Emotions evident as St. Anne parishioners break ground for new church in New Castle

By Mary Ann Wyand

NEW CASTLE—Cold wind gusts and rain mixed with snow couldn’t dampen the enthusiasm of St. Anne parishioners in New Castle on March 29 as they watched the long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony for their new $4.4 million church.

Several hundred parishioners and guests huddled together under umbrellas on the parish campus at 102 N. 19th St. as Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein blessed the site of the former St. Anne Church, which was destroyed in an arson fire on Holy Saturday, April 7, 2007.

For two years, St. Anne parishioners have worshiped in the basement of the Parish Life Center, which is the former school building.

“Just consider the rain and snow as tears of joy from God,” Archbishop Buechlein told the gathering at the start of the emotional prayer service.

“Today we break ground for a new house of the Lord that will be a gift that keeps on giving for many generations to come,” the archbishop said. “This long-awaited occasion is a sign of hope that is always present in our Church because of our faith. Although challenged by the circumstances of the dreadful fire of two Easters ago, your community of faith has carried on, and today I come to commend you for your perseverance.”

As many parishioners wiped tears from their eyes, Archbishop Buechlein explained that “St. Thomas Aquinas once said, ‘Today I come to you, O God, to make the pilgrimage to the holy city of Jerusalem. O Lord, may I enter into the Gate of Zion and the Temple of Jerusalem, saying: Blessed are you, O Lord, the King of all the earth.’”

“Today I am here to break ground for a new church, a place where we can celebrate Mass, celebrate family, celebrate life and our common faith,” the archbishop said.

For two years, St. Anne parishioners have faced a simple choice, Maxine Ferguson made her defining choice in the middle of her weekly visits to bring Communion to the parish’s sick and homebound members.

At that moment, the woman she was visiting reached for a large photo album, wanting to share with Ferguson the pictures and the story of her life.

Ferguson recognized the photo album immediately because the woman had shared her life story with her during a previous visit. As the woman flipped to the first page, Ferguson smiled and ooh-ed and aah-ed at the woman’s tales just as if she was hearing them for the first time.

“They have things they want to talk about,” Ferguson says with a smile. “You have to leave enough time to listen to them, pray with them and pray for them. I’m thankful to be part of the physical and spiritual lives of others, which helps to strengthen mine.”

She had the same attitude when she visited inmates in prison for several Christmases, singing carols and sharing dinner with them.

She has the same approach when she greets people at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, and when she serves lunch to the children from needy families who come to St. Thomas Aquinas for a summer day camp.

Maxine Ferguson

"Seeing others receive the Eucharist is a beautiful thing. Knowing that I helped the woman to trust and believe in a loving God who chooses some to follow his call is the best thing that has ever happened to me. Answering God’s call to religious life is based on trust, says pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Embracing a religious vocation is not about feeling worthy or strong enough to be one of God’s privileged ministers and witnesses, said Pope Benedict XVI.

It is about trusting God so much that one can answer God’s divine call without hesitation, he said in his message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

“What is asked of those who are called, for their part, is careful listening and prudent discernment, a generous and willing adherence to the divine plan, and a serious study of the reality that is proper to the priestly and religious vocations so as to be able to respond responsibly and with conviction,” he said.

The papal message for the day of prayer, which will be observed on May 3 in most countries, was released on March 31 at the Vatican. The 2009 theme is “Faith in the Divine Initiative—The Human Response.”

In his message, Pope Benedict said it is God who chooses some to follow his Son, Jesus, more closely and to put themselves fully at the service of the Church.

Answering God’s call “is never patterned after the timid self-interest of the worthless servant who, out of fear, hid the talent entrusted to him in the ground,” the pope said, citing Matthew’s Gospel parable of the talents.

Rather, it is a prompt and “ready adherence to the Lord’s invitation,” which is rooted in complete trust in God’s plan, he said.

The pope acknowledged the “worrisome shortage of priests” in some
Bishops: Catholic institutions’ use of Reiki therapy inappropriate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Reiki therapy, an alternative medicine originating in Japan, is unscientific and inappropriate for use by Catholic hospitals, clinics and retreat centers and people representing the Church, the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Doctrine said on April 26.

“For a Catholic to believe in Reiki therapy presents insurmountable problems,” the committee’s guidelines said. “In terms of caring for one’s physical health or the physical health of others, to employ a technique that has no scientific support [or even plausibility] is generally not prudent.”

The bishops said the technique—which involves a Reiki practitioner laying hands on a client—also is encouraged as a “spiritual” kind of healing, but that for Christians “access to divine healing” comes through prayer to God.

A Catholic who puts his or her trust in Reiki “would be operating in the realm of superstition,” they said.

The U.S. bishops outlined their position in “Guidelines for Evaluating Reiki as an Alternative Therapy.” The bishops’ guidelines, available online at www.usccb.org/dpp/doctrine.htm, were developed by the doctrine committee, chaired by Bishop William E. Lori of Fort Worth, Conn.

They were approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Administrative Committee on March 24 during its spring meeting in Washington. The Administrative Committee is the authoritative body of the USCCB that approves committee statements.

The guidelines described Reiki as a healing technique “invented in Japan in the late 1800s by Mikao Usui, who was studying Buddhist texts.”

They stated that “according to Reiki teaching, illness is caused by some kind of disruption or imbalance in one’s ‘life energy.’ A Reiki practitioner effects healing by placing his or her hands in certain positions on the patient’s body in order to facilitate the flow of Reiki, the ‘universal life energy,’ from the Reiki practitioner to the patient.”

But the bishops’ guidelines said, “Reiki lacks scientific credibility” and “has not been accepted by the scientific and medical communities as an effective therapy.”

“Reputable scientific studies attesting to the efficacy of Reiki are lacking, as is a plausible scientific explanation as to how it could possibly be efficacious,” the bishops’ guidelines said.

In 2008, after conducting a review of random clinical trials using Reiki, International Journal of Clinical Practice concluded: “The evidence is insufficient to suggest Reiki is an effective treatment for any condition. Therefore the value of Reiki remains unproven.”

The bishops’ guidelines noted that “Reiki is frequently described as a ‘spiritual’ kind of healing as opposed to the common medical procedures of healing using physical means.”

However, there is a radical difference between Reiki therapy and the healing by divine power in which Christians believe, the guidelines said.

“In Christians, the access to divine healing is by prayer to Christ as Lord and Savior, while the essence of Reiki is not a prayer but a technique that is passed down from the ‘Reiki master’ to the pupil, a technique that once mastered will reliably produce the anticipated results,” they said.

“Reiki therapy ‘finds no support either in the findings of natural science or in Christian belief,’” the guidelines told.

They warned that “there are important dangers” in using Reiki for one’s spiritual health, however, a Catholic who put his or her trust in Reiki “would be operating in the realm of superstition, the man’s land that is neither faith nor science,” they continued.

One’s worship of God is corrupted by superstition because it turns “one’s religious feeling and practice in a false direction,” the guidelines stated.

“We can’t always prevent people from falling into superstition through ignorance, but it is the responsibility of all who teach in the name of the Church to eliminate such ignorance as much as possible,” they said.

“Since Reiki therapy is not compatible with either Christian teaching or scientific evidence, it would be inappropriate for Catholic institutions, such as Catholic health care facilities and retreat centers, or persons representing the Church, such as Catholic chaplains, to promote or to provide support for Reiki therapy,” the guidelines said.

Official Appointments

Effective immediately


Rev. Aaron J. Jenkins, associate pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove and chaplain of Father Thomas Scenica Memorial High School in Indianapolis, to chaplain of the Indianapolis Fire Department while continuing as associate pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove and chaplain of Father Thomas Scenica Memorial High School in Indianapolis.


