The gift of the Holy Spirit

See more stories and photos from the 175th anniversary celebration, pages 7-18.

About 25,000 Catholics gathered at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on May 3 to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Seventeen bishops, two archabbots and several priests of the archdiocese helped Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein confirm 2,500 teenagers and 300 adults during the jubilee Mass. Also honored at the celebration were children who had recently received their first Communion, couples who had been married 50 years or longer, and men and women religious who were celebrating significant anniversaries of entrance into religious life or profession of vows. For more 175th anniversary Mass coverage, see pages 7-18. (Photo by Brandon A. Evans)

Thank you for your witness of faith

Our Jubilee Mass in celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis last Sunday was a beautiful and impressive experience of our Church at worship. We thank God for this blessing and all the blessings showered upon the Church in central and southern Indiana over the past 175 years. It was awe-inspiring to witness 2,800 young people and adults receiving the sacrament of confirmation.

In the name of all of us—laity, religious and clergy—I want to thank everyone who gathered at Lucas Oil Stadium for this historic occasion. What a marvelous expression of the unity of our archdiocese. The presence of Cardinal Francis E. George, Archbishop of Chicago, and several of my brother bishops, priests and archabbots made the event all the more special. I also want to thank the hundreds of volunteers and staff who worked so hard over the past year to make this celebration possible.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel and Annette “Mickey” Lentz were co-chairs of the planning committee, and were assisted on the executive steering committee by Ford Cox, Sharon Donohue, Kevin McDowell, Father Jonathan Meyer, Roger Neal, Carolyn Noone, Greg Otolski, Benedictine Father Julian Peters and Brenda Pfarr. Other key individuals in the planning included Father John Beitans, David Bethuram, Father James Bonke, Bob Desaulniers, Charles Gardner, Stephen James, Father Aaron Jenkins, Msgr. Paul Koetter, Bill McGowan, Kathy Moors, Jim Morris, Father Rick Nagel, Ken Ojorek, Father Michael O’Mara, Jen Ross, Julie Shewmaker, Father Kenneth Taylor, Christina Tuley and Anne Wilmes.

Countless others, including the staff of Lucas Oil Stadium, provided invaluable assistance. Many people and organizations, who are listed on page 15 of this issue, also contributed with financial and technical support. Heartfelt congratulations and thank you, one and all!

Let us pray that the next chapter in our archdiocese’s history will be as blessed and fruitful as the 175 years we just celebrated. We look ahead as a family filled with hope.

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
Feticide law and poverty commission among legislative successes

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

The April 29 adjournment brought success and disappointment for many of the Indiana Catholic Conference’s (ICC) legislative priorities. Bills to enhance penalties for feticide, create a child poverty commission and adjust charity gaming rules will become law this year, and were legislative successes for the ICC. Senate Bill 236, authored by Sen. James M. Merritt (R-Indianapolis), will enhance the penalty for a person who commits murder or attempted murder where an unborn child is involved. In the case of the 2008 bank teller tragedy in Indianapolis, it would have subjected the offender to an additional term of imprisonment of six to 20 years because unborn twins were lost.

"Any of my constituents are customers of the Huntington Bank and frequent the neighborhood 24-hour bank office and shooting occurred," Sen. Merritt said. "Plus, as the father of twins, this story really hit home with me."

Current law allows murder charges to be filed only if the fetus has reached seven months gestation. The twins carried by bank teller Katherin Shuffield of Indianapolis, who was shot during a robbery, were only five months gestation unless it is added to the new budget bill.

Sen. James Merritt

Notre Dame won’t give 2009 Laetare Medal

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The University of Notre Dame announced on April 30 that it will not award its prestigious Laetare Medal during the May 17 commencement ceremony after Mary Ann Glendon, former U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, turned down the honor.

"I am a Catholic. I am a pro-life, pro-family, pro-life, pro-life person," Glendon said.

"If the Notre Dame administration were to reconsider the Laetare Medal decision after Mary Ann’s unique set of circumstances, then I would welcome the opportunity to come to South Bend. But if the decision were not to be reconsidered, it would be the right thing and the Christian thing for me to decline it," Glendon said.

The Notre Dame Laetare Medal is named after the patron saint of Italy and is the highest honor awarded for meritorious service to humanity in the Church. It has been presented each year since 1883.

"In thinking about who could bring a compelling voice, a passion for dialogue, great intellectual stature and a deep commitment to Catholic values to the public — and more than one time — it quickly became clear that an ideal choice is Judge Noonan," Father Jenkins said in an April 30 statement.

"Since Judge Noonan is a previous winner of the Laetare Medal, we have decided, upon reflection, to not award the medal this year," he added.

A former professor at Notre Dame, Noonan was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan, and has been a consultant for several governmental bodies and non-profit foundations.

TheCriterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. 1400 N. Meridian St., Room 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46202. You can also e-mail rmassey@archindy.org.

We are asking people to cover the mailing costs, with any money left over going to the Archdiocese’s St. Vincent de Paul Society. For more information, call 317-236-1454 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1454.

Correction

A caption in the May 1 issue listed the wrong date for the Feast of the Assumption. In the archdiocese, a procession is observed on Sunday, May 24, instead of Thursday, May 21. Most U.S. dioceses have transferred observance of the feast to the seventh Sunday of Easter.

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The Criterion
Father Theodore Heck, 108, was world's oldest Benedictine monk

By Sean Gallagher

Benedictine Father Theodore Heck, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. M. ein, died on April 29. He was 108, and was the world's oldest Benedictine monk.

The Office of the Dead was prayed for him on May 3, and the Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on May 4 at the Archabbe Church.

St. Meinrad, I think we respect it should be," Father Bonke said. 

"I was a genius when I graduated from college and had enough of the world's oldest Benedictine monk in the world.

For 17 years, he served as subprior (third in leadership) in the monastery and, for three years, as prior (second in leadership). He was a founding member of the American Benedictine Academy, serving as its first president from 1947-57.

At the age of 70, he began 17 years of pastoral service as vicar of St. John Chrysostom Parish in New Boston, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese. During these years, he continued to teach on the college faculty. When he retired, he was named emeritus professor of the college and pastor emeritus of St. John Chrysostom Parish.

"He was sort of the living memory of a good part of the history of this community," Archabbot Justin said. "But not only that, he had a tremendous memory, and at least the facts straight of where the men were and what they were doing who were in school here while he was a rector. He would keep up with them.

