside and outside Africa the Christian message lived to the full is profoundly countercultural.

That was eminently clear when he addressed young people in an Angolan soccer stadium, telling them that their power to shape the future was directly dependent on their

"constant dialogue with the Lord."

"The dominant societal culture is not helping you live by Jesus' words or to practice the self-giving to which he calls you," he said. In fact, he said, today's "individualistic and hedonistic" values prevent young people from reaching maturity.

At his Mass the next day, the pope continued in the same vein, saying that "living by the truth" was not easy in the face of the "hardened attitudes" of selfishness that dominate much of contemporary social relations.

Abortion was very much on the pope's mind in Africa. His first speech on the continent reminded Africans of their traditional values and said the Church was the institution best able to preserve and purify them—unlike agencies that want to impose "cultural models that ignore the rights of the unborn."

In a speech to foreign diplomats, he laid down a direct challenge to international organizations that, in his words, were undermining society's foundations by promoting abortion as a form of reproductive health care. The working document for next October's Synod of Bishops, delivered by the pope to African bishops, said globalization "infringes on Africa's rights" and tends "to be the vehicle for the domination of a single, cultural model and a culture of death."

The pope hit hard on African wars and ethnic conflicts, and repeatedly held out Christianity as the answer. If Africans grasp that the Church is "God's family," he said in Cameroon, there is no room for ethnocentrism or factionalism. In effect, he presented the Church as the only institution capable of bringing Africans together in a way that goes beyond political or economic expediency.

Although the pope had two one-liners about corruption, typically portrayed in the West as the quintessential "African" problem, he did not engage in finger-pointing—even in Cameroon, which is usually at the top of the corruption charts of human rights organizations. Indeed, he called Cameroon a "land of hope" for Africa.

The reason is that he knows local African Church leaders are already on the front lines in denouncing political corruption. In Cameroon, for example, a year ago Cardinal Christian Wiyghan Tumi of Douala took the unprecedented step of publicly opposing President Paul Biya's constitutional meddling that allowed the president to serve yet another seven-year term—a position the cardinal reiterated during the pope's visit.

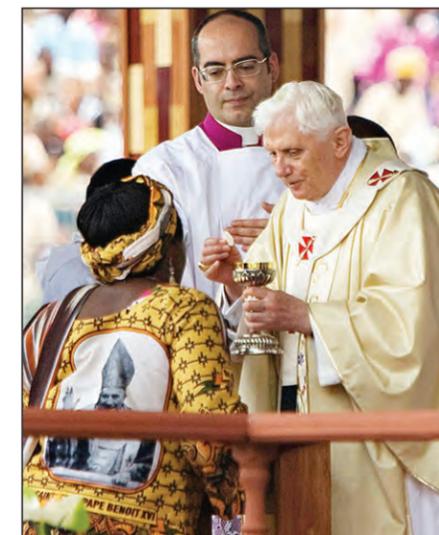
Significantly, the pope treated corruption not as a problem to be eliminated in return for foreign aid, but as a practice incompatible with the demands of the Gospel. He added, however, that Africa deserves a similar change in attitude from the developed world—not "more programs and protocols," but "conversion of hearts to sincere solidarity."

His visit to the sick in Cameroon illustrated that the Church must invest its resources in love and care for the needy, but with a special focus: Human suffering can only make sense in light of Christ's crucifixion and his "final victory" over

death, he said.

Even the pope's defense of women's rights in Africa was very much a "Benedict" approach, based not on human rights declarations, but on the biblical account of creation. Here, too, his point that men and women have "complementary" roles will no doubt find critics.

The pope's method in Africa was not to lay down the law, but to lay down a challenge, asking people to examine their own lives and their relationships in the light of the Gospel. He believes that Christianity is a perfect fit for Africa, but that, in view of cultural trends, it won't necessarily be an easy fit. †



Above, Pope Benedict XVI kisses a child as he leaves Amadou Ahidjo Stadium following Mass in Yaounde, Cameroon, on March 19. In his homily, the pope urged African families to reject the "tyranny of materialism" and other social changes that risk eroding the continent's traditional values. The liturgy was attended by more than 40,000 people.

Left, Pope Benedict XVI distributes Communion at the Amadou Ahidjo Stadium in Cameroon's capital, Yaounde, on March 19.



A group of Pygmies from Cameroon's Baka tribe dance for Pope Benedict XVI outside the nunciature in Yaounde, Cameroon, on March 20. The Pygmies conferred a rare turtle, a traditional sign of respect in their culture, to the pope shortly before his departure for Angola.

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Editorial

Abstinence education

In our Feb. 13 issue, we published a feature by senior reporter Mary Ann Wyand about Stephanie and Christopher Fenton, who were so proud of the fact that they had waited until marriage to have sexual intimacy that Stephanie fastened her A Promise to Keep chastity pin to her wedding bouquet.

The young couple had been part of the archdiocese's A Promise to Keep: God's Gift of Sexuality program, serving as abstinence education peer mentors and encouraging younger teenagers to refrain from having sex.

At nearly the exact time that our article was published, other periodicals published articles questioning the effectiveness of abstinence programs like A Promise to Keep.

For example, the Feb. 14 issue of *The Economist* reported, "Abstinence-only education programs have been controversial ever since they were introduced under [President] Ronald Reagan in 1981. Some liberals have labeled it 'ignorance-only' education and most favor a curriculum that includes discussion of both abstinence and contraception."

It continued, "Since the start of abstinence-only programs, the federal government has spent over \$1.5 billion on them, but the United States still has one of the highest teen-pregnancy rates of any developed country."

The Economist article said that the fate of abstinence education is uncertain under the Obama administration and a Democratic Congress. A bill that would fund "medically accurate" comprehensive sex education in schools is expected to be passed by legislators.

Another periodical, *Our Sunday Visitor*, reported in its March 1 issue that a researcher at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health compared teenagers who made pledges to remain abstinent with other teenagers who shared similar values but did not make a pledge, and concluded that a virginity pledge had no impact on whether or not teenagers had sex.

However, that finding was disputed by the RAND corporation, a non-profit research and development organization, in a study which found that teenagers who took pledges became sexually active at a lower rate than comparable teenagers who did not take pledges. The idea of a pledge, of course, is to make teenagers feel more accountable to their families and friends as well as to themselves.

In our sex-saturated society, it is remarkable that any teenagers can remain chaste. Movies and television sit-coms give the impression that the search for a sex partner is the most important part of life and that everyone is "doing it."

Despite society's pressures and teenagers' raging hormones, it is not true that most teens are having sex, although the figures are hardly comforting to parents of teens.



Stephanie and Christopher Fenton of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis hold a framed picture containing their wedding invitation, flowers and her A Promise to Keep pin, which she carried in her bridal bouquet on their wedding day.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the percentage of students in grades 9 to 12 who reported being sexually active has declined since 1991 when it was 54.1 percent. The most recent figure is 46.8 percent, less than half but not by much.

Besides the archdiocese's A Promise to Keep program, one of the largest Christian abstinence programs is True Love Waits, which began in 1993. Since then, teenagers have signed 3 million pledge cards. According to Jimmy Hester, co-founder of the program, no scientific study on the effectiveness of the program has been made, but he measures its success in the feedback they receive from teenagers.

Margaret Hendricks, program coordinator of A Promise to Keep, can say the same thing. Obviously, not every teenager who has made a pledge manages to keep it, but she knows that the program has been effective.

Part of the effectiveness depends on whether or not there is a religious component to the program. When teens are taught the beauty of the Church's teaching on sexuality and the good news behind its call to reserve sexual intercourse for husbands and wives—and why fornication is seriously immoral and leads to many problems for teens—there is a greater chance that teenagers will try to remain chaste than if they believe it's only to keep from becoming pregnant or keep from contracting a disease.

Other parts of a successful program involve peer mentors, as the Fentons were, and training in skill-building techniques that give participants a chance to learn how to avoid situations that might lead to sex. Some abstinence programs don't do those things, but the A Promise to Keep program addresses these important skills.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Caught in the crossfire of parental desires for children

Whenever I give a talk on in vitro fertilization, I try to explain to my audiences how new human life must be procreated in the warmth of the marital embrace and in the protective hearth of the maternal womb, not in the icy, impersonal world of the research laboratory or the manipulative setting of a petri dish.

On one occasion, after finishing up a talk, a married couple approached me. They had done in vitro fertilization and had several children from the procedure.

They appeared to be struggling in conscience, and asked a searingly honest question: "If in vitro fertilization is wrong, are you suggesting it would be better that we didn't have our beautiful children? We can't imagine our life without them."

Imagining a world different from the one we have constructed through our own personal choices is difficult. This is because of our innate tendency to validate our decisions, even erroneous ones, by focusing on "desirable outcomes" and "good intentions."

When we venture to look beyond our good intentions, however, we begin to discern other important truths that should inform the choices we make, challenging us to see the bigger plan for our lives in ways that extend beyond our own wants and desires.

I recall once speaking with a woman who had given birth to a little boy out of wedlock. She was raising him as a single mom. He was a source of endless joy and blessing to her, and to her extended family of brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles.

Yet, in a moment of candor, she admitted, "Although I love my son dearly, and I can't imagine my life without him, I've also come to see how it would have been better if I had chosen not to have sex before marriage, even though it would mean I wouldn't have my beautiful son. I could have, and should have, followed another path."

This woman told me that by giving herself to the man she hoped might one day be her husband, she supposed she was entering onto a path toward fulfillment. She soon came to realize, though, that her son had been deprived of the presence of a father figure, and that he was subject to various other difficulties as he grew up because of the choice she had made.

Whenever we choose to follow a path that involves intrinsically immoral choices, we necessarily mislead ourselves about the best total state of affairs that could have been ours. We usually also bring harm to others because of such choices.

For the intrinsically disordered choice of in vitro fertilization, it can be doubly difficult to see the harmful nature of the decision we are making because we direct our attention so intensely toward the baby we yearn for. Couples who choose in vitro

fertilization are doubtless convinced that the best total state of affairs for them would be to have a child, regardless of the steps it might require.

In the conversation with the husband and wife who attended my talk, they admitted that they could see how their own strong parental desires had gotten the upper hand in their decision-making process. They also admitted they were starting to grasp other realities involved in their decision to pursue in vitro fertilization: how a third party, an anonymous laboratory technician in a back room, had actually manufactured the kids rather than the parents engendering them through their life-giving marital embrace; how they had misused their own bodies and sexuality, becoming little more than sex-cell donors; how pornography and masturbation stood at the origin of their own children; how they had produced a plethora of children, and had frozen some, and discarded others along the way.

Probably the most difficult truth for us to grasp fully is that even the most desirable ends, like having children of our own, cannot justify the use of inherently immoral means to achieve those ends.

We can think that our desires are worthy to be achieved by any means because we imagine that we are the ones who determine what constitutes the best state of affairs for our lives.

It is but a short step to disaster, however, when our own desires become the final arbiter of right and wrong or when our own willfulness is given center stage.

An infertile couple may suppose they have a right to children when in truth they possess no such right because the deeper reality is that children are always a gift.

By insisting on or demanding the gift (through in vitro fertilization), the child no longer becomes a gift at all, but a kind of entitlement where he or she becomes a means or object in the pursuit of parental satisfaction, caught in the crossfire of parental desires.

Infertile couples too often may not have paused to reflect on the possibility of another path, nor fully considered the various other important and humanly fulfilling ways of expressing their marital fruitfulness, ways that might include foster parenting, teaching, becoming a "Big Brother/Big Sister" to needy children in the community or adoption.