Rev. George Joseph Nangachivettill, administrator of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, St. Anne Parish in Hammond and St. Maurice Parish in North India, and appointed pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, St. Anne Parish in Hammond and St. Maurice Parish in North India, and appointed pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, St. Anne Parish in Hammond and St. Maurice Parish in Hammond.

Rev. Harold W. Rightor II, associate pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Jennings County and St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County and director of youth ministry for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, to administrator of St. Anne Parish in Jennings County and St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County.

Rev. Vincent A. Amuso, associate pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg and St. Mary Parish in Aurora, returning home to the Diocese of Okigwe, Imo State, in Nigeria.

Rev. Gerald Okafe. Diocese of Sokoto, Sokoto State, in Nigeria, in residence at St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, appointed associate pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg and St. Mary Parish in Aurora.

These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Daniel M. Bechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com
E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2009 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.
Bir Zeit, West Bank (CRS)—Issam Shaheen always will remember Christmas Day 2008 as the day he stopped being able to support his family. On that day, Shaheen, 43, and his six family members were hurt in a car accident.

Though seriously injured, all six members of the family survived. Their medical bills have been covered by the insurance of the driver who rammed his truck into the family’s car. Transportation costs to Ramallah to reach the hospital and rehabilitation clinic are not covered, Shaheen said.

Shaheen, whose right hip was shattered, can no longer work as a taxi driver, put food on the table and pay his children’s school fees. He depends on his older son to help him in the little falafel stand he started as a side business years ago to supplement his driving income.

“It is frustrating to need to ask for help,” said Shaheen, who needs crutches or a wheelchair to get around. His 7-year-old son, Amir, attends the Catholic school at Bir Zeit’s Immaculate Conception Parish, his driving income.

A former carpenter, he now is dependent on donations for his pills he must take daily and the various inhalers on which his life depends. After two of his oxygen tanks broke, he borrowed a tank because of the cost to replace them.

Eid said the society’s funds are spread out to provide assistance to as many families as possible. Sometimes the society can only give a symbolic amount of money. So while Nabil Shaheen’s pills cost about $220 a month, the society can only provide a symbolic amount of money.

“I am thankful for the help, but I feel very bad having to ask. We were very poor, very bad having to ask. We were unable to talk. His wife, Loudy, 45, took care of both of them, dependent on her driving income.

Halaweh.

The branches in the West Bank cities of Jifna and Ramallah and in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem branch also has assisted Gaza residents after the recent war with Israel.

The society provides needy Christian families with food, clothes and monetary help. It also provides elderly care, helps families pay tuition and medical care, and helps with the costs of weddings, baptisms and burials.

In Bir Zeit alone, the number of Christian families the St. Vincent de Paul Society has helped in the past three years has doubled from 70 to 135, said Eid.

Eid said, adding that he wished the society could do more for Shaheen and his family.

Traditionally, Palestinian families have helped each other, but in the current economic situation that rarely is possible, said Eid.

The extended Shaheen family is facing particularly difficult problems. Shaheen’s older brother, Nabil, 62, has struggled for 10 years with chronic pulmonary disease as a result of years of heavy smoking.

A former carpenter, he now is dependent on donations to pay for the 45 pills he must take daily and the various inhalers on which his life depends. After two of his oxygen tanks broke, he borrowed a tank because of the cost to replace them.

Eid said the society’s funds are spread out to provide assistance to as many families as possible. Sometimes the society can only give a symbolic amount of money. So while Nabil Shaheen’s pills cost about $220 a month, the society can only provide him with $120 to $240 a year, he said.

There is no governmental health care plan in the Palestinian territories. Nabil Shaheen was able to pay for insurance until three years ago. The majority of uninsured Palestinians ignore their health issues because they are unable to pay for medical care.

So was the case with Fakhim Sayej’s 55-year-old sister, Mairam, who had diabetes and died earlier this year. Four years ago, the 54-year-old Sayej, who worked as a tailor, had a stroke, which left him paralyzed on one side and unable to talk. His wife, Loudy, 45, took care of both of them, dependent on donations from the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the parish priest, Father Azz Alaweh.

“I am thankful for the help, but I feel very bad having to ask. We were independent and not used to needing help,” said Loudy Sayej.

The situation throughout the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem is the same, said Diana Safieh, national president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for foreign donors feeling the economic crunch, donations are shrinking and the services the local branches provide are in danger.

“The whole situation all over the world is awful,” Safieh said. “With the financial problems, people are left without work and donations have become scarce. Thank God we still have local people who give. For example, St. Mary Family Parish in Ramallah asks parishioners to bring in donations of nonperishable food items during Lent and sent them to the society.

“Whatever we are fasting from we have to give to the poor,” said the parish priest, Father Akmam Hijazin. “If I am fasting, it also means I am giving something. What I don’t eat belongs to God and so I can give it to others. It makes the fast more meaningful.”

Rehearsal dates set throughout archdiocese for 175th anniversary Mass choir

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Singers from throughout the archdiocese are invited to participate in the choir for the jubilee Mass celebrating the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis beginning at 3 p.m. on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

The choir, which will be seated near the altar area in the stadium, is open to anyone of high school age or older. Choir members are required to attend at least one of the initial rehearsals, called auditions, unless EID unless indicated otherwise.

The first rehearsal may be chosen from the following options:
• April 23, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., St. Andrew Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond.
• April 26, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. CDT, St. Paul Church, 814 Jefferson St., Tell City.
• April 27, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., St. Bartholomew Church, 1360 27th St., Columbus.
• April 27, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., 9 a.m., St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. M eridian St., Indianapolis.
• April 27, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., 9 a.m., St. Margaret Mary Church, 2405 S. Seventh St., Terre Haute.

• April 29, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., St. Mary Church, 302 E. 10th St., Greensburg.
• April 29, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., St. Mary of the Knobs Church, 3033 Martin Road, Floyd County.
• April 30, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., St. Charles Borromeo Church, 222 E. Third St., Bloomington.
• April 30, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. M eridian St., Indianapolis.

The second rehearsal will be held on May 3 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lucas Oil Stadium.

At the first rehearsal, choir members will receive a music booklet for the Mass. They will also need a copy of the mixed four-part setting of “The Lord Is My Shepherd,” based on Psalm 23 and written by Thomas M athews, available at the rehearsal for $2.

[To register for the choir, send your name with the date and location of the rehearsal you will attend to worship@archindy.org or call 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or 317-236-1483.]

Volunteers are 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 as celebrating the archdiocese’s 175th anniversary.

A bout 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 archdiocese 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.lamey@archindy.org. Call Steve James at 317-236-1481 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1451, if you have questions.]

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The Criterion Friday, April 3, 2009
Through ashes and tears of joy, prophetic words bring our faith home this Easter

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The words that Archbishop Daniel M. Bechlein spoke at the ground-breaking ceremony for the new St. Anne Church in New Castle were prophetic.

So was the wisdom shared by Franciscan Sister Shirley Geth two years ago after historic St. Anne Church was destroyed by arson on Holy Saturday, April 7, 2007. “I just consider the rain and snow as tears of joy from God,” a Bishop Bechlein told the several hundred parishioners and guests who lived near the church, apologized and received a 40-year prison term as a result, the the Church is ever ancient and ever new.

Like the luminous mysteries, they are based more on Scripture than tradition. Each station begins with a quotation from the Gospels.

While there are still 14 stations, seven are new. Gone are the three “talls” of Jesus while carrying the cross. Also gone is the “encounter with Mary on the Way of the Cross” and “Veronica wiping the face of Jesus.” Pope John Paul II also deleted the “stripping of Jesus’ garments” and “taking Jesus down from the cross.” Instead, there are seven new stations.

It starts with Jesus in the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. The meditations written by Pope John Paul II for each station are very brief. Each one is only a sentence long, like Japanese haiku; short thoughts that focus the mind.