"Because of his decades of ministry in priesty formation at St. Meinrad, he helped form a generation of priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, including a Archbishop Daniel M. Bechlein.

"Father Theodore was a quiet and unassuming monk and priest, and was a steady administrator," said a Archbishop Buechlein.

"Everyone I know respected his integrity and unpretentiousness.

A Archabbot Justin said Father Theodore was modest throughout his life despite his accomplishments in priesty formation. Even in his later years, he was always the first to volunteer for the smallest things, whether that was stuffing envelopes in the development office or cleaning up around the house."

Archabbot Justin said, "It didn't matter to him. Nothing was beneath him in that sense."

Mgr. Harold K. Kuenne, who spent 12 years in priesty formation at St. Meinrad and was ordained a priest in 1958, praised Father Theodore for his kindness.

"He was a gentle, gentle man," said Mgr. K. Kuenne, administrator of St. M. Mary Parish in Greensburg. "He wouldn't hurt a soul. He was very kind and compassionate, just a jewel."

Father James Bonke, defender of the bond for the archdiocesan group of religious and associate pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, was a seminarian under Father Theodore from 1962-66.

He commended him for seeing the need for the seminary to be accredited like any other institution of higher education.

"He thought if seminary education was going to be deemed credible that the schools needed to be accredited both by secular and religious as well as the proper ecclesiastical agencies," Father Bonke said.

"I think his approach was that if this is what the Church wishes and intends and desires at this point in time, then that's the way it should be." Father Bonke said.

"Father Theodore was born in Charleton, Iowa, on Jan. 16, 1901, to Henry Heck Sr. and Margaret (Steinbach) Heck. He received the name Henry (John) at baptism."

After attending elementary school in M. isoouri and three years of high school in West Terre Haute, Father Theodore enrolled in the minor seminary at Saint Meinrad in 1918. He entered the novitiate in 1922, professed simple vows on Sept. 8, 1923, and was ordained a priest on May 21, 1929. He would have celebrated his 80th anniversary as a priest this month.

After his ordination, Father Theodore taught in the minor seminary. In 1932, he began graduate studies at The Catholic University of America, earning a Ph.D. in education in 1935. He returned to Saint Meinrad and, for more than 50 years, taught in the minor and major seminaries, and held a variety of administrative positions in the St. Meinrad schools.

Father Theodore also taught during the summers at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Ind., from 1936-43 and at the former Dubuque, Iowa, branch of The Catholic University of America from 1944-58.

For 17 years, he served as subprior (third in leadership) in the monastery and, for three years, as prior (second in leadership). He was a founding member of the American Benedictine Academy, serving as its first president from 1947-57.

At the age of 70, he began 17 years of pastoral service as vicar of St. John Chrysostom Parish in New Boston, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese. During these years, he continued to teach on the college faculty. When he retired, he was named emeritus professor of the college and pastor emeritus of St. John Chrysostom Parish.

Here are some of the insights about life that people shared with him, and hoped he would share with the school’s Class of 2009. M. Rogers said his blog benefactors didn’t post their names so names aren’t included in this story.)

Don’t leave a doubt about love

"Say ‘I love you’ to the people you love every chance you get. You never know when your number is up, so don’t leave anyone guessing.”

Be careful what you share

"Don’t put what you put on YouTube, MySpace, etc. It will appear where you least expect it, like at the rehearsal dinner for your wedding or your 40th birthday.”

Be positive, part one

"As a former Marian College graduate, I understand how scary it can be to walk across the graduation stage, and suddenly be ‘grown up’ and ‘on my own.’ It certainly is a shock at first. You feel as though you have a million things to do because you’re a college grad now. The next step is to get a job, a house or apartment, and find a way to fully support yourself.”

"Finding work in the current economy can certainly be a challenge. Remember to keep a positive attitude and do not be discouraged if you don’t nail your dream job the first trip out of the gates. It sometimes takes a few years before you find work you can really thrive in as an adult.”

"Keep an open mind”

"I was a genius when I graduated from college and had all the answers. However, the older I get, I find out the less I know. Every day, I learn something new from someone, somewhere.”

"Follow your dreams

"Get started now on what you want to accomplish. It might not seem like it right now, but the years do indeed pass by quickly. Don’t find yourself filled with regret over what you could have done. Don’t let anything stand in your way of accomplishing your dreams.”

Always remember your value

"A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived. A love all, realize that the struggles you are facing, most everyone has faced in the past and survived.
An invitation card for Pope Benedict XVI’s upcoming Mass in Amman is displayed near a row of candles during a Mass in Amman, Jordan, on May 2. The pope is scheduled to visit Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian territories during his May 8-15 trip to the Holy Land.

The pope in the Holy Land

Pope Benedict XVI faces many challenges as he ventures into the Holy Land for a week beginning today, May 8.

The politics of the Holy Land are always dangerous, and the pope won’t be able to avoid them even if he wished to do so.

The secular media probably will cover this visit closely, especially for its political ramifications.

Perhaps it would be nice if the pope could simply make a pilgrimage to the places revered by Christians because the Holy Land is where Jesus lived, died and rose again, and part of the trip will be a spiritual pilgrimage. He will visit the Basilicas of the Holy Family in Bethlehem, the Annunciation in Nazareth and the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. He will meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who has been rebuffed by so many countries and leaders.

But just a list of the people with whom he will meet shows that this visit is far more than a pilgrimage. In Jordan, he will meet with King Abdullah, in Israel, he will have separate meetings with President Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. On the West Bank, he will meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Besides those political leaders, he will also meet with Catholic, Orthodox and Armenian patriarchs as well as Muslim and Jewish religious leaders. He will visit the King Hussein Mosque in Amman, Jordan. He has a very full agenda. The Holy See and Israel have had full diplomatic relations since 1994. The Holy See has also had a “permanent and ex cathedra” diplomatic mission in Israel since 1953. The Holy See and Israel have had full diplomatic relations since 1994. That stands for “by the power of the see,” or, in other words, the pope.

Pope Benedict will visit those same places, and the world will be watching to see what he says and does there. Relations between the Church and Jews have deteriorated somewhat since Pope John Paul’s visit, which is one of the reasons why Pope Benedict wanted to make this trip. His lifting of the excommunication of four traditionalist bishops, including a Holocaust denier, almost did the trip until the pope said that Catholicism must recognize and remember the Holocaust.

Just the fact that Pope Benedict is a German has caused him to be viewed with suspicion. It is sometimes pointed out that he was in the Nazi youth movement as a boy and in the German military during World War II. Of course, all German youth had to be in the Nazi youth movement, and he deserted from his military post at the risk of his life.