The attraction for children can be so strong that it can prevent us from acknowledging honestly the evil aspects that may be interwoven into certain choices we make.

By pursuing children in a disordered way, we end up undermining the very blessings we seek for our life and for those around us.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.) †

Letters to the Editor

Reader: Is *The Criterion* anti-abortion or pro-life?

I would like to suggest that *The Criterion* change its name to "Anti-Abortion Gazette."

I do not advocate abortion, but I strongly believe that "pro-life articles" that seem to dominate *The Criterion* are anything but "pro-life."

Where is the same outcry against the immoral and sinful issues of war, torture, capital punishment, and the violence of poverty, racism, sexism, immigration issues, etc.?

Joe Zelenka
Indianapolis

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Easter gift of empty tomb shows that our sins can be forgiven

Find it hard to believe that we are about to enter the fifth week of Lent. It is timely to think ahead about the observance of Palm Sunday and the great Holy Week.

This year's palms will be burned to become ashes for next Ash Wednesday when we will receive them with the sober reminder: "Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return."

It doesn't hurt to keep in mind that the victory palm turns to a sober reminder of the sinfulness of our human condition. It reflects what happens in the dramatic liturgy of Palm Sunday. The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem ends in bitter sorrow.

St. Bernard once said, "How different the cries, 'Away with him, away with him, crucify him,' and 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest!' How different the cries are that now call him 'King of Israel' and then in a few days time will say, 'We have no king but Caesar!' What a contrast between the green branches and the cross, between the flowers and the thorns! Before they were offering their own clothes for him to walk on, and so soon afterwards they strip him of his and cast lots for them" (Sermon on Palm Sunday, 2, 4).

The Passion according to St. Mark is probably the closest to the actual story of

what happened to Jesus. In many ways, it describes Jesus in the most human terms.

His last words were "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mk 15:34). Yet, in the end a pagan Roman soldier tells of hope as he says: "Surely this was the Son of God" (Mk 15:39).

During Holy Week, Jesus is on trial. In the end, as Son of God, he triumphs over sin and death. He does so through his human weakness.

During Holy Week, St. Peter is on trial. He swears eternal loyalty to his friend and master Jesus. Then he betrays his friend three times. Yet, quickly, as a man of hope, he repents of his sin.

During Holy Week, Judas is on trial. He is the one who complains about the wasteful use of precious oil to anoint Jesus before his death; he is the one who sells Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

In the end, knowing the tragic wrong he did, he returns the 30 pieces of silver, yet he is unable to seek forgiveness because he is not a man of hope; tragically, he despairs and takes his own life.

Even though Judas is a friend of Jesus, he cannot see what the pagan soldier sees, he cannot see that Jesus dies for him, too.

Many centuries later, as people of faith, we journey into the future with hope.

Judas is a sad study of how one despairs. His was not a sudden betrayal of his friend Jesus. Betrayal is not sudden.

At the home of Lazarus, when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with expensive oil, the cynicism of Judas showed. He said the anointing was a waste; the money should have been given to the poor.

Cynicism signals a lack of hope, and it can be the forerunner to despair. And cynicism is often the cover of something dark.

St. John tells us the truth about Judas: He was a thief. Judas was living a lie, and he could not find his way back to the truth, to Jesus.

In a way, during Holy Week, are we not on trial? We need only to look into our hearts to know that our denials continue to add to the suffering and death of Jesus.

Jesus died not only for the sins of Peter and Judas or for sin in general. He died for our particular sins, too.

The truth is that Jesus does not love us in some vague sense as those folks who would live in the 21st century. He loves each of us as friends and in a particular way.

Do we repent? Do we have the hope of Peter, who denied Jesus three times? Do we repent like Peter, who would be the first

to enter the empty tomb on Easter Sunday morning? The great Easter gift of the empty tomb promised the possibility that our sins can be forgiven.

The sacrament of reconciliation is an Easter gift that Jesus won for us so that the palm branch, together with the cross, can be a sign of victory.

This gift is available in the fifth week of Lent and during Holy Week. We have time to confess our sins either this week or during Holy Week.

If we do so, the palm branch can lead us beyond darkness and the radiant cross to Easter joy. †

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

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

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for March

Youth: that they may be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit so that they can truly discern their role in the Church, especially God's call to priesthood and religious life.

El don del sepulcro vacío de la Pascua nos demuestra que nuestros pecados pueden ser perdonados

Me cuesta creer que estemos a punto de comenzar la quinta semana de la Cuaresma. Resulta oportuno pensar anticipadamente sobre la observancia del Domingo de Ramos y de la extraordinaria Semana Santa.

Las palmas de este año se quemarán y se convertirán en cenizas para el próximo Miércoles de Ceniza cuando las recibiremos junto con el recordatorio formal: "Recuerda que eres polvo y en polvo te convertirás."

No está de más tener presente que las palmas de la victoria se convierten en un recordatorio sensato de lo pecaminoso de nuestra condición humana. Ellas reflejan lo que ocurre en la liturgia impresionante del Domingo de Ramos. La entrada triunfal de Jesús en Jerusalén termina en un dolor amargo.

San Bernardo dijo alguna vez: "Qué distintos los gritos 'crucificalo, crucificalo' y 'bendito el que viene en nombre del Señor, ¡hosanna en el cielo!' Qué distintos son los gritos que ahora lo proclaman 'Rey de Israel' y dentro de unos pocos días dirán: '¡No tenemos más rey que el César!' ¡Qué contraste entre las ramas verdes y la cruz, entre las flores y las espinas! Antes le ofrecían sus propias ropas para que él caminara sobre ellas, y muy poco después lo despojaban de las suyas y las echaban a la suerte" (Sermón del Domingo de Ramos, 2, 4).

La Pasión según San Marcos es probablemente el relato que se asemeja más a la historia de lo que verdaderamente le ocurrió a Jesús. En muchos aspectos, describe a Jesús en los términos más humanos.

Sus últimas palabras fueron: "Dios mío, Dios mío, ¿por qué me has abandonado?" (Mc 15:34). Sin embargo, al final, un soldado romano pagano habla de esperanza cuando dice: "¡Verdaderamente este hombre era el Hijo de Dios!" (Mc 15:39).

Durante la Semana Santa Jesús es sometido a prueba. Al final, como Hijo de Dios, triunfa sobre el pecado y la muerte. Lo hace a través de su debilidad humana.

Durante la Semana Santa San Pedro es sometido a prueba. Le jura fidelidad eterna a su amigo y maestro, Jesús. Y luego lo traiciona tres veces. Pese a ello, como hombre de fe, se arrepiente rápidamente de su pecado.

Durante la Semana Santa Judas es sometido a prueba. Él es quien se queja de desperdiciar el aceite valioso para ungir a Jesús antes de su muerte; es quien vende a Jesús por 30 monedas de plata.

A la larga, al darse cuenta del terrible error que cometió, devuelve las 30 monedas de plata pero aún así es incapaz de buscar el perdón porque no es un hombre de esperanza; trágicamente, se desespera y toma su propia vida.

A pesar de que Judas es amigo de Jesús no puede ver lo que ve el centurión pagano, no puede ver que Jesús murió por el también.

Muchos siglos después, como pueblo de fe, peregrinamos hacia el futuro con esperanza.

Judas resulta un triste caso sobre la desesperación. Su traición a Jesús no fue repentina. La traición no es un acto repentino.

En la casa de Lázaro, cuando María ungió los pies de Jesús con aceite costoso,

Judas demostró su cinismo. Comentó que la unción era un despilfarro; que el dinero debió entregarse a los pobres.

El cinismo denota la falta de esperanza y puede ser el precursor de la desesperación. Y el cinismo por lo general es la fachada de algo oscuro.

San Juan nos cuenta la verdad sobre Judas: era un ladrón. Judas estaba viviendo en una mentira y no pudo encontrar el camino de regreso a la verdad, a Jesús.

En cierto modo ¿acaso no se nos somete a prueba durante la Semana Santa? Tan solo tenemos que hurgar en nuestros corazones para saber que nuestras negaciones continúan sumándose al sufrimiento y a la muerte de Jesús.

Jesús no murió solamente por los pecados de Pedro y de Judas, o por el pecado en general. Murió también por nuestros pecados particulares.

La verdad es que Jesús no nos amó en un sentido vago, como la gente que vive en el siglo XXI. Él nos ama a cada uno como amigo y de manera especial.

¿Acaso nos arrepentimos? ¿Tenemos acaso la esperanza de Pedro que negó a Jesús tres veces? ¿Nos arrepentimos como Pedro que fue el primero en entrar al sepulcro vacío en la mañana del Domingo de Resurrección? El maravilloso don del sepulcro vacío de la

Pascua promete la posibilidad de que nuestros pecados sean perdonados.

El sacramento de la reconciliación es un don pascual que Jesús conquistó por nosotros, de modo que la hoja de la palma junto con la cruz representan un símbolo de victoria.

Este don se encuentra a disposición en la quinta semana de la Cuaresma y durante la Semana Santa. Tenemos tiempo para confesar nuestros pecados, ya sea esta semana o durante la Semana Santa.

Si lo hacemos, la hoja de palma nos guiará más allá de la oscuridad y de la cruz radiante al júbilo de la Pascua. †

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

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.

Las intenciones vocacionales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo

Los jóvenes: que ellos acepten el ánimo del Espíritu Santo, para que puedan discernir su papel en la Iglesia, especialmente la llamada de Dios a hacerse sacerdote y entrar en una vida religiosa.

Events Calendar

March 27

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Marie Guild, rummage sale**, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-885-5098.

St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass, rosary, Stations of the Cross**, 6 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4052 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry**, 3-8 p.m. Information: 317-546-1571.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. **Fish fry**, 4:30-7:30 p.m., carryout available. Information: 317-357-8352 or tom@littleflowerparish.org.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Fish fry**, 5-7 p.m., \$6 adults, \$3 children. Information: 317-638-5551.

St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstick Road, Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **"St. John's Passion,"** 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-846-3850.

March 27-29

Saint Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, St. Bede Theater, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **National Players, Fri. "1984," Sat. "As You Like It,"** 7 p.m., no charge, buffet supper available, 5:30-6:15 p.m., \$9 per person. Information: 800-682-0988 or www.saintmeinrad.edu.

March 28

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Drive E., Indianapolis. **Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning class (NFP)**, 9-11:30 a.m. Information: 317-465-0126.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Wagner Hall, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany. **Spring prayer breakfast, "Letting Christ 'Easter' In Us,"** Benedictine Sister Mildred Wannemuehler, presenter, 9-11 a.m., no charge. Information: 812-945-2374.

March 29

St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Drive, Sunman. **Wholehog sausage and pancake breakfast**, 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-623-2964.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South,

.8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Mass, noon, on **third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in**, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

Cathedral of the Assumption, 433 S. Fifth St., Louisville, Ky. **Organ recital**, Ken Cowan, organist, 7:30 p.m. Information: 502-582-2971.

March 31

St. Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Concert, Kentucky Youth Chorale**, 3:45 p.m., no charge. Information: 800-682-0988 or news@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 1

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Lenten organ recital**, Gustavo Andres, organist, 11:30 a.m. Information: 317-635-2021.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Lenten speaker series, "Spaghetti and Spirituality,"** Mass, 5:45 p.m., pasta dinner, 6:30 p.m., suggested donation \$5, Dr. Ray Guarendi, presenter. Information and reservations:

317-636-4478.