Like the luminous mysteries, the Stations of the Cross written by Pope John Paul II are both an innovation and an ancient tradition. The Church is ever ancient and ever new.

“It’s new life, and I think out of it comes new hope. I think out of it comes new love. I think out of it comes new strength,” Defibaugh said.

I miss some of the traditional stations, especially Veronica’s wiping the face of Jesus, which is a reminder of the power of simple deeds of compassion.

The meditations written by Pope John Paul II are far more powerful than the Stations of the Cross. People have more difficulty meditating on the Stations of the Cross. They are much more difficult.

“This is my neighborhood. I go by here 40 years and lives near the church. “This is my neighborhood. I go by here ever new.

The Criterion

Letters to the Editor

Reader: The Criterion is an advocate for those who suffer because of poverty, violence and injustice in our world.

In response to the letter to the Editor published in The Criterion, with all due respect for the writer’s concerns about an “outcry against the immoral and sinful acts of war, torture, capital punishment, and the violence of poverty, racism, sexism, immigration issues, etc.,” I would like to raise an even more important point.

Without having secured the single most important human right—upon which our country was first and foremost founded—how can we ever begin to address the rest?

Alice Price Greenfield
Seamos agradecidos durante la Semana Santa y adentrémonos en su esperanza

La Semana Santa es una época de gracia especiálica. Nos entregamos a la oración litúrgica que la Iglesia nos presenta, principalmente durante el Triduo del Jueves Santo, el Viernes Santo y la Vigilia Pascual. Estas celebraciones litúrgicas en particular llevan consigo la noble sencillez de nuestra herencia cálctica más antigua.

El Jueves Santo celebramos el memorial de la Última Cena del Señor con una sencillez que el lector más superficial no puede ver. Esta celebración nos recuerda que el Señor no temía la muerte por nosotros. Como él nos despidió, hoy, también, despedimos a aquellos de nosotros que llevan más pesado el peso de nuestra experiencia humana. Vemos en su sacrificio la paz y la vida que la muerte no puede tomar.

El Viernes Santo nos lleva a la Pasión del Cristo que el Señor nos ha dejado como recordatorio de sus sufrimientos. Examinando este episodio, recordamos el amor que el Señor nos ha ofrecido y su sacrificio por nosotros. Nuestros crucifijos contienen un recuerdo cristiano sobre la vida y la resurrección y tocan una fibra sensible en nuestra experiencia humana. Vemos en ellos un símbolo de esperanza cuando nosotros mismos experimentamos el peso de la cruz en nuestras vidas.

La Pascua es una festividad especial para aquellos de nosotros que llevan más que su propia cura de sufrimiento humano. Jesús nos demostró que la vida no termina con la muerte. Podemos experimentar la solidaridad con Él en la oración, ya sea como una comunidad creyente o por nuestra cuenta. Por lo tanto, ¿la Pascua es la máxima celebración de esperanza para aquellos que enfrentan la muerte con temor, Jesús desterró de una vez por todas que en el misterio de la pasión y muerte de Jesucristo nos encontraríamos salvados de pecado y de la muerte.

Nuestra Iglesia se aferra a la tradición de exhibir la cruz con la imagen del cuerpo de Jesús en ella. Esta tradición no consta de una negación de la victoria de Jesús sobre la muerte, sino de un desplazamiento de la posición central que tiene la Resurrección en la vida cristiana. El crucifijo irradia el don inmenso del sacrificio del propio Cristo por nosotros.

Desearíamos recordar que una persona humana en edad de discipular tiene la cruz y sufrió profundamente debido a su amor por nosotros.

Seamos agradecidos durante la Semana Santa y adentrémonos en su esperanza.
Retreats and Programs

April 3

April 3-5

April 6

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 spirituality@thedome.org.

April 7-12

April 8
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 spirituality@thedome.org.

April 8-12

April 9
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 spirituality@thedome.org.

April 9-12

April 13
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg.

April 3
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Sowers St., Indianapolis. Lumen Dei meeting, Mass, 6:30 a.m., Mass, breakfast and program at Priory Hall, Father Paul Elmore, presenter. St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, presenter, $20 per person. Information: 317-919-5316 or e-mail LumenDei@spsmw.org.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana (CCRi), first Friday Mass, 12:15 a.m. Information: 812-367-1411 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 8

April 8-19
Monastery Immaculate Conception, 812-414-1497, 814 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). “Awakening: A Rebirth of Enthusiasm in Vocations.”” Information: 812-414-1497 or spiritual@thedomc.org.

April 9

April 10

April 11-12
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Come Away and Rest Awhile,” silent day of prayer. Information: 317-545-7681 or spirituality@thedome.org.

April 12
Parishioners at St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 126th St., Indianapolis. “Serenity, Step by Step,” Lenten organ concert, 4:30-7:30 p.m. Information: 317-784-4207.

April 14-19
Monastery Immaculate Conception, 812-414-1497, 814 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). “Awakening: A Rebirth of Enthusiasm in Vocations.”” Information: 812-414-1497 or spiritual@thedomc.org.

April 15

April 16-19

April 17

April 18
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “The Men’s Night at the Bunk’s.” men’s spirituality, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-216-6540 or parthur@archindy.org.

April 18-19

April 19

April 19

April 19

April 19-20
Monastery Immaculate Conception, 812-414-1497, 814 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). “Awakening: A Rebirth of Enthusiasm in Vocations.”” Information: 812-414-1497 or spiritual@thedomc.org.

April 20

April 20

April 20

April 21

April 21

April 22
Parishioners at St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 126th St., Indianapolis. “Serenity, Step by Step,” Lenten organ concert, 4:30-7:30 p.m. Information: 317-784-4207.

April 22
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “The Men’s Night at the Bunk’s.” men’s spirituality, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-216-6540 or parthur@archindy.org.

April 23-May 1
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “The Holy Spirit: My Friend and Companion,” 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

April 30

May 1
PHOENIX (CNS)—Maybe TV isn’t so bad after all.

An estimated 92,000 inactive Catholics in the Phoenix Diocese have come back to the Church in the last year thanks in large part to a groundbreaking television advertising campaign called Catholics Come Home.

The promotional spots featured people and locations from around the Phoenix area that promoted the Church during prime-time television. The cornerstones of the campaign, the Catholics Come Home Web site, addresses often misunderstood aspects of the practice of their faith, it let them know that we want them to come home,” Phoenix Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted said.

The commercials, which ran during Lent in 2008, detail the good works of the Catholic Church throughout history. They also offer real-life testimonials of local faltering Catholics explaining what turned them away and what drew them back to the Church.

“Phoenix was supposed to be this quiet little city,” said Tom Peterson, a former resident of Phoenix who is president and founder of Catholics Come Home, which is now based in Greensboro, N.C.

“Word went worldwide as soon as you launched,” he said in an interview with the Criterion diocesan newspaper.

The Catholic Sun.

More than half a million different visitors from all 50 states and 80 countries have visited the Web site catholicscomehome.com since the spots first aired.

The response was so positive that other dioceses around the country are looking to Phoenix for ideas on bringing Catholics back to the Church.

The Diocese of Corpus Christi in Texas recently launched different versions of the television spots in English and Spanish. Each parish supplemented the commercials at its Wednesday services with a brochure for everyone answering common faith-related questions and listing Mass times and ministries.

The Catholics Come Home spots will appear in more than a dozen other dioceses around the country later in 2009 or early 2010. By the time Advent rolls around in 2010, organizers say the ads will go national on major networks.

“Our family is made up of every race,” begins the longest of the spots. “We are young and old, rich and poor, men and women, sinners and saints.”

The two-minute ad highlights the vital part that the Catholic Church has played in establishing hospitals, orphanages and schools in addition to its role in science, marriage, family life, Scripture and the sacraments.