There was also the Vatican’s criticism of Israel when it invaded Gaza. Cardinal Renato Martino, head of the Vatican’s Council for Justice and Peace, said the reason why Pope Benedict wanted to see what he says and does there. The politics of the Holy Land are always dangerous, and the pope won’t be able to avoid them even if he wished to do so.

It wouldn’t be surprising if Pope Benedict alludes to this problem during his meeting with Muslim leaders in Jordan. This pope is not shy about speaking his mind. He is likely to observe the same politics he observed during his trip to Iraq.

The Holy Land is where Jesus lived, died and rose again. The pope in the Holy Land

The pope in the Holy Land

Pope Benedict will be the third pope to visit the Holy Land— not counting St. Peter. Pope Paul VI visited in 1964 and went away concerned that the Holy Land was quickly becoming a Christian museum because Christians were leaving in droves. A few days after his return to Rome, Pope Paul asked the Christian brothers to establish Bethlehem University and Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, then president of the University of Notre Dame, to establish the Pontifical Institute for Ecumenical Studies in Jerusalem. Both continue to function today.

Pope John Paul II’s visit in 2000 was seen as a tremendous success in improving relations between the Catholic Church and Jews. He visited both the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and the Western Wall, where he placed a prayer expressing sadness for the wrongs that Christians have done to Jews.

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

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

ARCHBISHOP BUECHLEIN'S Vocation for May

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for May: Seminarians that they will be faithful to prayer and study, and persevere in their desire to serve God and the Church as priests.

Vivamos nuestra fe con valor al igual que Santa Theodora y el Obispo Bruté
después de la magna celebración del aniversario número 175 de la fundación de la iglesia Católica en Indiana. Como la Madre Theodora, en el presente, nuestros actos, pensamientos y acciones se vuelven hacia el futuro. Cuando pienso acerca de los retos que enfrentaremos en nuestro servicio, como sacerdotes, es importante que nos acerquemos al modelo de vida de los fundadores.

La Madre Theodora arriesgó mucho por el bien de sus fieles. Pese a que no era modelo para el establecimiento, se rindió al liderazgo de nuestra Iglesia Local, donde estableció sus reglas y los valores que nos han sido legados. Nosotras tenemos la responsabilidad de enseñar a nuestros fieles a vivir las sagradas enseñanzas de nuestra Madre en el presente y el futuro.

El Obispo Bruté, por su parte, se esforzó por establecer nuestras iglesias en Indiana. Esto nos recuerda la responsabilidad que tenemos de propagar la fe en el presente y el futuro. Como sacerdotes, debemos seguir su ejemplo y perserverar en nuestra misión.

Llevemos al siguiente lema:

“Disfrutamos del producto de la sangre, el sudor, las lágrimas y el dinero de otras generaciones. Las bendiciones que ellos nunca tuvieron ni imaginaron, hacen que los ministerios sean difíciles de desarrollar con esperanza. En el futuro, las generaciones actuales también deben realizar su contribución a estas bendiciones y servir al Señor con generosidad.”

La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para mayo:

Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

¿Tienes una intención que deseas incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puedes enviarla a:

Cardenal Arzobispo Buechlein
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.
Eagle Scout project

Above, James Woothridge, at far right in front row, is a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. He is an Eagle Scout, and the oldest of the group of 10 grandchildren. He also volunteers with the food pantry at St. Vincent de Paul in Indianapolis. He is the son of Stephen S. Woothridge, president of St. Pius X School in Indianapolis.
By Sean Gallagher and John Shaughnessy

Singing from the heart, Diana Torres let her voice resound with the nearly 25,000 other worshipers who came to Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on May 3 to thank God for the blessings he has bestowed upon the Church in central and southern Indiana for 175 years.

As she joined in the singing of “Come and See the Many Wonders”—the special hymn for the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—Torres felt a surge of joy as her voice blended in harmony with an archdiocesan-wide gathering that represented generations of faith-filled people who have immigrated to Indiana from around the world.

She felt another rush of emotion later in the Mass when she saw men and women wearing the garb of their homelands proclaim readings and prayers in 10 languages: English, French, German, Igbo, Italian, Korean, Latin, Latvian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

“It’s amazing to see this many people in one area for God,” said Torres, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, who came to the anniversary celebration as a confirmation sponsor for her niece, Jasmine Rodriguez, one of more than 2,800 youths and adults who were confirmed during the Mass.

“Torres’ words echoed the song of celebration that marked the nearly 2 1/2-hour-long anniversary Mass, which reflected the stunning transformation that has been created in the archdiocese since the Servant of God Bishop Simon Bruté arrived in Vincennes in 1834.

At the time, Indiana was a rugged, undeveloped land on an American frontier with 25,000 Catholics—the same number that participated in the May 3 Mass. They were mainly from northern Europe, and they spread across the whole state and the eastern third of Illinois.

Today, there are 225,000 Catholics in just central and southern Indiana, a land filled with large cities, small towns and farming communities. But no matter what setting in which the Church finds itself, the message it proclaims remains the same.

“Sisters and brothers, for 175 years in our part of the world, the message of Christ, the Good Shepherd, has been a message of hope,” said Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein at the start of his homily at the Mass.

That hope was embodied during the Mass in the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation and in other ways. A bout 200 couples were honored for 50 or more years of married life. And religious jubilarians were praised for their many decades of faithful ministry and consecrated life.

In comments after Communion, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago said the Church’s history was “definitely a steadfastness here, not only in the archdiocese, but in the children being confirmed. It’s a blessing every time we celebrate confirmation.”

Cardinal George then turned his focus to the future, challenging those who had just been confirmed to become saints “so that in the next 100 years, the Church will recognize how the Holy Spirit has transformed the people of Indiana … through the work of the Church here.”

Cardinal George’s challenge echoed the words of a bishop in Buechlein’s homily.

In imitation of the Good Shepherd, now it is our turn to be pioneers in the spiritual growth and hope and compassion our Church promises to all peoples of central and southern Indiana,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “Dear candidates for confirmation, you are a witness and a pledge of the hope Christ offers.”

At the start of the Mass, Archbishop Buechlein invited the confirmation candidates to consider a special way to carry on their mission.

“On this Good Shepherd Sunday, Vocations Sunday, pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire our youth to join us as priests, deacons and religious in the beautiful vocation that is ours,” he said.