Vito's on Penn, 20 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Theology on Tap series, "Rapture: Don't Be Fooled,"** 7 p.m. Information: [indy.theologyontap.com](http://www.theologyontap.com).

Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Health and wellness class, 13-week class, "Love Your Family by Taking Care of Yourself,"** Jane Trennepohl-Neal, instructor, 6:30-7:30 p.m., \$25 per person. Information: 317-260-9824.

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-370-1189.

April 2

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Evening of reflection, "Meet Me at The Shack,"** Father James Farrell, presenter, 6-9 p.m., \$15 per person includes soup and salad dinner. Information: 317-788-7581 or

www.benedictine.com.

St. Francis Education Center, 5935 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **Support group for people with oral, head and neck cancer**, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-782-4422.

Knights of Columbus Hall, 511 E. Thompson Road, Indianapolis. **Spaghetti dinner**, 5-8 p.m., dinner or carryout, \$7 adults, \$4 children ages 3 to 12, free for children under age 3, proceeds benefit Seminarian Scholarship Fund. Information: 317-784-8445.

April 3

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana (CCRCI), first Friday Mass, teaching**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992 or ccrci@holyspirit.org.

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten fish fry**, 5-8 p.m., \$7 adults, \$4 children. Information: 317-787-8246.

St. Francis Hospital South Campus, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning class (NFP)**, 7-9 p.m. Information:

317-462-2246.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 14598 Oakridge Road, Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning class (NFP)**, 7-9:30 p.m. Information: 317-848-4486.

April 4

Holy Name of Jesus School, gymnasium, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Altar Society, annual spring rummage sale**, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454, ext. 2.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, Guest House, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Abbey Press and St. Meinrad Relay for Life, "Trivial Pursuit,"** 6:30-9:30 p.m. Information: 812-483-8999 or imundy@abbeypress.com.

April 5

St. Vincent Women's Hospital, 8111 N. Township Line Road, Indianapolis. **Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning class (NFP)**, 1-3:30 p.m. Information: 317-228-9276. †

Retreats and Programs

March 27-29

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, **post-abortion reconciliation ministry**, confidential location. Information: Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1521. All calls are confidential.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"The Saints in Our Lives,"** Benedictine Brother Silas Henderson, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 28

Monastery Immaculate Conception, Kordes Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). **"Saturday Morning at the Dome—Church History for the Ordinary Person,"** Benedictine Sister Donna Marie Herr, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$35 includes continental

breakfast and lunch. Information: 812-367-1411 or spirituality@thedome.org.

March 29

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Franciscan Spirituality for Everyday Living,"** Franciscan Sister Diane Jamison, presenter, 9-11:30 a.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

April 2

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Evening of Reflection, "Meet Me at The Shack,"** Father James Farrell, presenter, 7-9 p.m., \$15 includes soup and salad. Information: 317-788-7581 or www.benedictinn.com.

April 3

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"You Remember First Fridays,"** Franciscan Father Carl Hawver, presenter, 1-3 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

April 3-5

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence,

St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **"Come and See,"** vocations retreat for women ages 18-42. Information: 812-535-2895 or bkuper@spsmw.org.

April 6

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"St. Benedict's Way,"** Benedictine Brother Maurus Zoeller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 7

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E.

56th St., Indianapolis. **"Come Away and Rest Awhile,"** silent day of prayer. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. A spiritual checkup, **"Celebrate Your Faith,"** Episcopal Bishop Cate Waynick, presenter, 6:30-9 p.m., \$25 includes box supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or www.benedictine.com. †

St. Joan of Arc School needs help to create outdoor science lab in May

As St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis prepares to create an outdoor science lab in May, school leaders have announced a fundraiser to memorialize contributions to the school's improvement effort.

On May 20, the school community will plant trees, shrubs and flowers around the campus while creating the outdoor science lab, according to Jamie Pachciarz, a member of the school's parent organization.

The effort will include the help of 60 employees from Eli Lilly and Company, and a grant from

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful.

"In addition, a brick-paved sidewalk will be installed outside the front door of the school to memorialize contributions to the school's improvement effort," Pachciarz said.

Alumni of the school are especially invited to purchase a personalized brick. Anyone interested in buying a brick can contact the school at 317-283-1518.

"With their family name carved in brick," Pachciarz said, "donors will have a permanent reminder of their fond memories of this beloved church and school." †



Via Crucis

Jose Luis Gandara, a member of St. Mary Parish in New Albany, portrays the role of Jesus carrying the cross in a Hispanic "Via Crucis" ("Way of the Cross") on March 21, 2008, on the streets around the parish church. The Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery is sponsoring a bilingual **Via Crucis** again this year. It will begin at 7 p.m. on Good Friday, April 10, at St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., in New Albany. For more information, call 504-494-3264.

'Treasuring Womanhood' conference to address spiritual weapons

"Treasuring Womanhood," the sixth annual Indiana Catholic Women's Conference, will address "Spiritual Weapons" on April 18 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

Keynote speakers are:

- Johnette Benkovic, the founder and president of Living His Life Abundantly and Woman of Grace as well as a popular Catholic TV and radio speaker.
- Elizabeth Ficocelli, an award-winning Catholic author of nine books.
- Mercy Father Christopher Crotty, a nationally known retreat leader and Catholic radio speaker.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general and pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy

Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, is the principal celebrant and homilist for the conference Mass.

Elizabeth Welch, a teacher at Lumen Christi School in Indianapolis, will provide the music ministry with violin accompaniment by Teresa Fletcher.

The conference begins at 8 a.m. and concludes at 4:45 p.m. It is sponsored by the Marian Center of Indianapolis and supported by the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry.

Registrations include lunch and are \$40 per person by April 8 or \$45 per person after the early deadline.

To register for the women's conference or for more information, log on to www.mariancenterofindianapolis.com. †

School choice bill that passed in Senate awaits House action

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

In years past, school choice has been a partisan issue. Traditionally, Republicans have supported it, and Democrats have opposed it.

However, recent national trends indicate that when school choice legislation is presented in tax credits rather than vouchers, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle support it.

This trend is apparent in Indiana when looking at this year's school choice bill, Senate Bill 528, which passed the Senate in February with bipartisan support.

The proposal, known as the scholarship tax credit bill, authored by Sen. Carlin Yoder (R-Middlebury), would offer a 50 percent tax credit incentive to corporations or individuals for donations made to qualified Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGO's).

These organizations would then provide grants to lower-income families for school tuition or other school-related costs at the public or private school of the parents' choice.

The tax credit would allow individuals and corporations who contribute to a qualified scholarship program to deduct 50 percent of the amount of that donation from their state tax liability.

For example, a donor who gives \$5,000 to a participating scholarship program would be able to claim a \$2,500 credit against what they owed in state income tax liability. The SGO program receives the \$5,000 private donation, which would then be used to fund scholarships for lower-income students. A \$2,500 state tax credit thus helps leverage \$5,000 in private scholarship donations.

Sen. John Broden (D-South Bend), who supported the bill, said, "The focus was narrowly tailored. It really focuses on those children that are in the 200 percent of poverty category."

"I very much welcome the opportunity to help those families that are obviously having a very difficult time, and yet very much want the option and opportunity to send their children to a school of their choice," he said. "I like very much the way the bill was tailored to reach those working-class folks."

"I generally oppose these types of bills, like voucher bills or school transfer bills, but because this bill was so well-crafted and targeted to reach those families that really

need it is the reason why I supported the bill," Sen. Broden said. "It also wasn't school specific. The contributions are going to scholarship granting organizations rather than directly to a particular school."

Sen. Robert Dieg (D-Mount Vernon), who also voted for the bill, said, "The way I look at it is that the families that send their children to parochial schools pay taxes, but don't receive any benefit. This will allow lower-income children to attend a parochial school."

"I know a number of families that would like to send their child to parochial schools, but they simply can't afford

them. This bill enables those families to do that."

Prior to the beginning of the 2009 legislative session, the Indiana Catholic Conference's (ICC) top officials met with Rep. Patrick Bauer (D-South Bend), the Speaker of the House, to get suggestions on how to craft the scholarship tax credit proposal to make it acceptable to Republicans and Democrats alike.

"The Speaker of the House was very helpful in offering ways to make the bill palatable to members of both political parties," said Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director, who was present during the meeting. "Rep. Bauer also has provided assistance this year with the scholarship tax credit by

assigning Rep. Peggy Welch as House sponsor of the bill, who is known for her ability to foster bipartisan support. We are very appreciative for the speaker's help."

Despite opposition to the bill from the Indiana State Teachers Association and the Indiana Federation of Teachers, who testified before a Senate panel about fiscal concerns, bipartisan support in the House is growing.

Tebbe attributes the growing support for the legislation to two reasons.

"People who have joined our Catholic Action Network have been very active in contacting their representatives and asking for support of the scholarship tax credit

proposal," he said. "Thanks to input from the Speaker of the House on crafting the bill, many Democrats in the House are seeing the merits of the bill and how it really helps lower-income families while keeping public schools intact."

Currently in Indiana, there is only one scholarship granting organization, the Choice Charitable Trust in Indianapolis. This group awards scholarships to families to use in 60 participating schools in and around central Indiana.

The fiscal report on the bill prepared by Legislative Services Agency, a non-partisan government entity that supports the Indiana General Assembly, indicated that approximately 1,600 students could receive support from contributions of \$10 million, which is the maximum amount of contributions that would be eligible for the tax credit each fiscal year.

Senate Bill 528 has been assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee. The bill has not been scheduled for a hearing, and its fate is uncertain.

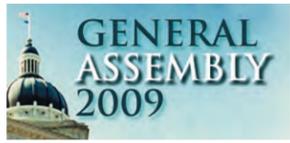
ICC officials encourage people to contact their lawmakers and ask for them to support the scholarship tax credit proposal.

To contact a lawmaker, log on to www.indianacc.org and click on "Legislative Action Center" on the left side of the screen. For those without Internet access, call 317-232-9600 or 800-382-9842 to contact a member of the Indiana House of Representatives or 317-232-9400 or 800-382-9467 to reach a member of the state Senate.

(Bridget Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion. To learn more about the Indiana Catholic Conference, log on to www.indianacc.org.) †



Sen. John Broden



Sen. Robert Dieg

I very much welcome the opportunity to help those families that are obviously having a very difficult time, and yet very much want the option and opportunity to send their children to a school of their choice.'

—Sen. John Broden

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'We are making a difference, each of us doing our part'

Niece of late civil rights leader is keynote speaker at pro-life prayer vigil

By Mary Ann Wyand

The late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. inspired hundreds of thousands of people to march for the civil rights of African-Americans during the 1950s and 1960s.

He preached tirelessly about equal rights for black people, endured incarceration for the sake of his dream of dignity for every person, and was assassinated because of his belief that all people deserve respect regardless of the color of their skin.

His niece, Dr. Alveda King of Atlanta, continues his civil rights campaign for equality for all people, especially for defenseless unborn babies whose mothers are experiencing crisis pregnancies, as a pastoral associate of Priests for Life and spokeswoman for the national "Silent No More Awareness Campaign."

She regrets her abortion years ago, and also ministers to women and men harmed by abortion.

King likes to reflect on and quote from her famous uncle's speeches.

"The Negro cannot win," Rev. Martin Luther King said about five decades ago, "if he is willing to sacrifice the future of his children for immediate personal comfort and safety."

She enthusiastically champions his message, emphasizing in all her talks that "abortion is never just about the child or the mother. ... How can the dream survive if we murder the children? ... African-Americans, like many Americans, are pro-life and uphold procreative marriage."