“If you’ve been away from the Catholic Church, we invite you to take another look,” the announcer says toward the end of the ad. “We are Catholic; we welcome home.”

Another two-minute ad shows men and women alone watching the best and the worst scenes from their lives play back before them on an old movie reel.

The final ad that aired, Peterson said the Catholics Come Home campaign has “the potential of transforming lives in a way that we just don’t have the ability to do.”

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Archdiocesan parishes schedule annual Lenten penance services

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Archdiocese of Indianapolis

**CALLED BY NAME**
ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
TEACHER RECRUITMENT DAY
Tuesday, April 28, 2009
Assembly Hall, Catholic Center
1400 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
8:30AM-3:00PM
Lunch Provided

General Information:

• The Interview Day is free for all candidates.
• Candidates may retrieve information on the different schools and pre-registration forms online at www.archindy.org.
• Most of the 60+ schools will be represented by the administration from the schools.
• Candidates should dress professionally.
• Candidates should bring at least 15 copies of their résumés.
• Employees of our schools are offered a full benefit package; including health, dental, vision, drug plan and life insurance. A retirement plan is offered through the Archdiocese.

Please Contact:
Mr. Jerry Flynn, Principal
jflynn@staschool-indy.org

**CALLED BY NAME**
4600 North Illinois Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208
Phone: 317-255-6244**** Fax: 317-255-6106

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**Effort draws 92,000 inactive Catholics back to Church**

PHOENIX (CNS)—Maybe TV isn’t so bad after all.

An estimated 92,000 inactive Catholics in the Phoenix Diocese have come back to the Church in the last year thanks in large part to a groundbreaking television advertising campaign called Catholics Come Home.

The promotional spots featured people and locations from around the Phoenix area that promoted the Church during prime-time television. The cornerstones of the campaign, the Catholics Come Home Web site, addresses often misunderstood aspects of the practice of their faith, it let them know that we want them to come home,” Phoenix Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted said.

The commercials, which ran during Lent in 2008, detail the good works of the Catholic Church throughout history. They also offer real-life testimonials of local faltering Catholics explaining what turned them away and what drew them back to the Church.

“Phoenix was supposed to be this quiet little city,” said Tom Peterson, a former resident of Phoenix who is president and founder of Catholics Come Home, which is now based in Greensboro, N.C.

“Word went worldwide as soon as you launched,” he said in an interview with the Criterion diocesan newspaper.

The Catholic Sun.

More than half a million different visitors from all 50 states and 80 countries have visited the Web site catholicscomehome.com since the spots first aired.

The response was so positive that other dioceses around the country are looking to Phoenix for ideas on bringing Catholics back to the Church.

The Diocese of Corpus Christi in Texas recently launched different versions of the television spots in English and Spanish. Each parish supplemented the commercials at its Wednesday services with a brochure for everyone answering common faith-related questions and listing Mass times and ministries.

The Catholics Come Home spots will appear in more than a dozen other dioceses around the country later in 2009 or early 2010. By the time Advent rolls around in 2010, organizers say the ads will go national on major networks.

“Our family is made up of every race,” begins the longest of the spots. “We are young and old, rich and poor, men and women, sinners and saints.”

The two-minute ad highlights the vital part that the Catholic Church has played in establishing hospitals, orphanages and schools in addition to its role in science, marriage, family life, Scripture and the sacraments.

“If you’ve been away from the Catholic Church, we invite you to take another look,” the announcer says toward the end of the ad. “We are Catholic; we welcome home.”

Another two-minute ad shows men and women alone watching the best and the worst scenes from their lives play back before them on an old movie reel.

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增长。
**Lynne O’Day**

The two gifts changed everything for Lynne O’Day. After several years of marriage, she and her husband, Daniel, adopted their son, Patrick, and later their daughter, Kathleen. “That started us down a path that really changed our lives from being focused on ourselves,” O’Day recalls. “When someone gives you the gift of their child, it’s overwhelming. It gave us the opportunity to be parents—an awesome experience.”

Since those days in the early 1970s, O’Day has been one sharing her gifts to make the world a better place. She’s been extensively involved with Catholic Charities agencies throughout the archdiocese. And, fittingly, she developed a deep commitment to serving as a volunteer for St. Elizabeth/Coleman Pregnancy and Adoption Services in Indianapolis, an archdiocesan Catholic Charities ministry from which she and her husband adopted their two children.

“What a tremendous organization that is in people’s lives,” says O’Day, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. “I was a volunteer for 30 years and president the last year.”

A few retiring in 2005 as senior vice president of operations at St. Vincent Health, she deepened her commitment to her volunteer efforts, seeing it as a way to fill the void she felt in her life since the death of her husband.

“I had a lot of time to think about how I wanted to spend my time,” O’Day explains. “I was a public servant, and I also volunteered for the Greenskeeper Free Clinic, which provides medical care to the poor and the homeless in Marion County. I looked at the void I felt and thought, ‘This is what I want to do.’ I’m really good at it. I’ve been blessed. This is a wonderful way to share my blessings with others.”

**Patty Schmalz**

Patty Schmalz likes to view God as a generous benefactor, someone who gives us the gift of love and life. She’s been extensively involved with Catholic Charities agencies throughout the archdiocese of Indianapolis, the setting where she has been a lector, a room mother for the parish’s school, a food pantry volunteer, a co-chair of the parish festival, a marriage preparation team member, president of the ladies’ club and the first woman elected chairperson of the parish pastoral council.

And that’s just a small list of her volunteer efforts. Still, she wonders why she deserves the Spirit of Service Award. “There are so many people in my parish who are deeply involved,” she says. “They really take a sense of ownership of parish life. It feels odd being singled out, but it’s nice.”

So is the way the conversation with her surprisingly turns to homemade pies and how she talks about the importance of the crust. It’s a foundation that takes time and the right touch. Schmalz explains. She could just as easily be describing her volunteer efforts. She learned both—the pie-making and the volunteering—from her mother, Rita Aible.

“You learn how to be a person from your parents,” says Schmalz, a seamstress like her mother, who sewed wedding gowns. “When I was growing up, my mother was not a preacher, she was a doer. My mother lived stewardship before we ever used the word. She inspired everyone in our family, and there were a lot of us. She always showed us that anywhere we could share our gifts with others, we should do it.”

**John Knapp**

At 16, John Knapp traveled to a poor, rural village in El Salvador—a trip that changed her life and moved her to try to change the lives of others.

“I lived with the people in the rural village where I stayed and experienced their sense of humanity and of poverty and I also witnessed their immense suffering,” says Knap, a graduate of St. Pius X School in Indianapolis.

“It’s important to go out and encounter the poor, whether they’re in your own city or another country, and just listen to them,” he says. “That’s what I’ve been given in life. I feel I owe so much back. I want to listen and love in a way that I hope I can sustain all through my life.”

She also volunteers to help the Latino community near Notre Dame, and when she returns to Indianapolis, she volunteers at Mt. Trashie, an inner-city, multi-service center run by the Sisters of Providence in Indianapolis.

“The Sullivan and Sullivan Hardware”

When Pat Sullivan starts talking about the history of his family’s business, it’s easy to understand why Sullivan Hardware and Garden is so chosen to receive the Corporate Leadership Award.

“Sullivan Hardware was founded in 1954 by my father, Robert Sullivan,” Pat Sullivan notes. “A few serving in World War II and the Korean War, my father started a contracting business before he established the hardware store. Actually, it was my mom who ran the hardware store while my dad continued his contracting business. My dad grew up in Holy Cross Parish (in Indianaplois) and was very active in donating his time and materials.”

Those contributions to the Church continued. The store was moved from the eastside of Indianapolis to a location at 71st Street and Keystone Avenue.

“We became members of St. Pius X Parish, but Dad tried to support all the parishes in the area,” says Pat. “He became very active in donating his time and materials.”