The opening procession of the Mass that stretched from one end of the floor of Lucas Oil Stadium to the other included scores of religious, deacons, priests, and 18 bishops and two Benedictine archabbots.

They were joined by boys and girls dressed in white from across the archdiocese who recently received their first Communion. Representatives from several Catholic fraternal organizations in the archdiocese also processed.

The procession also reflected an ecumenical spirit, with Representatives of various Christian communities and non-Christian faiths participated, offering a sign of how the Church in Indiana has sought good relations with people of all faiths since its beginnings.

The liturgy’s cultural diversity impressed K.P. Singh, an immigrant from India and a member of the 55th Sababg of Indianapolis.

Just imagine how many nationalities, how many ethnic groups, how many languages, how many lineages and heritages were represented here under this one roof,” Singh said. “A little slice of all of humanity was under this roof. How beautiful was that?”

Rev. Rick Spleth, the regional minister in Indiana for the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ joined other Christian ministers at the anniversary Mass.

“I was honored to be included in this celebration,” he said. “And I celebrate this great milestone with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Please join me in prayer that the Church will recognize how the Holy Spirit has transformed the people of Indiana … through the work of the Church here.”

The liturgy noted 255 Catholic churches were opened in Indiana’s first 50 years.

“The Holy Spirit is present among us,” said Marty Schmidt, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute.

Schmidt spent the better part of the weekend in Indianapolis. He attended the Mass for Vocations on May 1 at St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis and returned on May 3 to take part in the 175th anniversary Mass. “My brother and cousin are being confirmed today as part of the celebrations,” he said.

Schmidt, 30, who is discerning a possible vocation to the priesthood, said he couldn’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime celebration.

Osi Okonkwo added his own lyrical view of a memorable day.

“It’s definitely a special day,” said Okonkwo, a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

“There’s definitely a stillness here, not only in the archdiocese, but in the children being confirmed. It’s a blessing every time we have an opportunity to gather as Christians. It’s a special day to be part of the Body of Christ.”

[Editor’s note: Mike Krokos contributed to this story. To read the text of Buechlein’s homily, the remarks of Cardinal George and for more photos from the 175th anniversary Mass, log on to www.Criteriononline.com]
Confirmation candidates take next step in faith journey

By John Shaughnessy

The two teenagers have known each other for most of their young lives, developing the kind of friendship that lets them know they can count on each other through the good times and the tough times.

It’s a friendship that has been nurtured by sharing classes together, playing sports together, and even receiving the sacraments of reconciliation and first Communion together.

So it seemed only natural to Kaitlin Sims and Kaya Wagoner that they would share another one of the most defining moments in their lives as Catholics—receiving the sacrament of confirmation.

The two eighth-grade students at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Indianapolis pose for a picture before the anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

Kaya Wagoner, left, and Kaitlin Sims chose to make their confirmation a year early so it would coincide with the 175th anniversary celebration of the archdiocese on May 3. The two eighth-grade students at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Indianapolis pose for a picture before the anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

One after another, more than 2,800 youths and adults stepped forward,承诺ing to their Church and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The 14-year-old youths shared how their faith and their friendships deepened with the other 28 other youths from their parish who were receiving the sacrament. They also glowed when they mentioned the Archdiocesan Confirmation Retreat they attended in April.

“We got to make so many new friends from different parishes,” Kaya said. “And it was inspirational.”

Yet perhaps the most moving part of the preparation for confirmation was the way it drew the two friends even closer to God.

“When I went through first Communion and reconciliation, I felt that God was there,” Kaitlin said. “Now that I’ve gone through confirmation, I see God in a different way. He’s there with me, I can talk to him, and he’s not going to judge me. I know I can rely on him.”

That feeling connected many of the young people from across the archdiocese who received the sacrament, whether they were from small parishes such as St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Liberty and Our Lady of the Springs Parish in French Lick, or large groups from such parishes as St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis and St. Louis Parish in Batesville.

“It’s amazing,” said Meghan Sandlin, 16, a member of American Martyrs Parish in Southport. “This means I’m now an adult in the Church’s life. I’ll strive to be more Christ-like.”

That deepening relationship with God is at the heart of confirmation, said Sharon Meier, the religious education coordinator at St. Michael Parish in Brookville and at Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Cedar Grove, both in the Connersville Deanery.

“Confirmation is a great gift from God, especially with all the challenges we face in today’s world,” Meier said. “The [young people] have had the opportunity to get reintroduced to their rich Catholic faith and the responsibilities of being a Catholic. With the help of the Holy Spirit, they will be able to fulfill their mission that God has intended for them.”

Kim Sprague already has witnessed the difference in the high school students who were confirmed last year at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright in the Batesville Deanery. She says that many young women in that class now wear dresses to Sunday Mass while the young men even wear ties.

“There is a new surge of excitement amongst our teens,” Sprague says.

Witnessing the Holy Spirit grabbing hold of our youth is such a blessing. That same reaction was experienced by Kay Scoville, the director of youth ministry for the archdiocese. It was an emotional time for her as she watched more than 2,800 people be confirmed during the anniversary Mass.

“It’s overwhelming to think of all these people committing to our faith,” Scoville said. “We have people of many different ages who are taking this step together. It’s awesome that they are saying ‘yes’ to our faith.”

For good friends Kaitlin Sims and Kaya Wagoner, “yes” is the only answer they can see giving to God.

“I know I’m ready to be with God,” Kaya said. “I know I can turn to him. He’s one of my best friends.”

Kaitlin added, “I’m closer to him than I’ve ever been before.”

Excitement is evident for family and friends of confirmation candidates

By John Shaughnessy

One after another, more than 2,800 youths and adults stepped forward, publicly and humbly committing themselves to their Church and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

And for each person who received the sacrament of confirmation during the 175th anniversary celebration of the archdiocese on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, there was at least one friend or family member who beamed as a loved one made that commitment.

Emilio Catalan gloved with love and pride as he watched his wife, Mima, take her place among the rows and rows of people who waited to be confirmed.

“This is good for a lot of people,” said Catalan, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. “I love the Church, and I’m really excited for my wife. She’s

See CONFIRMATION, page 16

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As the North Deanery high school of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Bishop Chatard community joins in celebrating the 175th anniversary of the archdiocese and its inspiring history of faith, education and service. We also wish God’s blessings on all our students who received the sacrament of confirmation.