King was the keynote speaker for a spring "40 Days for Life" pro-life prayer vigil on March 10 in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic at 8590 N. Georgetown Road in Indianapolis.

Ironically, the pro-life rally was held on the date that the Planned Parenthood Federation of America had declared as "Thank Your Abortion Provider Day."

Nine unborn babies have been saved in Indianapolis since the Lenten pro-life prayer vigil started on Ash Wednesday, which was Feb. 25, in front of the largest abortion facility in the state, according to Eric Slaughter, co-director of the archdiocesan "40 Days for Life" spring prayer campaign.

In her "Silent No More" speeches, King often criticizes President Barack Obama's pro-abortion agenda.

"People across the country should let our new president know that we want babies in the womb protected and traditional marriage respected," she noted in a press statement. "The accomplishment of an African-American holding the nation's highest office will be of little value if the black community continues to be destroyed by the horrible plagues of society, such as abortion's harmful effects on our women and children, teen pregnancy, AIDS/HIV, childhood obesity, incarceration of our youth, poverty, attacks on fatherhood [and] marriages, and the hosts of evil we face every day."

"The genocide must end," she emphasized. "We are one human race, and it's time to stand up for the truth. It's time to stand up for life, liberty and family. ... We need to let Barack Obama know that our children's lives are more important than the money and political support of the abortion lobby, and that of all of the other special interest groups that destroy our quality of life. This nation was founded upon life, liberty and justice for all."

King started her speech in front of the abortion clinic with several prayers.

"President Obama, in the name of Jesus, let the babies live," she prayed. "Planned Parenthood, in the name of Jesus, let the babies live."

As Christians, she said, "we have the authority to make that demand and make that claim. And we do believe that this clinic will close and babies will stop being murdered here."

King also led a large group of women carrying "Silent No More" signs and other pro-life supporters of all ages in the

"Prayer to End Abortion."

The Tuesday afternoon prayer rally attracted about 100 people who also are participating in the "40 Days for Life" spring campaign during Lent.

"I remember meeting David Bereit [a '40 Days for Life' co-founder from College Station, Texas], first by telephone," she said, "and he was talking about a wonderful truth that if more people would join together and pray, and that if we would pray for 40 days, that we would see a change in the [pro-abortion] climate."

"I began to pray with David," King said. "I joined some of the first campaigns. Father Frank Pavone [the founder and national director of Priests for Life] is very devoted and committed to standing with [Bereit] and many [pro-life] leaders across the country and many lay people. So when we make that commitment of 40 days of sacrifice and prayer, we should pray every day, all day. We know that, but specifically to pray for life. Certainly, together for 40 days, that makes a difference."

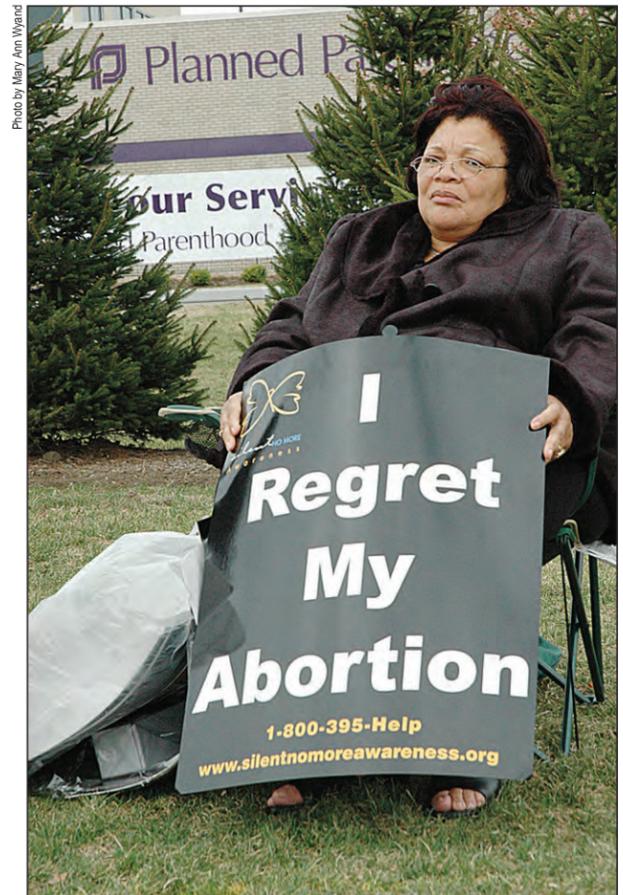
Pro-life supporters have an obligation to "let our light shine" for others, King said. "Jesus said, 'Let your light shine that people will see it and glorify God in heaven' (Mt 5:16). ... People who think they need to go in the clinic can see our light. Most of the time when women get abortions, ... it's because [they] don't see another way out. But it's our responsibility as Christians who support life not to condemn, not to judge, not to point fingers, but to open our hands in love and say, 'Let us help you so you

don't have to do this.'"

King asked the pro-life supporters to raise their hands if they have helped save the lives of unborn babies.

As dozens of people held up their hands, she said, "Each of us can give testimonies that God is moving on this Earth. ... We are making a difference, each of us doing our part."

(For more information about the "40 Days for Life" spring prayer campaign, log on to www.40daysforlife.com/Indianapolis.) †



Dr. Alveda King of Atlanta, a pastoral associate of Priests for Life and spokeswoman for the national "Silent No More Awareness Campaign," prays on March 10 in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic in Indianapolis as part of the spring "40 Days for Life" pro-life prayer vigil.

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 the list in this week's newspaper. However, the entire schedule is posted on *The Criterion Online* at www.CriterionOnline.com.

Batesville Deanery

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 3, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
 April 4, 9:30 a.m. at St. John the Baptist, Dover
 April 7, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood

Bloomington Deanery

April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
 April 2, 7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery

April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
 April 2, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget, Liberty

Indianapolis South Deanery

March 28, 9:30 a.m. at St. Barnabas
 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

April 2, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels

New Albany Deanery

March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
 April 1, 9:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville
 April 2, 9:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville
 April 5, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

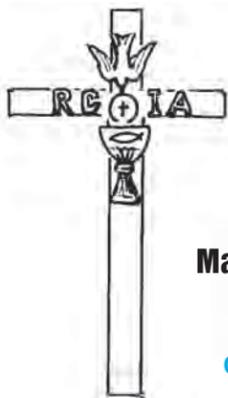
Seymour Deanery

April 6, 6:30 p.m. for St. Anne, Jennings County, and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

Terre Haute Deanery

March 31, 6:30 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
 April 1, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville †

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175 years of history

Faith on display in Vincennes as jubilee pilgrims travel back in time

By Mary Ann Wyand

VINCENNES—Archdiocesan pilgrims who traveled to historic Vincennes, Ind., with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on March 18 enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate a 175th anniversary Mass at the beautiful Old Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis Xavier.

It was a memorable liturgy as the 51 pilgrims from central and southern Indiana praised God and offered thanks for 175 years of the Church's presence in Indiana that began with the establishment of the Diocese of Vincennes by Pope Gregory XVI on May 6, 1834.

An apostolic brief during the papacy of Pope Leo XIII dated March 28, 1898, changed the name to the Diocese of Indianapolis and moved the episcopal see there. On Oct. 21, 1944, Pope Pius XII issued an apostolic decree that created the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

After welcoming the pilgrims, Archbishop Buechlein led a rosary at the start of the one-day jubilee bus trip to southwestern Indiana, which will be offered again on Sept. 12.

"It's good to have you all here," he said. "We'll pray for the canonization of [the Servant of God] Bishop [Simon] Bruté as well today, and say thanks to God for 175 years of grace and blessings upon our local Church."

During his prayer, the archbishop offered thanks for "our ancestors in faith"—those who carried the Catholic faith to Indiana and those who passed it on to new generations.

In Vincennes, the pilgrims began the day with Mass at the restored basilica, which is Indiana's oldest church.

During his homily, the archbishop recalled the faith and dedication of Bishop Bruté, who was appointed the first bishop of Vincennes in 1834.



The Old Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis Xavier in Vincennes, Ind., is the oldest church in Indiana and was restored recently. Pilgrims from all over the world have visited the historic church. A statue of Father Pierre Gibault, vicar general of "the Illinois country," who lived from 1737 to 1804, stands in front of the basilica. Information carved on the base of the statue states that in 1778 Father Gibault "gained the allegiance to the United States of the French population of Vincennes."



"Bishop Bruté, because of his simplicity, was called a silent power in the Church in its infancy here in the United States,"

Archbishop Buechlein explained. "He was respected for his strong prudence, and he was admired for his holiness. ... He was a man of hope in very trying times and circumstances."

With only three priests to assist him, the archbishop said, Bishop Bruté overcame overwhelming challenges to establish the Church in Indiana.

"I lift up our first bishop as the model for us in our baptismal call to holiness," he said. "... Let our anniversary prayers keep us close to Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life. Let's make the extra effort to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Bishop Bruté ... had a great devotion to the Eucharist. May we learn to love the Eucharist more and more."

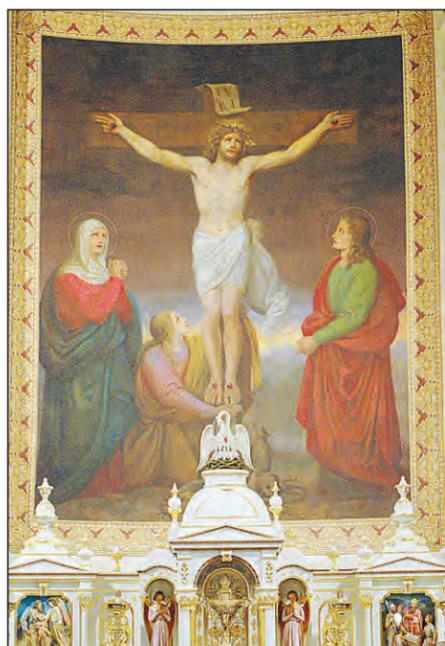
Following Mass and lunch, the pilgrims toured the basilica and crypt, which contains the remains of the four bishops of Vincennes—Bishops Simon Gabriel Bruté, Celestine de la Hailandière, John Stephen Bazin and Maurice de St. Palais.

They also visited the Old Cathedral Library, which was founded in 1794 and is the state's first library. About 12,000 historic documents preserved in the library's valuable collection include rare volumes and Church manuscripts. A papal bull issued by Pope John XXII in 1319 is the oldest document. An illuminated manuscript copy of *Officium Sanctae Mariae* on vellum dates to the 11th or 12th century and is the oldest book.