As more locations of Sullivan Hardware and Garden have been added, the family tradition of sharing its blessings with the Church has continued. Besides supporting different parishes and parish schools, the South Bend-born brothers also support two organizations that expand the Seeds of Hope, the Little Sisters of the Poor and Right to Life of Indianapolis.

“My dad always led by example,” he says. “Whatever the Church needed, he did it. We learned from him. It’s always been a part of our lives. It’s what we do.”

**Table: Tables are available for Spirit of Service Awards dinner on April 22**

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The Criterion Friday, April 3, 2009

St. Joseph and St. Anne parishioners restore and renovate church interiors

By Mary Ann Wyand

JENNINGS COUNTY — Two country churches in Jennings County received beautiful Lenten makeovers in February and March thanks to the generosity and hard work of parishioners who helped restore and renovate the church interiors in only a few weeks.

Farmers in southern Indiana, said he knew that farmers routinely complete big jobs quickly, but he was still amazed by their efficiency, expertise and detailed craftsmanship.

For parishioners who helped restore and renovate the church interiors, "I'm just amazed by their talent and hard work at both churches," Father Mey said. "The work at St. Anne Church began on Jan. 12 and we were done in a month. We never moved out of the church for Mass. At St. Joseph Church, work began on Feb. 16 and Masses were celebrated in the Parish Center for a month while the restoration was done. There was no grant money. It was all done out of the generosity of people's hearts."

Seven-year-old Xavier Vogel of St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County carries a Lamb of God sculpture in the procession at Mass on March 19, the feast of St. Joseph. The lamb symbolizes Jesus and is seated on a book that represents the Word of God. The book is painted blue to indicate that through Mary we receive the Word made flesh. The lamb sculpture fits in the front of the altar.

In Jennings County, The parish was founded in 1841.

Hed of Holy Cross order asks President Obama to rethink position on abortion and other life issues

ROM E (CNS) — The head of the Holy Cross religious order that founded the University of Notre Dame has written to U.S. President Barack Obama and asked him to rethink his positions on abortion and other life issues.

U.S. Father Hugh W. Cleary, Holy Cross superior general in Rome, said that when Obama receives an honorary degree from the Indiana university and delivers the commencement address in May, he should take to heart the objections of Catholics who have been scandalized by the invitation.

Father Cleary asked the president to use the occasion to "give your conscience a fresh opportunity to be formed anew in a holy and reverent before human life in every form at every stage— from conception to natural death."

The 13-page letter, dated March 22, was made available to Catholic News Service in Rome. Father Cleary also prepared an abridged version of the text as an “open letter” to the president, which was expected to be published on the Web site of America magazine.

Father Cleary’s letter began by congratulating Obama on being awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Notre Dame, and said the university was honored to have him deliver the commencement address.

The visit should be a “teachable moment” for all involved, Father Cleary said.

He asked the president to take advantage of the occasion to “rethink, through prayerful wrestling with your own conscience, your stated positions on the vital life issues of our day particularly in regard to abortion, embryonic forms of stem-cell research and your position on the Freedom of Choice Act.”

Father Cleary repeatedly quoted Obama’s words at the National Prayer Breakfast in February: “There is no God who condemns taking the life of an innocent human being.” Sadly, the priest said, legalized abortion implies that a person’s choice for personal freedom supersedes this obligation to protect and nurture human life.

"An ‘unwanted’ child comes in many forms: an untimely presence, a disabled or deformed creature; an embryo of the wrong sex; a child conceived out of wedlock; a child conceived through a hideous crime,” he said.

Father Cleary said the United States has a history of defining the parameters of human life "when it suits our self-interest." One example was slavery, justified by denying that a black human being of African descent was fully human, he said.

Father Cleary noted that many U.S. Catholics today feel their beliefs are dismissed without the serious attention they deserve. Catholics recognize that they live in a pluralistic society, he said, but also believe they have something vital to say about life issues.

"We want to be taken seriously. We insist on taking ourselves seriously; that is why there has been so much protest and turmoil in regard to your presence at Notre Dame," he wrote.

He suggested that during his Notre Dame appearance Obama speak about how Catholics “can be taken seriously for our faith in the face of public ridicule and obstacles the Church can encounter.

Father Cleary repeatedly quoted Obama’s words at the National Prayer Breakfast in February: “The Lord of the harvest does not cease to ask some to place their entire existence freely at his service so as to work with him more closely in the mission of salvation,” he said.

(EDITOR’S NOTE: The text of the pope’s message in English is posted online at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/vocations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090120_hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090120_xlvi-vocations_en.html The text of the pope’s message in Spanish is posted online at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/vocations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090120_xlvi-vocations_sp.html)
Bill to restore wrongful death of unborn in civil suits withdrawn

By Bridgit Curtis Ayer

Good people with good intentions working to create good public policy can be derailed by political maneuvering.

This year’s wrongful death bill, Senate Bill 341, which would have restored Indiana’s wrongful death law for viable fetuses in civil suits, hit a political snag on March 23 and was withdrawn by the bill’s sponsor.

Co-authored in the Senate by Sen. Brent Steele (R-Bedford) and Sen. Vaneta Becker (R-Evansville) and sponsored in the House by Rep. Peggy Welch (D-Bloomington), Senate Bill 341 would have allowed civil suits to be restored to its pre-2002 form to include the wrongful death or injury of an unborn child who had reached viability.

Under the bill, viability is defined as a fetus that could survive outside the womb, which is about seven months gestational age.

The bill passed the Senate by a 47-0 vote in the House, the bill passed the Public Policy Committee, but when Rep. Welch, a pro-life Democrat, realized that amendments were going to be attached to the bill to make it a pro-life, political football rather than an effort to correct the immediate problem in the statute, she withdrew the bill.

A common maneuver among elected representatives at the statehouse is the practice by both political parties to offer amendments which may either kill legislation or to get lawmakers to take a recorded vote on politically controversial language, which can later be used against them in election years.

Second reading amendments were filed in the House to amend Senate Bill 341, some of which would have a child defined as an unborn fetus at any stage of pregnancy rather than at viability, which is currently in the bill.

“The purpose of the bill is to restore legislative intent of the definition of a child for purposes of wrongful death civil suits, which was changed by a 2002 ruling by the Indiana Supreme Court in the Bolin v. Wingert decision,” Rep. Welch said.

“Basically in [the] 2002 ruling interpreted the statute to mean that the legislature did not intend to exclude the viable fetus. However, because the legislature did not explicitly include viable fetus in the definition, the court did believe it could act where the legislature had not.

In 1987, the Indiana Supreme Court said that they didn’t believe the statute was clear regarding the definition of a child as one that had taken a breath, it would have been considered a child, the other didn’t, so it couldn’t be considered a child in a wrongful death suit.”

Rep. Welch said, “We are trying to move back the point of pre-Bolin, which was a 100-year tradition and precedent of recognizing a viable fetus as a child for the purpose of being a party in a wrongful death suit.”

In 1987, the legislature, while revising and updating civil suit statutes, defined a child as an unmarried individual without dependents, and who is less than 20 years of age.

Prior to 1987, it was commonly understood, accepted and supported in case law that a child in wrongful death suits included a viable fetus. The legislature did not intend to exclude the viable fetus.

However, because the legislature did not explicitly include viable fetus in the definition, the court did believe it could act where the legislature had not.

In 2002, the Indiana Supreme Court’s Bolin v. Wingert ruling interpreted the definition of a child as one that had taken a breath. This ruling came about as the result of a lawsuit filed when a car accident involving Rebecca Bolin, who was eight to 10 weeks pregnant, suffered a miscarriage.

When the Bolin couple filed suit under Indiana’s wrongful death civil wrongful death code for damages of their unborn child, the trial court found they had no claim under the current statute.