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Celebrating the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Photo by Mike Krokos
Mass volunteers excited to be a part of Church history

By Mike Erskov

They came from Bloomington and Brownsburg and parishes throughout the archdiocese. There was even a student from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, who grew up near Warsaw, Ind., in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese, who felt compelled to assist at the once-in-a-lifetime celebration. Of course, there was a contingent from Indianapolis, too.

The nearly 300 people who served as volunteers for the 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis were happy to be a part of Church history, and they did everything from serving as ushers to assisting with the collection.

Others directed people to Communion, and helped the confirmands and their sponsors get where they needed to be on the main floor of the stadium. Some volunteers assisted priests. And others carried placards and chrism oil during the confirmation rite, and led bishops and priests to their appropriate places.

“We had people covering all the bases,” said Stephen James, director of the archdiocesan Office of Purchasing, who coordinated the recruiting of volunteers.

“We always get nervous ahead of time and, somehow, it always comes together,” he added.

Volunteers Christopher Breen and Michael Hussey, both members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, were stationed above the south end zone assisting Mass-goers. They seemed to answer one question countless times before the Mass. “Where do we go?” Most of the people, Breen said, wanted to know “where are all the different churches [parishes] on the floor.”

“It just keeps getting busier,” Breen noted. “My son [Michael] is making his confirmation, and my parents are here for their 50th [wedding] anniversary,” said Julie Carr, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. “My son [Michael] is making his confirmation, and my parents are here for their 50th [wedding] anniversary,” said Julie Carr, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.

Julie Carr: a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, gets assistance from volunteers Christopher Breen and Michael Hussey before the start of the 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on May 3. Breen and Hussey are also members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.

Volunteers Christopher Breen and Michael Hussey before the start of the 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

The 175-year history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

(Taken from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Directory)

The Diocese of Vincennes—now the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—was established by Pope Gregory XVI on May 6, 1834. The territory then comprised the entire state of Indiana and the eastern third of Illinois. The latter was separated from the Diocese of Vincennes upon the establishment of the Diocese of Chicago on Nov. 28, 1843.

By decree of Pope Pius IX, on Jan. 8, 1857, the northern half of the state became the Diocese of Fort Wayne, the boundaries being that part of the state north of the south boundaries of Fountain, Montgomery, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Delaware, Randolph and Warren counties. The remaining southern half of the state made up the Diocese of Vincennes, embracing 50 counties. It covered an area of 18,479 square miles extending from the north boundaries of Marion and contiguous counties to the Ohio River and from Illinois on the west to Ohio on the east.

The second bishop of Vincennes was permitted by apostolic brief to establish his residence at Vincennes, Mad. Lafayette or Indianapolis; Vincennes was, however, to remain the see city. This permission, with the subtraction of Lafayette, was renewed to the fourth bishop.

Upon his appointment in 1878, Bishop Francis Chatard, the fifth bishop of Vincennes, was directed to fix his residence at Indianapolis.

A though the site of the cathedral and the title of the see were continued at Vincennes, Bishop Chatard used St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis as an unofficial cathedral until the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul was completed in 1907.

St. John the Evangelist Parish, established in 1837, was the first parish in Indianapolis and Marion County. By apostolic brief dated March 28, 1838, the title of the diocese was changed to that of “Diocese of Indianapolis,” with the episcopal see in the city of Indianapolis.

A through the bishop’s official residence was changed, the patron of the diocese remained St. Francis Xavier, the title of the Old Cathedral at Vincennes.

An apostolic decree of His Holiness Pope Pius XII, creating the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was issued on Oct. 21, 1944. On Dec. 19, 1944, by executive decree of the papal delegate, the Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, apostolic delegate to the United States, the papal decree of Pope Pius XII was solemnly proclaimed in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, elevating Indianapolis to the status of an archdiocese, the state of Indiana becoming the metropolitan area.

The dioceses of Evansville and Lafayette-in-Indiana were created by the same decree and, along with the Diocese of Fort Wayne, made suffragan sees of Indianapolis. Upon establishment of the Diocese of Gary on Feb. 25, 1957, it too became a suffragan see.

The current size of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is 13,757.7 square miles, according to 1990 measurements from the Indiana State Library Reference Division, and comprises the counties of Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Clay, Crawford, Dearborn, Decatur, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Harrison, Hendricks, Henry, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Johnson, Lawrence, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Ohio, Orange, Owen, Parke, Perry, Putnam, Ripley, Rush, Scott, Shelby, Switzerland, Union, Vermillion, Vigo, Washington and Wayne, and the townships of Harrison in Spencer County, in the southern part of Indiana.
Cardinal reflects on anniversaries, the Church in the U.S.

By Sean Gallagher

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago was among the 17 bishops and two abbots who came to Indianapolis on May 3 to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Vincennes.

As the current president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the archbishop of Chicago, he is a prominent leader of the Church in this country. He was interviewed by The Criterion via e-mail a few days before the anniversary Mass.

Q: What does the 175th anniversary of the Diocese of Vincennes mean to you personally?

A: It is a great joy for me to represent the Archabbey at this joyful anniversary Mass through the presence of 17 bishops and especially of Bishop [Benedict] Flaget. It’s not as easy for us to picture the vastness of the territory and pioneer nature of all the faithful, the priests and especially of Bishop [Benedict] Flaget.

—Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

Bishops and abbots show Church’s universality at May 3 Mass

By Sean Gallagher

It was originally the Diocese of Bardstown, Ky., one of four dioceses created in 1808 out of the Diocese of Baltimore, the first local Church in the United States.

The celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis involved more than just the Church in central and southern Indiana.

The archdiocese is in communion with the broader universal Church. Those ties were displayed at the anniversary Mass through the presence of 17 bishops and two Benedictine abbots from around the Midwest.

Archbishop Kurtz also said that diocesan anniversaries are important in that they help us consider history and not just geography in thinking about the Church’s universality.

“It’s not as easy for us to picture the vastness of the territory and pioneer nature of all the faithful, the priests and especially of Bishop [Benedict] Flaget.”

—Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

I’m very much a part of the fabric of that territory. “It’s a great joy to be a son of the archdiocese and come back and celebrate.”

He served as a chancellor and vicar general of the archdiocese.

For more than 150 years, the local Church in central and southern Indiana has had a close relationship with the Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

The monks have staffed many archdiocesan parishes over the years. And the monastery’s seminary has been the primary place where archdiocesan seminarians have been formed for the priesthood.

A patriarchal archdiocese is an honor for me to represent the Archabbey at this joyful celebration.”

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Archabbot Justin Du Valli, the current leader of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, spoke about the importance of the anniversary Mass in the days leading up to it.