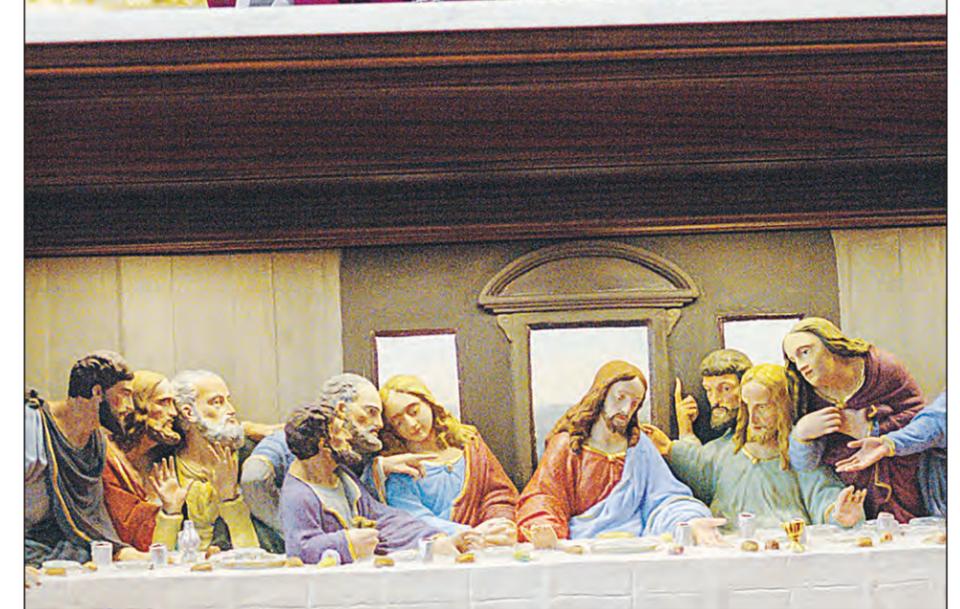
St. Lawrence parishioners John and Karen Carroll of Indianapolis said they are "history buffs" and wanted to learn more about the early days of the Church in Indiana.

"I have studied early Indiana history," John Carroll said, "and was extremely impressed with the artifacts they had accumulated that survived all this time. ... I like to study the roles that Catholics played in the early years of the country and the role of the early French settlers."

As the bus passed by Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis at the end of the day, Archbishop Buechlein invited the pilgrims to participate in the archdiocese's 175th jubilee Mass there at 3 p.m. on May 3. †



An historic painting of Jesus on the cross graces the high altar of the Old Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis Xavier in Vincennes, Ind.



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein celebrates the eucharistic liturgy at the historic altar in the Old Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis Xavier in Vincennes, Ind., on March 18 during the archdiocesan jubilee pilgrimage. The altar features a depiction of the Last Supper.



Above, Father John Schipp, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Vincennes, Ind., explains the history of the Old Cathedral Basilica for archdiocesan pilgrims on March 18 before leading them on a tour of the crypt church, where the remains of all four bishops of Vincennes are interred.



Left, St. Jude parishioner Andree Muns of Indianapolis, who grew up in Paris, France, reads the bishops' letters and documents written in French that are displayed under glass at the Old Cathedral Library in Vincennes, Ind. See more photos at www.criteriononline.com.

Volunteers needed to assist at 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis still needs volunteers to help at the May 3 Mass celebrating the archdiocese's 175th anniversary.

About 350 people are needed to carry out a variety of ministries during the Mass to be celebrated at 3 p.m. at

Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, said Stephen James, director of the archdiocesan Office of Purchasing, who is coordinating the recruitment of volunteers.

Volunteers are needed to help with most aspects of the Mass, including

assisting the bishops with confirmation. Ushers, sign bearers and Communion guides are also needed.

Volunteers will need to be able to walk up and down stairs, James noted. Jobs will be assigned to individuals when they arrive at Lucas Oil Stadium.

(Volunteers are encouraged to register online at www.archindy.org/175th. Look for the volunteers' link. You may also sign up to help by sending an e-mail to steve.james@archindy.org. Call Steve James at 317-236-1451 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1451, if you have questions.) †

St. Anne parishioners celebrate past, present and future

By Mary Ann Wyand

The past, present and future are closely linked this year in the history of St. Anne Parish in New Castle.

St. Anne parishioners recently had an opportunity to look at artifacts representing their parish's history, which were preserved in a time capsule sealed in the former church cornerstone.

The cornerstone dated 1923 was cemented in the foundation of their historic brick church, and the time capsule wasn't meant to be opened yet.

But after an arson fire gutted their beloved church on Holy Saturday, April 7, 2007, the damaged remains of the formerly sacred building had to be demolished for safety reasons and to make room for the construction of their new church on the same site at 102 N. 19th St.

Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth, the parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish and St. Rose Parish in Knightstown, and several parishioners arranged a special ceremony on Feb. 18 so members of the 260 household Henry County faith community could see the contents of the time capsule.

About 100 parishioners at the ceremony were happy to find crucifixes, crosses, religious medals, a flag and historic documents safely preserved in the time capsule and cornerstone.

"Some of the oldest members of the parish were present," Sister Shirley said, "and they were so honored to take the things out of the time capsule. We have a lot of pictures ... on our Web site."

She said the past, present and future of the parish are represented in pictures of the artifacts taken from the time capsule as well as architectural renderings of the new \$4.2 million church and the computer technology that shares the images

on the Internet.

Parishioner Steve Dyer of New Castle said three journals written by Father John Gallagher, the pastor in 1923, were among the items preserved in the time capsule and he is interested in reading them.

The concrete cornerstone will be preserved and used as part of a pedestal in the new church to display the statue of St. Anne and a young Mary which survived the fire.

"The architect had a wonderful idea about that," Dyer said. "I thought that was a marvelous idea. I think with all the [architectural] plans we have really blended the old and the new, and I think that's one reason why [the new church design has] been so well received by the parishioners."

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein will help St. Anne parishioners look to—and build for—the future when he helps with the groundbreaking ceremony for the new church at 2 p.m. on March 29 on the parish campus.

Sister Shirley said construction is expected to be well under way before Easter so St. Anne parishioners will be able to celebrate a special resurrection in the life and history of their 136-year-old faith community.

(To view pictures of artifacts from the time capsule, log on to St. Anne Parish's Web site at <http://saintanne.us.to>.) †



Longtime St. Anne parishioners Ed Leyes, from left, Robert Gorman and John McGrady open a time capsule that was preserved in the cornerstone of St. Anne Church in New Castle during a Feb. 18 ceremony at the Henry County Art Center in New Castle. The church was destroyed in an arson fire on April 7, 2007.



Artifacts from the time capsule preserved in the cornerstone of St. Anne Church in New Castle include crucifixes, crosses, religious medals, a flag and historic documents.



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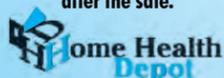
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Lent can give us a new appreciation of obedience

By Mary Jo Pedersen

Years ago, I visited the great basilica cathedral at the Abbey of Montecassino in Italy with its rich marbles and exquisite mosaics. Four of the remarkable mosaics depict the vows taken by Benedictine monks who built and rebuilt this magnificent church over a period of nearly a thousand years.

The mosaics above the high altar show figures representing the vows of chastity, stability, poverty and obedience. I could identify three of these figures easily, but the fourth was a mystery to me. Instead of a kneeling monk bowing before a superior, the mosaic representing obedience depicts the face of an attentive monk with his hand behind his ear, leaning forward with a look of expectant listening on his face.

It is one of the most beautiful mosaics that I have ever seen in terms of color, texture and expression. I was so struck by its beauty that I purchased a copy of the artwork in the basilica museum. The artistic representation of obedience intrigued me.

I had always associated obedience with childhood or servitude, with bowing and submitting one's will to another person out of duty or fear. My husband and I left the word "obey" out of our wedding vows years ago because we regarded ourselves as equals and thought that obedience was not necessary for two adults forming a partnership of love in marriage.

As I looked into the radiant face of the mosaic monk, however, and began investigating the meaning of the word "obey," I recognized the poverty of our understanding.

The English word "obey" comes from the Latin "*obedire*," which means "to hear" or to "listen attentively," like that monk.

Benedictine monks would have a clear understanding of the image of obedience since the *Rule* of St. Benedict begins with: "Listen carefully, my son, to the master's instructions and attend to them with the ear of your heart."

This Benedictine understanding of obedience can help us realize that there are multiple kinds of obedience operating at different times in the various spheres of our lives.

I had outgrown the obedience-out-of-fear that characterized my childhood. It served me well as parents, teachers, coaches and other authorities took part in my education and socialization.

In young adulthood, I experienced the

heady independence that allowed me to make decisions about my life based on my own good judgment and not necessarily on what my parents told me to do. When I suffered the consequences of bad choices, I learned the value of listening to trusted people in my life.

I still obey traffic laws, tax laws and community ordinances because this is part of being a responsible citizen and makes good sense to me. Civic obedience flows from a respect for the common good that was instilled in me by my family.

But the monk in the mosaic—his obedience is a different thing.

The monk is not bowing to an external authority—he is listening to God. His expression is not one of fear, but of expectancy and trust. His is the obedience referred to in the reading from the Letter to the Hebrews for the fifth Sunday of Lent.

Even Jesus, in some mysterious way, had to learn obedience. Jesus turned his ear to his Father, listening and trusting that, if he followed the path laid out by his Father who loved him, his life would be safe.

In the life of faith, to obey means to do what Jesus did—to be open to and to listen to our heavenly Father who loves us.

This is not a blind obedience, but a generous listening that orients one's will to God.

In the Greek version of the Letter to the Hebrews, the word for "obedience" used in the text means "to be persuaded, won over."

As a follower of Christ in this season of Lent, I have to ask if I allow myself to be "won over" by God.

Am I open to hearing something other than my own ego-driven will?



Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Benedictine Brother Christian Raab ritually places his hands over his chest on Jan. 25, 2008, during his profession of solemn vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. He was ordained a deacon last October. At the time of his profession of solemn vows, Brother Christian's hair was cut in the form of a "corona," which is Latin for "crown," a centuries-old monastic tradition. The Benedictine understanding of their vow of obedience places emphasis on listening attentively, something that is good for Catholics to reflect upon during Lent.

Am I really listening when I pray or ponder the Scriptures? Or do I come to God in this season of repentance with my own agenda, holding tight to my life as I have scripted it?

In the life of faith, to obey means to do what Jesus did—to be open to and to listen to our heavenly Father who loves us.

Lent offers us the opportunity to open our guarded hearts, trusting our lives to God—as Jesus did.

The monk in the mosaic puts his hand behind his ear to block out noise and listen intently. He is literally bent on listening.

In John's Gospel this Sunday, we hear the words of Jesus that say we only gain our life if we are willing to lose it, to give it away selflessly.

Do I want to listen to that message this Lent?

Am I open to self-giving love in my marriage and in my relationships with others?

If I truly listen to my spouse, my children, my co-workers, the poor and vulnerable around me, will it persuade me to be more selfless or generous, less controlling of others?

The compelling message about the meaning of obedience as turning toward God with a posture of attentive listening was the mosaic monk's message to me during my visit to the abbey—as it is now in these final days of Lent.

(Mary Jo Pedersen, a veteran coordinator of marriage and family spirituality programs, lives in Omaha, Neb. She is the author of For Better, for Worse, for God: Exploring the Holy Mystery of Marriage, published by Loyola Press in 2008.) †

Discussion Point

Obedience means following God's will

This Week's Question

How do you define "obedience" in your life of faith and in your everyday life? Are there different kinds of obedience?

"When I think of obedience, I think, in a sense, of freedom because obedience and the will of God go together for me. We obey by doing his will [which is to love]—like loving our neighbors as ourselves. Being obedient makes life easier because we know the way we act is in line with God. It's almost like a circle. Obedience brings joy, peace and happiness, and we come more and more into his image and likeness." (Mary Ann Cottone, Moorestown, N.J.)

"To me, it is obeying authority—first the pope and the Church ... then mothers, fathers and your boss. Teachers too, as long as they do not interfere with our

belief in God, as happened when I grew up in Croatia. ... It is important to obey authority because it represents God on Earth." (Katie Bayford, Montgomery, Ala.)

"In both faith and everyday life, I think obedience is a matter of following God's laws. I don't think there's a difference." (Mike McNulty, Akron, Ohio)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What does it feel like to be a Catholic in a place where there are very few other Catholics? How does the Church survive in such areas?