When the Bolins appealed their case to the Indiana Supreme Court, the court looked at the definition of a child and found that “the fact that the legislature did not expressly include unborn children within the definition of a ‘child’ in the Children Wrongful Death Statute lends further credence to our conclusion that an eight-to-10-week-old fetus does not meet the statute’s definition of ‘child.’

The ruling stated that the legislature clearly set upper limits for a child, but not lower limits.

According to the Bolin v. Wingert case, the court based their decision on the fact that in other sections of the Indiana Code the legislature has enacted protections for unborn children using explicit language.

For example, Indiana Code 35-42-1-6, enacted in 1979, imposes criminal liability for the knowing or intentional termination of a human pregnancy, and in Indiana Code 35-46-5-1 the legislature made it a crime to traffic in fetal tissue.

Rep. Welch said she is hopeful she can bring the bill back again before the April 29 session adjournment deadline. The Indiana Catholic Conference has been working with Rep. Welch, and is supportive of the legislation.

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

Catholic Radio provides weekly legislative updates

As in years past, Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director, will provide weekly legislative updates on Indianapolis Catholic radio.

They are broadcast at 11:05 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings on WSPM 89.1 FM following Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein’s weekly radio broadcast.

Indianapolis Catholic Radio also streams on the Internet and can be heard statewide by going to www.catholicradioindy.org and clicking on the “Listen Now” button.
Reflect on Christ’s Passion by meditating on Scripture

By Fr. Gerald O’Collins, S.J.

Soon we will begin Holy Week with its awesome liturgies, expressive music and powerful Scripture readings. We will hear passages that are among the most profound and poignant in the whole Bible. Some of them are rather long and perhaps not as familiar as other passages.

If we have the chance, we might read the biblical readings ahead of time and study them. (See the “Daily Readings” box on page 13 for the list of Scriptures for Holy Week and the Easter Triduum.)

If we pause and pray, we will certainly notice and be touched by subtle patterns and underlying themes.

The Passion story from Mark’s Gospel that we hear on this Palm Sunday is a gripping read. Two pervasive patterns help to make it so powerful:

• First, a series of people take action against Jesus and “hand him over.”
• Second, Jesus himself, right through Mark’s Passion story, is utterly alone.

Even before the Last Supper, Judas has decided to “betray” or “hand over” Jesus to the chief priests (Mk 14:10-11, 21, 42, 44). Then the Sanhedrin, led by the high priest, Caiaphas, and the other priests, acts against Jesus by having him bound and “handing him over” to Pilate (Mk 15:1, 10). Finally, the Roman prefect acts against Jesus by having him scourged, and then “handing him over to be crucified” (Mk 15:15).

It is not difficult to identify motives that prompted the actions of Caiaphas and Pilate. Unprincipled and cruel, Pilate took the easy way out in the cause of maintaining public order. Like Matthew and John, Mark reports the scourging in a single line. He does not need to comment. His first-century readers knew only too well what that punishment does to someone. Some of them would have seen what criminals and rebels look like after they have been scourged by two men systematically using spiked whips to flap the skin off their backs. As Mark tells the story, it is only after Jesus’ death that anyone takes a stand for him. Seeing the way he died, the officer in charge of the execution squad declares, “Truly this man was the Son of God (Mk 15:39).”

It is only at this point that Mark refers to a number of female followers of Jesus who have witnessed the Crucifixion. He names three of them: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome (Mk 15:39-41). Thanks to them, the loneliness of Jesus in his Passion and death has not been complete.

From Mark’s Passion narrative, I have selected two themes and set out to clarify them. First, a series of people take action against Jesus and “hand him over.” Second, Jesus himself, right through Mark’s Passion story, is utterly alone.

The whole story of Jesus’ arrest, suffering, death and burial unfolds with breathless speed in the Passion narrative recorded in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus quickly went from being welcomed with joy in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to being utterly isolated and undefended. From the time of leaving the Passover supper until the moment of his death on the cross, Jesus receives no visible human support from anyone. There is a chilling loneliness in the unfolding story of his arrest, the proceedings that he faces before Caiaphas and Pilate, and the death he endures when he cries out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mk 15:34).

One horrific episode in Mark’s Passion narrative symbolizes the way Jesus is delivered up to his enemies—he is flogged and crowned with thorns then mocked by a squad of soldiers. Like Matthew and John, Mark reports the scourging in a single line. He does not need to comment. His first-century readers knew only too well what that punishment does to someone. Some of them would have seen what criminals and rebels look like after they have been scourged by two men systematically using spiked whips to flap the skin off their backs. As Mark tells the story, it is only after Jesus’ death that anyone takes a stand for him. Seeing the way he died, the officer in charge of the execution squad declares, “Truly this man was the Son of God (Mk 15:39).”

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From Mark’s Passion narrative, I have selected two themes and set out to clarify their nuances and deeper meaning. That can help us to take things in slow motion, let ourselves share vividly in what happened and reflect deliberately, “Yes, I was there when they crucified my Lord.”

This Week’s Question

Contemplate Christ’s death on the cross

What do you feel as you hear the description of the events leading up to Christ’s crucifixion? Do you feel compelled to act in any way?

“It’s incredibly humbling, and I feel I have to share with my children what Christ has done for us ... There is something bigger than us ... [that] teens need to be reminded of.” (Suzy Clarke, Belgrade, Mont.)

“It makes me sad to think of how people turned so quickly away from Christ’s teachings. There was all the rejoicing on Palm Sunday then by Friday they were ready to crucify him.” (Donna Vergez, Merrimac, Wis.)

“It makes me realize what [Jesus] went through for all of us. And it makes me stay with my Lenten resolutions because the Passion brings me deeper into my faith.” (Lisa Krause, Orlando, Fla.)

“All through Lent, giving up things and almsgiving remind me that the Crucifixion is impending. Then there is Holy Week. ... I feel really grateful that Jesus died on the cross for us.” (Michele Lauerstein, Mequon, Wis.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What aspects of Latin American styles of worship have been incorporated into your parish’s life?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to corresp@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. © 2009 by Catholic News Service.
Faith, Hope and Charity
David Siler

It's time for a 'Spiritual Stimulus Package'

Congress recently approved an economic stimulus package that seeks to bring new life to an economy on life support. But how will it affect us and bring us closer to God? In this column, I will try to bring ourselves into this national debate.

I submit that the reasons are less about economics and business and more about values, morals, and the crisis of the heart—or, more simply put, a movement away from the Gospel principles of faith, hope, and love.

Perhaps these times call for a 'Spiritual Stimulus Package' as an addition to an economic package. Perhaps what is most needed is an opening of our hearts and minds to a new depth of spirituality for one another. How about more love, care, and concern for one another?

What could this stimulus package contain? How about if every man, woman, and child dedicated just 10 minutes a day to prayer? If each of us decided to give at least one hour per week to a cause greater than ourselves, would that not enhance the life of another human being, the community or the environment?

Perhaps we could all decide to eliminate from our vocabulary all words that bring negativity to our world. Perhaps we could change our thoughts of harm for others to thoughts of healing and peace. What if all those in the world who buckle down and work up for prayer were to lay them down for one week and sit with their enemy while doing good?

For us Catholics, how about if we each committed to attend one extra Mass a week? How about if we rosette or spend an hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament? I think the idea may be endless, but will not likely come from Congress. We, the people of God, will need to prepare this package and spread its message.

The current economic conditions can bring about a sense of hopelessness and despair. It is time for us to hold on more tightly to what we have. I invite us to consider that it is time for just the opposite. We need only recall the biblical principle of "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

As for our own stimulus package, perhaps as we commit to sharing a meal, sharing a prayer and sharing a rosary, we can share ideas. You can also e-mail me at dsiler@archindy.org. Together, we can move toward a community of faith and values, morals and more about economics. Together, we can move to bring new life to an economy on life support.