“We gathered to celebrate [God’s] blessings on May 3, I will carry with me the gratitude of the monks for blessings past, present and yet to come,” he said. “It is an honor for me to represent the Archdiocese of Chicago and to help celebrate this joyful celebration.”

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The Advisory Board, Volunteers and Staff at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House are thankful to celebrate with Archbishop Buechlein and the members of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis during this 175th anniversary year.

We look forward to continuing our shared mission, serving central and southern Indiana, for many years to come.

May the Peace of Christ continue to be with us all!

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Celebrating 175 years of faith

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein prays the eucharistic prayer during the archdiocese’s 175th anniversary Mass on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Transitional Deacon John Hollowell, right, assisted the archbishop during the liturgy.

Archdiocesan seminarians Gregory Lorenz, left, and Winston Fitzgerald carry a portrait of St. Theodora Guérin during the procession for the 175th anniversary Mass. They are students at the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. Lorenz is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis. Fitzgerald is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

Members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis gather inside Lucas Oil Stadium on May 3 before the 175th anniversary Mass.

Holy Angels parishioner Alex Ogbuh of Indianapolis, a native of Nigeria, reads a petition in Igbo, an African language, during the prayers of the faithful for the archdiocese’s 175th anniversary Mass on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Petitions were read in nine languages.

Members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem walk in the opening procession. The order works to preserve Catholic sanctuaries and the presence of the Church in the Holy Land.

Minh Nguyen Sr., a member of the Vietnamese Apostolate in Indianapolis, reads a petition in his native language during the prayers of the faithful for the 175th anniversary Mass. Petitions were also offered in Latin, Spanish, Igbo, Korean, German, French, Italian and Latvian.

Members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis gather inside Lucas Oil Stadium on May 3 before the 175th anniversary Mass.

Seminarian Mitch Strange from Our Lady of Hope Parish in Washington, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese, and archdiocesan seminarian Nicholas Welch from Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood carry a portrait of the Servant of God Bishop Simon Bruté during the procession for the 175th anniversary Mass. They are students at the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

Concelebrating priests at the Mass pray during the eucharistic prayer.

Lucille Elsener, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, receives Communion from Father Eckhard Sonnen, pastor of St. Maurice Parish in Goshen and sacramental minister of Immaculate Conception Parish in Milburn and St. Denis Parish in Jennings County.

Dozens of patens filled with Communion hosts sit on a table near the altar during the Mass. Communion was later distributed throughout the stadium.

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago confirms Joseph Kaiser, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, during the Mass while live video of the confirmation is broadcast on a giant video screen in Lucas Oil Stadium. Joseph’s confirmation sponsor, at left, was Richard Burkett.

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Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis echoed on May 3 with music performed by Catholics young and old from across the archdiocese that represented a broad spectrum of musical and ethnic traditions.

Charlie Gardner, archdiocesan executive director of spiritual life and worship, worked for more than a year to arrange music for the 175th anniversary Mass. He was glad that it was both prayerful and representative of the archdiocese’s cultural diversity.

“They go together because the prayer of the Church is representative,” he said. “The musical expression is so important—from Latin in our roots and different styles of music.”

Before the Mass began, a choir made up of more than 100 students from five Catholic high schools in Indianapolis sang several selections. The students came from Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, Bishop Chatard, Roncalli, Father Thomas Scicena Memorial and Cathedral high schools.

Eddie Guanajuato, who directs bands and choirs at Cardinal Ritter, helped organize the choir, and spoke about it while the students were singing.

“It’s wonderful to hear this sort of sound coming out,” he said. “We have a huge task. We have to make Lucas Oil Stadium a holy place. That’s kind of hard. We have to make Lucas Oil Stadium a holy place. That’s kind of hard. We have to make Lucas Oil Stadium a holy place. That’s kind of hard.

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Carney Sylvestre, a member of the choir for more than 25 years, was excited about the opportunity to sing for Catholics from across the archdiocese.

“This is just amazing,” she said. “As a Gospel choir, we don’t normally get to sing (before most) ... of the Catholic Church. So this is going to be a new experience.”

Leona Marino, a member of St. M. Icchael Parish in Brookville in the Connersville Deanery, was a member of the 200-member Mass choir.

“It was a wonderful, uplifting day,” Marino said. “The whole day was beautiful. ... I hadn’t been in a choir for probably about 10 years. I had actually forgotten how uplifting that was to be with that kind of group. But it was so beyond the choir.”

Marino said she was impressed by the messages shared by a Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, and the various multicultural aspects of the Mass.

“It was a day that I will never forget,” she said.

Jose Ochoa played the mandolin and was part of St. Monica’s Spanish Choir that sang before and during the Mass.

“It was a new experience. It was great,” he said. “I’m proud to share the music from Mexico with all the people that are from different countries that gathered here today.”

A after the Mass, Gardner reflected on the fact that he helped lead the music ministry 25 years ago at the archdiocese’s 150th anniversary Mass.

“Let us do the selling ... so you can enjoy the new season.

Gardner said, “I never knew in front of this many people. I was doing it for God, and I was doing it for the people and I was doing it for a Archbishop Daniel. It was really a great experience.”

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Members of a high school choir made up of students from Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, Bishop Chatard, Roncalli, Father Thomas Scicena Memorial and Cathedral high schools, all in Indianapolis, sing prior to the start of the 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on May 3.
Sisters and brothers, as I prayed about what to say at this grand celebration, I thought of these pre-Easter anecdotes. They express simple faith in the Good Shepherd, and it is our hope. They inspire the hope and compassion that is the legacy handed to us by our ancestors. Sacrifice, love, trust and a pure heart go together.

The pre-Easter anecdotes tell us what it means to be witnesses of simple faith and, perhaps inadvertently, witnesses of the hope that accompanies no-nonsense faith and charity.

Our world needs the hope that is Jesus Christ, and our Catholic faith and its ritual give life and encouragement to anyone who suffers, whether physically, spiritually, emotionally or morally—that could be any of us or all of us.

Thanks to you who inspire us whether you take us by surprise or do so in ordinary ways. Your struggles and failures, your illnesses and disabilities, are instruments of Jesus the Good Shepherd, instruments of Gospel love and compassion.

Finally, I can’t let this occasion go by without finding the young adults that the priesthood and consecrated religious life provide many opportunities to share the lives of others. The Holy Father designated this Sunday as Vocations Sunday. Vocations are the fruit of prayer and love from sacrificing families of faith and hope.