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



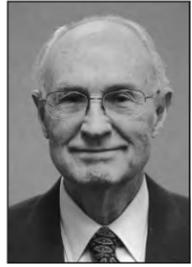
CNS photo/David McManis

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Basic Catholicism: The divinity of Jesus

(Seventh in a series of columns)

During recent decades, certain scholars have attempted to find “the historical



Jesus”—as opposed, I suppose, to the Jesus of the Christian faith.

In the process of trying to learn as much as possible about Jesus, they sometimes acknowledge that he was a great man, but deny that he was divine.

But it is not sufficient for Catholics to follow Christ just because he was a great man. He claimed to be God. He said that he had always existed. He told Nicodemus that God sent him into the world (Jn 3:17).

Some, though, say that Jesus really never said such things, that the Gospel writers wrote those things decades after Jesus died. Sometimes one even hears that Jesus never claimed to be God.

Usually, though, these people acknowledge that Jesus claimed to forgive sins. He did this frequently.

Once was during the dinner given by Simon the Pharisee when a sinful woman bathed Jesus’ feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. He told her, “Your sins are forgiven” (Lk 7:48). The others at table said to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” (Lk 7:49).

Perhaps even a better example is the healing of a paralytic, reported by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus first said to him, “Your sins are forgiven.” The scribes sitting there understood Jesus’ claim, for they asked, “Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?” (Mk 2:7).

When Jesus healed the paralytic, he told those scribes specifically that he was doing it “that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth” (Mk 2:10). If only God can forgive sins, Jesus obviously claimed to be God.

As a man, I can forgive you for injuring me, but I have no right to forgive

you for injuring someone else. If you sin by breaking God’s laws, only God can forgive that. And Jesus claimed to have the authority to do that.

In his book *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis wrote: “I am trying to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about [Jesus]: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Faith teaches we can rely on Christ’s promise in Easter

The first time I laid eyes on Marcella O’Connor, we were 5-year-old kindergartners at Wayzata Public School.



I admired her because I thought she was pretty in what I later came to know as an Irish way. She had fair skin sprinkled with freckles, a pert little nose, steady blue-gray eyes, and black hair

fashioned in Shirley Temple curls and topped with a big bow.

And she was funny. Almost every day, she told us stories about what her several older brothers were up to, all of it no good, and the incendiary reactions of her parents.

This really impressed me as an only child, and shocked me a bit too, since Marcie and I were both “goody two-shoes” girls. She had an infectious laugh, and was a magnet for boys and girls alike because she was always cheerful.

When you attend one school for 13 years, as I did, your classmates become like your family. I may have been an only child, but I had several brother and sister classmates whom I knew as well as any blood kin, and Marcie was certainly as dear to me as a sister. We skipped rope, sledded

down schoolhouse hill, whispered confidences and giggled from the primary grades through high school.

Marcie’s dad was a working man struggling through the Great Depression with a large family to feed. The family lived in a small house in an unfashionable section of town, but Marcie had her own tiny bedroom in which we’d have occasional sleepovers. We’d hear the naughty brothers thumping and wrestling in their room until finally their mom would drive them outdoors.

When you knew Marcie’s mom, you knew where the humor came from. She was funny as well as wise and long-suffering. She never sat down until the kitchen was clean, everyone was in bed and prayers were said because the O’Connors were faithful Catholics.

The first time that I set foot in a Catholic church was to attend the funeral of Marcie’s father, who died when we were about 12. As I sat in the church balcony, a Protestant trying to keep up as people rose, knelt, genuflected and recited Latin responses, I was impressed with the faith displayed in the church. It was so sad, but the certainty of resurrection was almost palpable.

In high school, Marcie dated a “new” boy who was good-looking and charming. We all adored him, too, and voted them “cutest couple” in the class. They were

married after graduation, and he entered the Air Force. Later, not able to have their own kids, they adopted two children.

Mr. Charming turned out to be an abusive alcoholic and, after years of trying to hold her marriage together and keep the children safe, Marcie divorced him. But not before continually asking help from Church leaders. Their response was always something like “hope and pray,” which she found unhelpful.

Marcie, the good Irish Catholic girl, finally left the Church and raised her kids by herself. Later, she married a kind non-Catholic who adored her, and then life improved until she began to suffer from dementia. Her husband still brought her to our school reunions and, though she wasn’t sure who we all were, she understood that we loved her.

Marcie was a good and faithful woman who felt let down by her husband and by people in her church, but not by God, as we know from Christ’s promise in Easter.

Now that she has passed away, with that in mind, I hope and pray that I will see her again one day in glory.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

‘Abba, Father, I put my life in your hands’

Years ago, frustrated with my life because it wasn’t happening the way I



wanted it to, I found answers in an unexpected stop for a Good Friday liturgy at my parish.

Although it had been years since I had attended Lenten services, I flirted with the idea of going to church on

Good Friday.

Each time that the thought surfaced, however, I dismissed it. After all, my husband and I had plans to take the kids out for pizza, and I wasn’t going to disrupt our agenda.

But that night, as we were on our way to the pizzeria, I noticed the packed parking lot at our church, which was along our route, and it beckoned me.

Although it was late, the kids were hungry, and the service was well under way, I insisted that we stop.

We found space on the grass and parked the car. I carried the baby on my hip while

Joe held our preschoolers’ hands. Amid mild protests, we rushed across the darkened parking lot and slipped into the back door of the church.

A few empty seats remained, and we slid into them, blanketed by the reverence of the congregation. The church lights were dimmed, and radiance surrounded the life-sized crucifix on the altar, now draped in red cloth. I bowed my head in penitential prayer.

I remember nothing more than gliding into the worship of the assembly, but the song we sang moments later still resonates today: “Abba, Father, I put my life in your hands.”

Sitting in the back of that church, repeating that refrain, I was able to release my fears, doubts, anger, resentments and judgments. I realized, perhaps for the first time, that it wasn’t my life, but his life within me, that mattered.

I’ll never forget that day.

Maybe you were in that congregation. You showed me that we are not alone in the journey.

Perhaps you didn’t know what it meant to me to be able to join you in worship, but it was life-changing. Maybe you can give this gift to others.

Perhaps, this year, we’ll participate in a service that lifts another soul from the tarmac into the heavenly realms. Only God knows.

“Abba, Father, I put my life in your hands.” I finally meant it.

“Abba, Father, I put my life in your hands.”

I’m trying to live it.

(Debra Tomaselli lives in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Her column appears in several diocesan newspapers. Her e-mail address is dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Don’t grumble when carrying your daily cross

I like to think that I strive to follow Jesus’ teaching, “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23).

It’s hard sometimes when I come across that daily cross at 6 a.m.

I’ve been in the habit for a while now of waking up early to have some time for prayer and a quiet breakfast before my boys get up. For myself, at least, I know I can be a better husband and father when I carve out some time for myself during the day, and the earlier the better.

But for a few weeks now, my youngest son, Victor, who will be 2 in April, has been waking up at 6 a.m. or earlier. And as he does his usual jabbering, his two older brothers wake up not too long afterward.

Goodbye, quiet time. Hello, cross.

It’s easy for me to grumble at such times. But when I do that, I’m really grumbling at God.

He has called me to be a father. It is an essential part of his will for my life. And so when my sons need attention from me (as they often do early in the morning when they’re hungry, need to use the bathroom or get dressed), God’s will is for me to be there for them.

When I grumble, I’m being presumptuous. In effect, I’m telling God that I know what is better for my life than he does.

This is not to say that arranging for personal time for ourselves for prayer, hobbies or friendships is bad. Far from it. But when there are legitimate interruptions to such personal time, we need to accept them as God’s will.

St. Vincent de Paul knew this well. He was a 17th-century French priest who became well-known for his service to the poor. St. Vincent had this to say about being interrupted during the kind of prayer time that I value early in the morning:

“If a needy person requires medicine or other help during prayer time, do whatever has to be done with peace of mind. Offer the deed to God as your prayer. Do not become upset or feel guilty because you interrupted your prayer to serve the poor. God is not neglected if you leave for such service.”

If stepping away from prayer or any kind of personal time to serve the true needs of others is a part of God’s will, how much more is that true when we want to watch our favorite TV show, spend time surfing the Internet or work on a hobby?

In the end, picking up our cross daily and following in the steps of Jesus is about deliberately taking our attention away from ourselves and placing it with love on God and those around us.

Our first human instinct when considering this is that it’s a zero sum gain: the more attention I give to others means the less I can give to myself and that I’ll be less happy as a result.

Yes, we take the risk of faith when we put our needs and wants aside to serve others. But, as we journey through these final weeks of Lent leading up to Palm Sunday and Good Friday when we solemnly recall Jesus’ suffering and death, we need to constantly remember that the cross is never the end of the story. The empty tomb is.

And so when, despite your gut instincts, you take the risk of faith, lay aside for a while your own needs and wants to serve those around you, put in the front of your heart and mind that you can carry that cross joyfully, knowing that the victory that surpasses anything we could ever imagine is waiting for us on the other side. †

Fifth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 29, 2009

- Jeremiah 31:31-34
- Hebrews 5:7-9
- John 12:20-33

The Book of Jeremiah provides this weekend's first reading.



Jeremiah's eloquence and the length of his writings place him among the great prophets.

A theme common among all the prophets is that, despite human sinfulness, God is always merciful.

Jeremiah constantly wrote with this theme in the back of his mind. As a nation, the people had turned away from God, consequently bringing chaos and misery into their lives.

Their misfortune was not the result of God's indifference to them. Certainly, it was not because God deserted them. Rather, they created the problem.

This weekend's reading speaks of a new day. God will offer a new way to life, peace and joy.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the source of the second reading.

This epistle's authorship and origin are disputed. Undisputed are its compelling language as well as its deep insights into the person and mission of Jesus, the Redeemer.

As the name implies, it is rich in Jewish symbolism and it is abundant in the most profound of Jewish beliefs. These beliefs form the context into which Jesus came as God's Son and as Savior.

This reading refers to the Crucifixion. Jesus, the Son of God, willingly accepted the pain of death on the cross. He was not the helpless victim of circumstances or the scheming of others. He chose to die on Calvary. He was obedient to God's will.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading.

An interesting incidental in this reading is that contact with Jesus is initiated through the Apostles. In the early Church, when this Gospel was written, the Apostles were very important. They literally had known the

Lord, were the Lord's special students and were chosen to be the Lord's representatives. They acted and spoke with authority.

Jesus brings an ominous overtone to this reading. He predicts death. He speaks of a grain of wheat falling to the ground, lifeless and tiny. However, from this small piece of reality, wondrous new life springs.

He speaks of the voluntary giving of life. Remember that, while these verses recall an event which occurred actually in Christ's lifetime, they are part of a Gospel that was probably composed long after the earthly life of Christ.

The first people who heard this Scripture knew the story of the Crucifixion. These people would have instantly connected the reading with Jesus and with the death of Jesus on Calvary.

The message is clear and blunt. In the death of Jesus is life. In our own death to sin is our life.

Reflection

Next weekend, the Church will celebrate Palm Sunday, also called Passion Sunday. In not too many days, the Church will call us to mark this year's Holy Week with its magnificent, compelling Triduum.

This weekend's readings set before us great drama. The most momentous time of all human history is soon to be remembered. It is the moment of reconciliation between God and humanity. Nothing is more important for anyone than to be reconciled with God.

Through these readings, the Church teaches us two lessons. One is about the uninterrupted, eternal love of God, given to us in divine mercy. Even if we stray afar from God, God never dismisses us. He never forgets us.