It's time for a 'Spiritual Stimulus Package'. Let each of us create our own package that works for our lives. Build up your spiritual savings account and stimulate collective spirits for people of all races.

I've started a group on Facebook so we can share ideas. You can also e-mail me at dsiler@archindy.org.

I submit that the group ideas win out over generosity, that despair is winning over hope, or that gluttony is winning out over self-control. It is time for us to stand together and declare that this is not the world we wish for!

I am looking forward to being in advance this idea of a "Spiritual Stimulus Package." Let each of us create our own package that works for our lives. Build up your spiritual savings account and stimulate collective spirits for people of all races.

I've started a group on Facebook so we can share ideas. You can also e-mail me at dsiler@archindy.org.

Together, we can move toward a future of justice, peace, justice, and harmony—and justice for all.

(David Siler is executive director of the Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries. E-mail him at dsiler@archindy.org.)
The Sunday Readings
Sunday, April 5, 2009

• Mark 11:1-10
• Isaiah 50:4-7
• Philippians 2:6-11
• Mark 14:1-15

This weekend, in a liturgy majestically in its ability to transport us to the events of the day that began the first Holy Week, the Church celebrates Palm Sunday. The liturgy may be somewhat different. Some parishes have a procession to precede each Mass, ideally led by the Catholic congregation, who will carry palms blessed by the celebrants. These palms will recall similar branches used to acclaim the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem centuries ago.

As if to describe what happened on the first Palm Sunday, the procession begins with a reading from St. Mark’s Gospel. This reading recalls the coming of Jesus across the Mount of Olives and from Bethany to Jerusalem. He approached Jerusalem from the East, just as the Scriptures had predicted as the route of the Messianic. He came in humility. Roman leaders would have ridden into the city on horseback or in chariots. Jesus rode a donkey. As the Lord would insist days later to Pilate, the Roman general who had given the King of God is not of this world. After this procession, the Liturgy of the Word progresses normally.

The first reading is from Isaiah. It is the third “Suffering Servant” song, emphasizing the fictional Servant’s absolute devotion to God despite all the hardships that would come. The Book of Isaiah has four of these hymns of the Suffering Servant. They are most expressive and moving. Christians always have seen Jesus in this liturgical figure.

Supplying the second reading is the Epistle to the Philippians. Eloquent and most compelling, scholars believe that its origin was liturgical. Early Christians used the hymn in their worship. The hymn is an exclamation of the glory of Christ.

For the Gospel reading in the Liturgy of the Word, the Church this year provides the Passion according to St. Mark. Each of the Gospels has its own perception of the Passion of Christ. For Mark, the special point is that the Lord was utterly alone as he faced trial and death. Judas’ betrayal, the young man who ran away, Peter’s denial, the failure of the religious scholars to recognize the Lord’s true identity and the kangaroo court itself all were important details for Mark.

Finally, Jesus stood willingly helpless before Pilate, the representative of the Great Evil, the pagan Roman Empire, earthly power at its zenith. The Suffering Servant song sets the stage. Jesus, innocent and good, faces human sin and death.

This Gospel is a wonderful prelude to the story of the Resurrection to be told on Easter.

Reflection
People almost always can say where they were when they first heard about the terrible collisions of the hijacked planes with the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. Americans who were alive on Nov. 22, 1963, remember where they were when they heard that President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated.

He was alive on Dec. 7, 1941, remember hearing the first reports about the attack on Pearl Harbor.

People still talk about historical accounts of the Titanic, a British luxury liner, which sank with great loss of life on April 15, 1912, during its maiden voyage across the Atlantic Ocean.

Thus it was with the Evangelists. They vividly reported the Passion of Jesus with such careful but individual reconstructions of the day indicates how vital the Lord’s trial and death were in the Evangelists’ lesson plan.

With Lent, the Church has prepared for us Holy Week. Mark tells us that Jesus faced the sin of the world, deserted by frightened, ignorant human beings. He faced death.

Each Christian, somehow, is in similar conflict. The Church bluntly reminds us of this fact, not in despair, but in hope. Follow Jesus to Calvary. Rise with Jesus to new life. This is the Church’s message to us on this weekend. Palm Sunday begins the Church’s most profound lesson about the reality of life.

Daily Readings
Monday, April 6
Isaiah 41:2-7
Psalm 27:1-3, 13-14
John 12:11-11

Tuesday, April 7
Isaiah 49:1-6
Psalm 71:1-4a, 5-6ab, 15, 17
John 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday, April 8
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 69:8-10, 21bc-22, 31, 46
Matthew 26:14-25

Thursday, April 9
Holy Thursday
Isaiah 61:1-3a, 8b-9
Psalm 89:21-22, 25, 27
Revelation 1:5-6
Luke 24:16-21
Holy Thursday evening
Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

Friday, April 10
Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 17-17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1-19-42

Saturday, April 11
Holy Saturday night
The Easter Vigil
Isaiah 54:5-14
Psalm 118:1-2, 16ab-17, 22-23
John 20:19-23
Psalm 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-7

Sunday, April 12
Easter Sunday
The Resurrection of the Lord’s Passion
Psalm 118:1-2, 16ab-17, 22-23
Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:11-18
or Mark 16:1-7
or, at an afternoon or evening Mass.

Question Corner/ Fr. John Dietzen
Church’s ban on joining Masons does not include the Eastern Star

Q. May a Catholic become a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, a women’s organization related to Freemasonry? Someone who belongs to the Eastern Star is an extraordinary minister of holy Communion in a nearby parish. I have questioned priests and our bishop, but didn’t receive an answer. (Iowa)

A. Membership in the Freemasons is still prohibited for Catholics. Canon law itself today does not forbid Masonic membership explicitly. It simply forbids Catholics to join any organization which plots against the Church (Canon 8374). However, a 1983 statement from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith clearly intended to tighten up the Church’s position on Masonic membership although it leaves areas of ambiguity which will probably be resolved only with experience.

The major objection of Catholics and other Christians is not only its history—especially in Europe and Latin America—of anti-Catholic and anti-religious activities. Most serious objections are based on Freemasonry’s beliefs and quasi-religious character, aspects of which appear contrary to Christian doctrines. This aspect in particular inspired the Church’s 1983 statement.

Masonic initiation rites involve reciting formulas and saying that such regulations must not be extended to cases or situations beyond those actually expressed in the law (Canon #8374).

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 applied strictly. That is legal language for restricting the rights of a person must be interpreted strictly. That is legal language for saying that such regulations must not be extended to cases or situations beyond those actually expressed in the law (Canon #8374).

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History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese

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

Special to The Criterion

Sacred. Contemplative. Hopeful.
St. Christopher Parish, in conjunction with the annual Catholic Women’s Convocation on March 14 in Indianapolis, held an all-day event for 140 participants from many parishes and cities in Indiana who enjoyed the Lenten day of reflection. Musician and composer Jan Novotka, of Scranton, Pa., expressed her love for creation rooted in spirituality during her keynote presentation for "Spring Into Life.

Novotka also is a spiritual director, pastoral associate and master gardener. Her CDs include "In the Great Work." "Lovers of Life" and "In the Name of All That Is.

The women began the day of reflection by singing "Everyday God," the conversation theme song, which set the tone for a contemplative, meditative day.

Next, Novotka sang "All Is Holy, All Is One," which continued the meditative flow of music interspersed with Scripture passages read by several women who assisted with the reflection. Many of the participants cried during the song and prayer response.

Novotka challenged the women to look at each other as if looking through the eyes of Jesus in order to realize that lives exist within each person.

She also shared ways to experience God, rejoice in the reality that God is everywhere and focus on living in the present moment.

"Lose yourself," she emphasized. "And you will find your life in the Kingdom of God."