Sisters and brothers, today we pray for the grace to hand on Christ our hope and his compassion to generations to come.

We are a family that believes, a family that prays and a family that acts with faith. Please God, may it be so.

(ARCHBISHOP BUECHLEIN’S HOMILY IS ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE AT www.criteriononline.com.)
GEORGE
continued from page 10

this part of the country to do?
A: Our Church is public, and God never comes to us alone. Occasions such as this remind us that the Church is global, universal, by her very nature.
Q: Last year, the first four dioceses created from the Archdiocese of Baltimore celebrated their bicentennial. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is celebrating 175 years this year. Your archdiocese will be doing the same nine years from now. And many other local Churches across the country will celebrate significant historical milestones in the years to come. As you help lead the Church in this country at this time in its history, how do you see that it has matured or changed over time? What do you see as areas of growth in the life of the Church?
A: The situation is in flux, as it always is. A: The situation is in flux, as it always is.

Q: In 2004, you gave an address to Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the ad limina visit of the bishops of Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.
A: Five years after giving that address, do you think the Church's growth in Indiana, but most of those canonized to come.

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Religious jubilarians have contributed much to the archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

Through much of its 175-year history, men and women religious have contributed much to what the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has become today. From north to south and east to west, Franciscan friars and sisters, Dominican nuns have become integral parts of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

During the May 3 Mass to celebrate the archdiocese’s 175th anniversary, a group of religious who are celebrating their own jubilees either of entrance into religious life or profession of vows were honored with a special blessing after Communion.

Cardinal Francis E. George, archbishop of Chicago and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, commended the religious and prayed the prayer of blessing.

The first religious he honored was Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who professed vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

“We thank you for cooperating with God’s grace, for drinking deeply from the well of the Benedictine monastic tradition,” Cardinal George said. “We are grateful for your prayer and work for the Church, especially as archbishops of Indianapolis and in the conference of our bishops.”

Three other jubilarians honored spoke with The Criterion before the Mass, and have long records of ministry in the archdiocese.

Benedictine Sister Mildred Wannemuehler is celebrating the 60th anniversary of when she professed religious vows. A past prioress of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Sister Mildred also served as the parish life coordinator of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville for 19 years. She is also well-known for giving presentations in the faith and retreats in parishes across the archdiocese.

“I probably have given talks and things in almost half the parishes,” said Sister Mildred, who is originally from Evansville, Ind. “I like the archdiocese because I’ve been so involved in it.”

Franciscan Sister Jean Marie Cleveland, who entered religious life 50 years ago, has served as the congregational minister of the Oldenburg Franciscans. She also ministered as the parish life coordinator of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and St. Patrick parishes, both in Indianapolis, pastoral associate at St. John the Baptist Parish in Dover and St. Peter Parish in Franklin County, and principal of the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception.

“I think to be recognized for 50 years in that large gathering is recognition for us (religious), of course,” said Sister Jean Marie, “but it’s also recognition to the people that are there of stability and commitment, and that is possible in today’s age.”

When Providence Sister Regina Shaughnessy looked out at the tens of thousands of Catholics from central and southern Indiana gathered at the Mass, she saw many people who likely were educated and formed in the faith in Catholic schools that were staffed by religious men and women.

“I know that our community served a lot in the educational institutions of the archdiocese for many years,” she said. “I think today of probably what they are because of the educational background that many of them received from the parish schools.”

Sister Regina, who grew up in Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Patrick parishes, both in Indianapolis, is celebrating the 60th anniversary of her entrance into religious life. “God has blessed me with long years and good health,” she said, “so I’m very grateful for that. I love my congregation and hope that it has a very vial future.”

A few years of religious life, Sister Jean Marie is now assisting the young adults at Marian College in Indianapolis discern their calling through the Franciscan school’s Rebuild Our Church program. “To be able to be a part of that at Marian is quite an honor because I see young people who really want to make that happen,” she said. “They really want to be involved with youth and with the Church and with people.”

Even in retirement, Sister Mildred continued to give retreats and presentations, and regularly ministers at the Indiana Women’s Prison in Indianapolis and the food pantry of the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

And, whether it is in service or hidden, cloistered prayer, Sister Mildred said that religious are important to the life of the archdiocese.

“We’re here to work with the Church even if we’re a monastic group,” she said. “We pray for the archdiocese very often.”

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Photos by Sean Gallagher
Stage design for Mass combines history and holiness

By Mary Ann Wyand

Simple yet spiritual was the focus for the stage design for the archdiocese’s 175th anniversary Mass on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. The anniversary year theme is “We Have Seen the Lord: Come and See.”

Five symmetrical pillars at the back of the five-foot-tall stage were draped in cloth in the archdiocesan colors of blue and gold. The huge corpus, on loan from the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, was mounted on a cross built by the Benedictine monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Benedictine Father Julian Peters, right, and former archbishop of Indianapolis, was mounted on a cross built by the Benedictine monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Benedictine Father Julian Peters, right, and former archbishop of Indianapolis, was mounted on a cross built by the Benedictine monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

The challenge was to try to make Lucas Oil Stadium look somewhat like a church,” Father Jenkins explained, “to create a sacred space inside this huge complex that’s normally used for sporting events.”

He said the center pillar was 32 feet tall and held the large crucifix, which is 17 feet tall and weighs about 600 pounds. “We wanted to keep the stage design fairly simple and straightforward,” Father Jenkins said. “We were trying to work with budget constraints so we didn’t want to go overboard with decorations. But we wanted to do something that was nice and that would look more like a sacred space.”

He said it took two days of work on May 1 and May 2 to build and dress the stage. “I’ve been praying especially for the kids that I am teaching [at Scecina] and that I know at Holy Name [who were confirmed],” Father Jenkins said, “and then a prayer for our archdiocese that in the future we can continue to grow stronger and stay close to the Lord.”

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Srs: S. Patricia Owens, SSF & S. Barbara Pyle, SSF
Srs: S. Mary Anne Kaur, OFS & S. Margaret Maker, OFS

We are happy to congratulate

the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

on its 175th anniversary.

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SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
Faith and life are one for many Latin American Catholics

By Father Herbert Weber

It was a hot Sunday afternoon when Franciscan Sister Lucille Schmitmeyer, an American missionary working in Chiapas, Mexico, led me to a small shack. We were about to experience the weekly gathering of a Christian base community.

The residents of that home-grown event had met the husband the previous day at a group leader preparatory session at the church. A bout eight or older adults were present.