His greatest gift is Jesus. Jesus brings us reconciliation, and in it union with God. He is one of us, a human born of a human mother.

The other lesson is that salvation is not thrust upon us. We must accept it. We must will it. It must be our choice. It is the outcome of obedience. At times, we must be obedient even unto death, as was Jesus. At times, we must be obedient even if the cross stands before us with its threat, but also with the promise of victory if we overcome it. †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 30
Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30,
33-62
or Daniel 13:41c-62
Psalm 23:1-6
John 8:1-11

Tuesday, March 31
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 102:2-3, 16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday, April 1
Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
(Response) Daniel 3:52-56
John 8:31-42

Thursday, April 2
Francis of Paola, hermit
Genesis 17:3-9
Psalm 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday, April 3
Jeremiah 20:10-13
Psalm 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday, April 4
Isidore, bishop and doctor of
the Church
Ezekiel 37:21-28
(Response) Jeremiah 31:10-13
John 11:45-56

Sunday, April 5
Palm Sunday of the
Lord's Passion
Mark 11:1-10 (procession)
or John 12:12-16 (procession)
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18a, 19-20,
23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Mark 14:1-15, 47
or Mark 15:1-39

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Mass offering as memorial includes entire human family

QI am a convert to the Catholic faith and do not understand Mass offerings. What do they mean?



What happens when we are told that "this Mass is being offered for" a specific person? (Ohio)

AFor well more than 1,000 years, Catholic people have had the custom of Mass offerings for the poor as well as for the Church's ministers and other needs.

Along with this custom, however, we have carried on an almost continuous struggle to avoid any appearance of commercialism about the Mass and misunderstandings about the meaning of such offerings.

Language which is at least open to confusion is not uncommon, and the example that you give is a good one.

We believe that each celebration of the Eucharist reaches out to everyone on Earth. It has the same broad, worldwide intention as the first offering of that sacrifice by Jesus on the cross.

In other words, as our eucharistic prayers make clear, every offering of this sacrifice includes not only the whole Church, but also the whole human family, living and dead. No priest, even should he wish to do so, can narrow down that universal embrace as Jesus renews his sacrificial offering in the person of his Church on Earth.

When a priest accepts a Mass offering, he accepts, according to traditional theology, the responsibility to include that intention in his prayers at Mass.

This is the meaning of the present Church law, which states, "It is lawful for any priest who celebrates or concelebrates Mass to receive an offering to apply the Mass according to a definite intention" (Canon #945).

For this reason, it is generally inappropriate to state, in the general intercessions, for example, or the eucharistic prayer, that a Mass is "being offered for" a specific individual. It tends to place undue attention and emphasis on that particular intention rather than on the entire Church.

Obviously, to put it bluntly, no one "buys" major ownership as if it were in a particular offering of the Eucharist. If any

announcement of a special intention is to take place, perhaps a good suggestion, theologically and liturgically, would be stated as "John or Jane Doe is being remembered especially at this Mass."

This understanding also places in better perspective the claim that richer families and individuals who are able to request Masses more frequently have some spiritual advantage over those who cannot do so.

As the eucharistic prayers proclaim, the offering is for all our brothers and sisters who have died in the hope of rising again.

Indeed even more, as the second eucharistic prayer reminds us, the Eucharist that we offer is for all the departed, all the people in the world who have died. No one is ever left out.

QI belong to a rosary-making club, and we make special all-black rosaries to wear around the neck.

We send them particularly to men and women serving in the armed forces.

We were told that this is wrong, but isn't it a better sign of faith than other jewelry someone might wear? (Michigan)

ANo. A rosary is not jewelry. It is a sacramental intended solely as a help to prayer and meditation on the lives of Jesus and his mother, and should not be worn as a necklace.

I realize that some people do use them with the intention of proclaiming their faith, but there are other sacramentals—medals with sacred images, for example—that are more appropriate and respectful to accomplish that purpose. †

My Journey to God

Lenten Meditations

Heaven Help Us

Our prayers should never cease,
Our words speak lasting trust.
Our faith is our salvation,
Our path through earthly dust.

God grants us ample help,
He marks the path with care.
God will not desert us,
As long as there's a prayer.

Hearts Across the Heavens

We cannot hand them daily bread—
Our leavened prayers must rise instead,
Then fall like manna from above,
Each whispered prayer a slice of love.

Though earthly paths are far apart,
There is a joining at the heart,
A force revealing prayer's disguise
That heals the stare of hollow eyes.

(Dorothy M. Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. A large crucifix is draped with purple cloth for Lent on March 18 at the Old Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis Xavier in Vincennes, Ind.)



Photo by Mary Ann Wyland

When My Feet Hurt

When my feet hurt
It cannot be
Because I walked
To Calvary,
Nor did I feel
The hammer's blow,
Each cruel nail—
I only know
When my feet hurt
It brings to mind
What he endured
For humankind.

By Dorothy M. Colgan

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org. †

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

CONLEY, Patrick J., 59, St. Gabriel, Connersville, March 14. Brother of William Conley.

DAVIS, Agnes, 74, Holy Family, New Albany, March 17. Mother of Nancy Amy, Phyllis Clark, Brenda Kadel, Jane Witten, Kathy, Charles, Glenn, Jerry and Tom Davis. Sister of Shirley Clements, Eula Wright and Joseph Robinson. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of one.

DESJARDINS, Rosemary, 90, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Jan. 31. Mother of Mary, Christopher and Vincent Desjardins. Sister of Marion and Frank Morriss.

DOLE, Geraldine, 71, St. Joseph, St. Leon, Feb. 27. Wife of James Dole. Mother of Linda, Doug, Mark and Mike Dole. Sister of James Rolfes. Grandmother of eight.

FONDA, Otis, 64, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 3. Husband of Sandy Fonda. Father of Erik, Mark and Todd Fonda. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of one.

GARTELMAN, Cecilia M., 92, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, March 3. Mother of Marilyn (Alerding) Waltman. Grandmother of two.

GELARDEN, Hettie Marie, 97, St. Paul, Tell City, March 7. Aunt of several.

GOLDSMITH, Carol J., 69, Holy Family, Oldenburg, March 12. Wife of Elmer Goldsmith. Mother of Paula Fledderman, Jill Reidy, Dan, Mark and Tom Goldsmith. Sister of Mary Grote, Roseann Prickel, Doris Walke, Edward and Richard Gindling. Grandmother of 13.

HAMILTON, Robin L., 51, Prince of Peace, Madison, March 11. Wife of Gerald Hamilton. Mother of Brittny, Gerri and Bradley Hamilton. Daughter of Marvin and Betty Shadday. Sister of Paula Bell, Jodi Johnson, Mary Beth Weinshinker, Kenneth Fuqua II and Marvin Shadday II. Grandmother of four.

HEIGHTCHEW, Lucy P., 71, Prince of Peace, Madison, March 9. Mother of Virginia Sanders-Beach, William Howard and Barry McDowell. Sister of

Jackie and William Guy. Grandmother of six.

HUBER, Marilyn (Dunn), 79, St. Roch, Indianapolis, March 6. Mother of Jerilyn Sauer, Denise Spellman, Daniel, Michael and Vince Huber. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of two.

JOHNSON, Edythe, 89, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute, March 7. Mother of Michele Chernay, Cheryl Wolfe and Brian Johnson. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of nine. Great-great grandmother of two.

JONES, Mary Alice, 65, Holy Family, New Albany, March 12. Sister of Nancy Russell, Melba, Terri, Bill, John and Paul Jones.

KIDWELL, Alice M., 99, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 9. Mother of Susan Gilstrap, Mary Lou Lannan and Dolores Marmonti. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 25.

KROGER, Ellen I., 92, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, March 4. Aunt of one.

LAWLESS, Elizabeth V., 86, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Feb. 28. Mother of Beth Jones and Gregory Lawless. Sister of Marcia Baker and Geraldine Shell. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of five. Great-great-grandmother of two.

LOWER, William, 87, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Feb. 28. Husband of Mittie Lower. Father of Barb Maurath, James and John Lower. Brother of Donald and Robert Lower.

MALONE, Rebecca A., 80, St. Paul, Tell City, March 4. Wife of Ralph Malone. Mother of Molly Byrd, Jennifer Copeland, Katie Rothgerber, Kelly, Michael, Patrick and Tim Malone. Sister of Patricia Crawford, Linda and Jim Ludwig. Grandmother of several.

MONTGOMERY, Jean L., 72, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Oct. 30. Wife of

Jim Montgomery. Mother of Kimberly, Michael and Steven Montgomery. Sister of Lauretta Kuster. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

MULINARO, Michael Joseph, 23, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 13. Son of Michael and Terri (Buchanan) Mulinaro. Brother of Marisa Mulinaro. Grandson of Toni and Ronald Buchanan and Mary Meyer. Great-grandson of Tom and Ethel Smith.

NASIS, Consuelo V., 85, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, March 17. Sister of Isabel Justiniano, Flora Joven, Julio and Quirino Nasis.

NAVILLE, Rita Catherine (Bir), 89, St. Mary, Navilleton, March 9. Mother of Betty Beck and Mary May. Grandmother of five.

PRUITT, William Edward, 63, St. Paul, Tell City, March 14. Husband of Mary Jo Pruitt. Father of Tammy Presley and Chad Pruitt. Brother of Charlotte Bennett, Carol Green, Nancy Proctor, Larry and Ray Pruitt. Grandfather of four.

QUIGLEY, Mary Domenica (Matuszewicz), 92, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 6. Mother of Jo Clarke, Carrie Drummond, Dennis and Pat Quigley. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of 25.

RIDDLE, Robert A., 74, St. Paul, Tell City, March 12. Husband of Rose (Pund) Riddle. Father of Stacy Hagman. Brother of Bill, Jack and Rodney Riddle. Grandfather of four.

RIEDMAN, Dorothy A., 89, St. Michael, Brookville, Feb. 16. Sister of Phyllis Clark, Thelma Karbowski and Harry Riedman.

RINGER, George Robert, 90, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, March 9. Father of Mary Ellen Keen. Grandfather of one.

ROTH, Margaret, 75, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis,

March 4. Sister of Joan Holzer and William Roth.

SATTERTHWAITE, Clementine, 96, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, March 12. Mother of Toni Ambuehl, Jan Ballak, Mary Murry, Margaret, Peter and Stephen Satterthwaite. Grandmother of 21. Great-grandmother of 24. Great-great-grandmother of one.

SCHNIEDERS, Gary Joseph, 53, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 5. Father of Sierra Jo Schnieders. Son of Eldridge Schnieders. Brother of Linda Banker and Susan Johnson.

SHIELDS, Gertrude R., 99, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Dec. 17. Mother of Robert Shields. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of four. Great-great-grandmother of two.

SHINN, William, 87, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Feb. 26. Husband of Ruth (Freeland) Shinn. Father of Billie Carr, Mary Shields, Tina Wilmont, Bill, Jim, John, Kevin, Roni, Tom and Tony Shinn. Grandfather of 22. Great-grandfather of 18.

Providence Sister Jean Arkenberg was a teacher and math specialist

Providence Sister Jean Arkenberg, formerly Sister Marian Jean, died on March 8 at Union Hospital in Terre Haute. She was 85.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 13 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Dorothy Jean Arkenberg was born on Nov. 22, 1923, in Chicago.

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Jan. 5, 1941, and professed her first vows on Aug. 15, 1943, and her final vows on Aug. 15, 1949.