"Become transformed by the presence of God in the risen, shimmering Christ.

To reinforce that message, she sang "Everywhere We Are, We're in God's Are.

Novotka also talked at length about living our lives as if we are truly in God's Presence.

"For it is really true," she said. "How would life be different if we lived in that way? If every conversation, action and place we went was in God's presence?"

A truly living faith would arise and life on Earth would change.

Novotka concluded the day of contemplation, meditation and contemplation with musical selections expressing sacredness and hope.

Nancy Moyer, a pastoral associate at St. Christopher Parish, said "some of the women said this was the best conversation ever" because of the richness of the keynote presentation and workshops.

Moyer said Novotka is a gifted and contemplative musician and composer as well as an insightful spiritual director.

"In her keynote presentation, she certainly brought all that together to lead the group of women into a prayer of God being present in every moment, in every breath, in every day," Moyer said. "She had a wonderful, gentle way of leading the group into prayer, and allowing us to sing, to move, to reflect and to share God's presence in our life."

(Senior reporter Mary Ann Wyand assisted with this story)

Vatican orders apostolic visitation of institutions of Legionaries of Christ

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has ordered an apostolic visitation of the institutions of the Legionaries of Christ following disclosures of sexual impropriety by the order's founder, the Rev. Marcial Maciel Degollado.

The announcement of the unusual investigation was posted on the Web site of the Legionaries of Christ on March 31 along with a letter of the pope's decision.

The letter, written by the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, said the pope wanted to help the Legionaries of Christ deal with its present problems with "truth and transparency."

It said the visitation would be carried out by "a team of prelates," who were not identified.

A post viscious is a form of internal Church investi- gation ordered by a pope under the law enacted by his delegates or delegates of the pope. The team sets the jurisdiction and powers of the visitation, which usually ends with the submission of a report to the Holy See.

In February, Legionaries of Christ officials in Rome disclosed that Father Maciel had fathered a child. Sources in Rome said the order was also looking into accusations of financial irregularities by Father Maciel.

Father Maciel died on Jan. 30, 2008, at the age of 87. Cardinal Bertone's one-page letter, dated March 10, was addressed to Father Alvaro Corcuera, director of General of the Legionaries and its lay association, Regnum Christi.

"The Holy Father is aware of the noble ideals that inspire you and the faithful and prayerful spirit with which you are facing the current vicissitudes, and he encourages you to continue seeking the good of the Church and society by means of your own distinctive initiatives and institutions," the cardinal's letter said.

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Vatican orders apostolic visitation of institutions of Legionaries of Christ
**ST. ANNE**

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remarked that everything is grace.” As a Catholics, he said, “we believe that, but sometimes it is hard to discover that grace in difficult times. Perhaps the most obvious grace that comes with the tragic fire of your venerable church building is the strength of your community through the trials and efforts to rebuild.

“I knew from that Easter Tuesday two years ago, when I came to see the devastation and to be with you for a while, that you would overcome the tragedy,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “Why did I know that? When I arrived, there were parishioners praying the rosary outside the gutted church building and I saw their faith.”

That day, the archbishop met with Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth, parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish and St. Rose Parish in Knightstown, as well as lay leaders of the Henry County faith community.

“God is blessing you and will continue to bless you,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “Today I come to say thank you, and to pray with you for the blessings we continue to need to finish the great work begun this afternoon.”

Sister Shirley quoted St. Francis of Assisi in her remarks.

“Most high, all powerful, good Lord,” Sister Shirley said. “Praise, glory, honor and every blessing are yours…” Together we will continue to praise and bless the Lord, give him thanks and serve him with great humility.”

She also thanked New Castle Mayor James Small and community residents, who “have journeyed with us in our loss, our grief, our sorrow, and so how wonderful to have you with us today to share our excitement and our joy.”

Father Joseph Rautenberg, pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Cambridge City and sacramental minister for St. Anne and St. Rose parishes, and Father Stanley Herber, pastor of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville and priest moderator for St. Anne and St. Rose parishes, also participated in the ceremony.

“It’s a hopeful time,” Father Rautenberg explained after the prayer service. “It’s also a time with sad memories from two years ago on Holy Saturday morning when the church was burning.

“Today is another transition, certainly more hopeful than the work of demolition and clearing the site,” he said. “Now we’ll begin to see progress for the new church building. It will be nice to have a church to worship in next year, another stained glass window, a new landmark, and hopefully a new furnishing for the parish and the community.”

As she greeted guests during the groundbreaking ceremony for their new church, she said “I think the cross that the corpus will be mounted on will be donated by our parish children.”

Eight-year-old Destiny Reece of New Castle said she missed going to Mass at St. Anne Church. She remembers praying in the old church, and is looking forward to watching the construction of the new church as she rides by the parish campus in a school bus twice every week day.

Despite the cold, rainy weather, Destiny and other children in the 268-household faith community were excited about the groundbreaking ceremony for their new church. They also were happy about the homemade cookies for the reception.

Sister Shirley said the children in the parish have worked hard to help raise funds for their new church, and have been an inspiration for adult parishioners.

Archbishop Buechlein thanked Destiny for raising $580 for her parish by selling pocket pouches for rosaries that she made with her grandmother, Vickie R Reece.

Sister Shirley said her fundraising project is yet another example of how a new generation will carry on the Catholic faith in New Castle.

Parishioner Jack Basler, who chairs the building committee, enjoyed breaking ground for the new church with Archbishop Buechlein, Sister Shirley and Father Rautenberg.

“It’s been a long two years,” Basler said. “It’s taken a lot of work on the part of a lot of parishioners to get us to this point, but we are on schedule. Our goal is to keep the project on schedule so that we’re finished in time for Easter 2010. We’ve had tremendous support from the parish, people in the community and people at the archdiocese to get us to this point. Without that, we wouldn’t have gotten this far.”

He said project architect Kevin Stuckwisch and Toby Winiger of Enthus Architects in Indianapolis, Brand Construction employees in Indianapolis, and building committee members from New Castle and the archdiocese worked hard to complete the construction plans for St. Anne.

“We tried our best to blend in some of the old with the new,” Basler said. “I think there will be plenty of reminders of the old church so that people will be able to relate to that very well, and it will be nice to have all the modern conveniences.”

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**Director of Youth Ministry**

St. Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church, a 1,100 family parish that celebrates God’s love in suburban Indianapolis, is seeking a full-time Director of Youth Ministry to lead youth in grades 7-12. The vision of this ministry is to foster the spiritual and social needs of the youth through programs, activities, and retreats. This person is also responsible for the training and coordination of a volunteer adult support team.

Candidate must be a practicing Roman Catholic and be knowledgeable in the teachings of the faith. The ideal candidate will be energetic, outgoing, highly self-motivated, with strong interpersonal and organizational skills. A Bachelor’s degree in Theology, Youth Ministry, or other relevant area is required. Preference will be given to those with a Master’s degree, professional experience in youth ministry, and a National Certification in Youth Ministry.

This position requires a flexible work schedule, including weekends, evenings, and some travel. Please send a cover letter and resume by April 17, 2009 to sjrocker@archindy.org, or to St. Alphonsus Liguori Church, 1870 West Oak St., Zionsville, IN 46077, attention Sonya Drenche.

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**Logan Cline, from left, Lily Cline and Riley Cline were among many children who attended the groundbreaking ceremony with their parents on March 29 at St. Anne Parish in New Castle. Parish children have helped with fundraising efforts for the new church and furnishings.**

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**Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth, parish life coordinator of St. Anne Parish and St. Rose Parish in Knightstown, sings during the groundbreaking ceremony on March 29 on the parish campus.**

**for two years, Sister Shirley encouraged parishioners to focus on forgiving William Abbott of New Castle, who was charged with and admitted setting their church on fire on April 7, 2007.**