During 68 years as a member of the congregation, Sister Jean ministered as a teacher for 55 years at Catholic schools in Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina, Missouri and Washington, D.C.

In the archdiocese,

SPARKS, John M., Jr., 92, St. Andrew the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 8. Father of Sharon and Steven Edwards, Betty Fowler and Rev. Dr. Bonnie Sparks. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of two.

SPICER, Alice, 83, St. Paul, Tell City, March 4. Mother of Phyllis Fiscus, Patricia Harrison, David and James Spicer. Grandmother of 11.

STEMM, Ella Mae, 84, St. Mary, New Albany, March 5. Wife of Dr. Wilson E. Stemm. Mother of Victoria Lopp and Dr. Wilson S. Stemm. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of five.

SUMMERVILLE, David K., 52, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 14. Husband of Margaret Ann (Wilson) Summerville. Father of Colin Summerville, Todd and Tyler Willing. Brother of John Summerville Jr. Grandfather of four.

TEKULVE, Clara M., 95, Holy Family, Oldenburg, March 5. Mother of Daniel, Michael and Thomas Tekulve. Grandmother of eight. Step-grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of 12. †

Sister Jean taught at Holy Cross School in Indianapolis from 1948-49, St. Paul School in Sellersburg from 1949-52 and the former St. Ann School in Indianapolis from 1952-53.

In 1986, she began 12 years of service as a school mathematics specialist.

In 1998, Sister Jean returned to the motherhouse and worked in various ministries, including as a seamstress.

Surviving are a brother, Raymond Arkenberg of Brookfield, Ill., as well as three sisters, Providence Sister Catherine Arkenberg of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Marian Domkowski of Chicago and Zita Andree of Lombard, Ill.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

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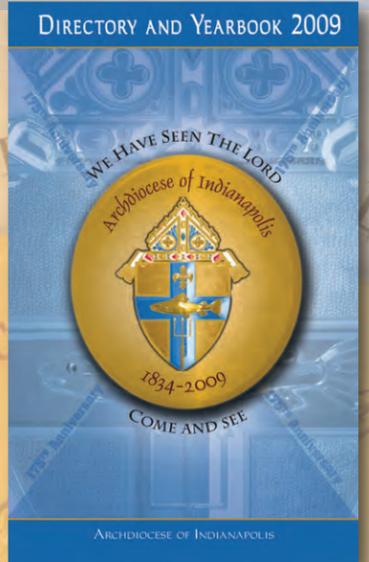
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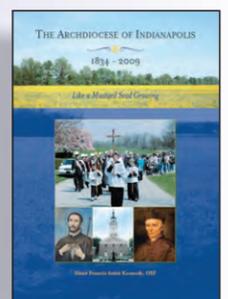


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The history book sells for \$27 (plus \$4.50 for shipping and handling). The coffee-table book contains glossy, full-color photographs and graphics. The first half of the book is an historical account of the founding of the archdiocese and the growth of the Catholic Church in Indiana. The second half of the book contains historical information and photographs of each parish in the archdiocese.

Still Available

As number of uninsured rises, is Washington ready to act?

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Mary Smalls of Charleston, S.C., is proud of her 18-year-old daughter, Saray, who has been accepted into each of the eight colleges to which she applied.

But she's also worried that she might have to send Saray off to college in the fall without any health insurance—or that the daughter who has worked so hard might not be able to attend the college of her choice at all.

Smalls was laid off from her job at an auto parts factory just before Christmas. With a more than \$900 monthly house payment and weekly unemployment pay of \$365, the \$665 monthly cost to retain her health coverage under COBRA is out of the question.

COBRA is short for the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, which allows most workers who have lost or changed jobs to buy into their former employer's health coverage.

"I'm between a rock and a rock," she told Catholic News Service by telephone on March 20. "I feel like I'm letting [Saray] down. I've got to think of something between now and August."

The Smalls family is certainly not alone. In a report released in early March, the Center for American Progress Action Fund estimated that approximately 14,000 U.S. workers lost their health insurance every day in December and January.

The numbers come as no surprise to Nancy Anness, vice president of mission, advocacy and community clinics for St. Thomas Health Services in Nashville, Tenn., who said the system's

health clinics—which primarily serve the working poor—"see a new uninsured patient every 52 seconds."

"I have seen the uninsured population grow and grow and grow," she added. "We're busier than ever."

A recent report from the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Health Insurance Status and Its Consequences shows that high rates of uninsurance in a community affect the whole community, not just those

living without health insurance.

"When rates of uninsurance in communities are relatively high, insured adults in those communities are more likely to report difficulty obtaining needed health care and to be less satisfied with the care they receive," said Dr. John Z. Ayanian, a professor of medicine and health care policy at Harvard Medical School and a member of the committee, in March 11 testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee.

"Privately insured, working-age adults in higher uninsurance areas, for example, are significantly less likely to report having a place to go when sick, having a doctor's visit or routine preventive care [including mammography], and seeing a specialist when needed," he added. "They are also less likely to be satisfied with their choice of primary-care and specialty physicians or to trust their doctor's decisions."

Although the Census Bureau estimates the number of Americans who were uninsured in 2007 at 45.7 million, a recent report from the consumer health care group Families USA puts the number who spent at least some part of 2007 or 2008 without

health insurance at 86.7 million—or one-third of the U.S. population under age 65.

Nearly four out of five (79.2 percent) of those without health coverage were in working families. Almost 70 percent of families without health insurance included a full-time worker, and another 9.5 percent had a part-time worker.

The seventh annual observance of Cover the Uninsured Week was set for March 22-28. As the week neared, the number of hearings, briefings and reports related to health care reform seemed to be increasing exponentially in Washington. President Barack Obama and a growing number of members of Congress all pledged to get down to the hard work of drawing up a specific plan for providing health insurance to all Americans.

But is Congress likely to act soon?

Even Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., who calls health reform "my top priority—not one of, but the top priority—for the year," says it is an "ambitious goal" to get a bipartisan proposal to the Senate floor by June or July, as he hopes to do.

"I don't think I am naive at all about the problems that are out there," said Baucus, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, at a recent briefing for reporters sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation, Families USA and the National Federation of Independent Business.

At a separate briefing sponsored by the three organizations, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, the ranking Republican on the Finance Committee, agreed with Baucus about the need to get a health care reform proposal to the Senate floor before the



WASHINGTON LETTER



Medical and dental coordinator Yvonne White jokes while taking blood from Willie Dyson at St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center in 2006 in Rochester, N.Y. The center provides health care, counseling and adult education to the growing number of individuals who lack health insurance.

August recess.

"If we don't set an aggressive agenda, it won't get done this year," Grassley said on March 19. "And if it's not done this year, it won't get done for the next four years."

Both senators mentioned the need to "reward quality of care, not quantity" as a central part of health care reform and stressed the importance of a reform plan that is widely supported by both parties.

"I don't want a 51-vote solution," said Baucus, while Grassley said he hoped the eventual reform plan "passes with 75-80 votes" in the Senate.

Smalls, a member of Evening of Prayer Church of God in Charleston, would just like to see a solution that would get her daughter off to college, with health insurance.

"I promised God I would do my best by" Saray and her two older brothers, who are grown and have their own health insurance, she said. "But the Lord is good, and I believe that he is working this thing out." †

NOTRE DAME

continued from page 1

The 44th president also will deliver the commencement addresses at Arizona State



President Obama

University on May 13 and the U.S. Naval Academy on May 22, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said on March 20. The U.S. president traditionally delivers a speech to graduating students at one of the U.S. military academies.

Obama will be the ninth U.S. president to receive an honorary degree from Notre Dame, and the sixth to be a commencement speaker. In 2001, President George W. Bush addressed the graduating class about the importance of faith-based organizations.

The petition drive initiated by the

Cardinal Newman Society called it "an outrage and a scandal" for the university to honor Obama and asked Father Jenkins to "halt this travesty immediately."

"This nation has many thousands of accomplished leaders in the Catholic Church, in business, in law, in education, in politics, in medicine, in social services and in many other fields who would be far more appropriate choices to receive such an honor," the petition says.

By late afternoon on March 24, the Web site www.notredamescandal.com reported having received more than 81,000 signatures on the petition.

"By inviting Barack Obama as commencement speaker, Notre Dame is telling the nation that the teaching of the Catholic Church on this fundamental matter [of abortion] can be ignored," Ralph McInerney, a philosophy professor at Notre Dame, said in a March 23 column on his Web site, "The Catholic Thing."

"For one whose 54-year career as a member of the Notre Dame faculty is coming to an end this June, it is a bitter thing to reflect on the 2009 commencement speaker," he said.

Father Jenkins pointed out that U.S. presidents from both parties have come to Notre Dame for decades to speak to its graduates about a wide range of pressing issues—from foreign policy to poverty, from societal transformation to social service.

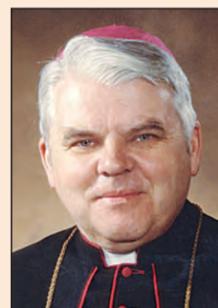
"We will honor Mr. Obama as an inspiring leader who faces many challenges—the economy, two wars, and health care, immigration and education reform—and is addressing them with intelligence, courage and honesty," he said.

"It is of special significance that we will hear from our first African-American president, a person who has spoken eloquently and movingly about race in this nation. Racial prejudice has been a deep wound in America, and Mr. Obama has been a healer," he said. †

Bishop D'Arcy: Has Notre Dame chosen prestige over truth?

(Editor's note: On March 24, Bishop John D'Arcy of the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese issued the following statement regarding the University of Notre Dame's invitation to President Barack Obama to deliver the commencement address and to receive an honorary degree at its May 17 graduation ceremony.)

"On Friday, March 21, Father John Jenkins, C.S.C., [Notre Dame's



Bishop John D'Arcy

president] phoned to inform me that President [Barack] Obama had accepted his invitation to speak to the graduating class at Notre Dame and receive an honorary

degree. We spoke shortly before the announcement was made public at the White House press briefing. It was the first time that I had been informed that Notre Dame had issued this invitation.

"President Obama has recently reaffirmed, and has now placed in public policy, his long-stated unwillingness to hold human life as sacred. While claiming to separate politics from science, he has in fact separated science from ethics and has brought the American government, for the first time in history, into supporting direct destruction of innocent human life.

"This will be the 25th Notre Dame graduation during my time as bishop. After much prayer, I have decided not to attend the graduation. I wish no disrespect to our President. I pray for

him and wish him well. I have always revered the Office of the Presidency. But a bishop must teach the Catholic faith 'in season and out of season,' and he teaches not only by his words—but by his actions.

"My decision is not an attack on anyone, but is in defense of the truth about human life.

"I have in mind also the statement of the U.S. Catholic bishops in 2004. 'The Catholic community and Catholic institutions should **not honor** those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions.' Indeed, the measure of any Catholic institution is not only what it stands for, but also what it will not stand for.

"I have spoken with Professor Mary Ann Glendon, who is to receive the Laetare Medal [at the commencement ceremony]. I have known her for many years, and hold her in high esteem. We are both teachers, but in different ways. I have encouraged her to accept this award and take the opportunity such an award gives her to teach.

"Even as I continue to ponder in prayer these events, which many have found shocking, so must Notre Dame. Indeed, as a Catholic university, Notre Dame must ask itself if by this decision it has chosen prestige over truth.

"Tomorrow [on March 25], we celebrate as Catholics the moment when our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, became a child in the womb of his most holy mother. Let us ask Our Lady to intercede for the university named in her honor, that it may recommit itself to the primacy of truth over prestige." †



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