The humble house had a dirt floor, open windows and doors allowed dogs, cats and chickens to come and go. Nevertheless, the adults gathered that day showed fervor and reverence as they listened to the Gospel reading and explored its meaning for their lives.

That afternoon’s discussion on the Scriptures was anything but just an intellectual exercise. As if hearing the sacred words for the first time, the group listened with a knowledge that Jesus was talking directly to them. They also knew it was up to them to apply the parable.

Since that day, I have started many small faith groups in parishes in the United States. But it was experiences like that in Mexico which helped me realize the power of God’s word to transform people’s lives.

In the last 30 or more years, the Church in Latin America has experienced both suffering and moments of great grace. There have been civil wars in Central America and numerous government changes in South America.

There have been the killings of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, El Salvador; Sister Dorothy Stang, an American-born Brazilian of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who was outspoken with a knowledge that Jesus was talking directly to them. They also knew it was up to them to apply the parable.

Since that day, I have started many small faith groups in parishes in the United States. But it was experiences like that in Mexico which helped me realize the power of God’s word to transform people’s lives.

No two countries are the same politically or in social makeup. Therefore, the role of the Church is different as well. Yet there are lessons that can be learned from the faith of those in Latin America. Interestingly, my examples usually involve the poorest and most powerless people that I have come to know. That, too, conveys a message for those of us from more affluent countries.

First of all, one people’s spirituality is often integrated into the rest of their lives. I first discovered this in the hills of El Salvador.

The small community that I traveled to was both beautiful and frightfully impoverished.

In visiting homes, I regularly found little shrines or pictures of Jesus or Mary. The people looked at their lives through a lens of faith even though they rarely had a priest to celebrate Mass for them.

Neighbors gathered for entertainment after a long day of work. Often, someone would bring a guitar. Then, the only ones they knew, were Church songs like “Pescador de Hombres” (“I, Lord, You Have Come”). This is not to say they didn’t have other interests, but their faith and devotional practices were totally intertwined with their daily activities. What I frequently witnessed in Latin America was an integration of faith into the fullness of life experiences.

It is a lesson that I have learned and would like to share with you.

The A woman carries a statue of St. Jude, patron of desperate situations, as people wearing masks gather for prayer outside a church in Mexico City on April 28. Most churches in the city remained closed because of the swine flu outbreak in Mexico. The Church in Latin America has experienced much suffering over the past several decades, but Catholics there continue to integrate their faith into the totality of their lives.

The experience in El Salvador also was an integration of faith and devotional practices. The parish of Santa Rita active. Sunday gatherings were led by lay persons.

On my second visit, when I opened a box of Spanish Bibles I had brought, the leaders carefully handed them to selected individuals literate enough to take on the responsibility of reading the word of God to their neighbors.

The leaders and responsibility were taken very seriously. Great poverty was almost everywhere I visited. Many people spent their entire day trying to survive. At the same time, the lack of material possessions tends to focus people’s vision.

One woman in a very poor barrio on the outskirts of Cuamaca, El Salvador, once told a group of students I was leading, “My life is easier than yours.” Those college students knew the woman wasn’t even sure whether she would have something to eat that day. So they asked her what she meant.

Her answer was that they have too many other things to worry about. She had to rely directly on God. That made her life easier. Poverty, often in countries where there is wealth for a small minority, brings us to a final lesson learned in Latin America: Faith leads to work for social justice.

Whether small base communities decide to seek land rights or parishes find ways to feed the hungry, many Church leaders have found it necessary to work to change unhealthy systems.

A parish I recently visited in Guatemala has created its own coffee fields so the people won’t have to go to big plantations to pick coffee, a job that often promises much but pays them little.

Each time I return from a trip to Latin America, I find myself enriched by the people I have come to know. I also re-evaluate the way that my own faith is being lived.

[The story is concluded in the next issue of Faith Alive!]

Discussion Point

Parishes welcome Latino worship styles

Have any aspects of Latin American styles of worship been incorporated into your parish’s life? What are they?

“We have a large Latin American population at our (parish). They bring us incredible gifts with their absolute devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. We have the most incredible, joyful celebration, beginning around 5 a.m. with drumming, dancing and a big breakfast before Mass.” (Michele Anderson, Boulder, Colo.)

“Not at our (parish), but one of our neighboring parishes has not only a large Hispanic congregation, but a Polish community, and they have some Masses in Spanish and others in Polish. On Easter, they have a trilingual Mass in English, Spanish and Polish.” (Joseph Ramirez, Tucson, Ariz.)

“Our parish is very large and we have quite a few Spanish-speaking people in our congregation. One of our vigil Masses on Saturday and one of our five Sunday Masses are in Spanish.” (Unique Chambless, Brandon, Fla.)

Lend Us Your Voice

A upcoming edition asks: Is your home a haven for rest and regrouping, or one more endless project that never seems to get done?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to opener@catholicaews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Don't understand about Catholics and New Testament more than any other woman. Blessed and venerate her. She appears in the Thirteenth in a series of columns. From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Twelve something/Christina Capecchi

Grace for the graduate: A leap of faith, a new beginning

Dear Graduate,

I know how you're feeling: lightheaded and faint-hearted. You're trying to process the past four years that flew by, trying to smile politely as you all straighten up, left hand takes diploma, right hand shakes, tassel flips from right to left.

You've managed to master biochemistry and the sociology of the cafeteria, Professor Armit and two inexorable roommates, and yet these simple instructions have you feeling cross-eyed.

The hard part ought to be behind you, but you suspect the greatest challenge awaits: How to properly uncork your college career.

You're treading in deep emotion, torn between a weep and a cheer. Each goodbye you extend feels sorely inadequate.

I couldn't imagine life beyond college. I hated to leave the close quarters and the strong camaraderie I had been living in. In sure I would never again experience anything like it.

And I was right.

But I can assure you that the end of one good thing makes room for the beginning of another. You'll find yourself immediately in a new college life, with its new blessings and different rewards.

It is deeply satisfying—perhaps more so—because you become a contributing member of society, not just a college student.

So here is my summations to you: Instead of dreasing this change, embrace it. Invite and observe opportunities for growth.

"When the heart is ready for a fresh beginning," wrote the late Irish poet John O'Donohue, "unforeseen things can emerge. And, in a sense, this is exactly what a beginning does. It is an opening for surprises."

Now, you're going to college. It is a passport of newness. You are an unknown, a blank canvas on which you can paint a great picture.

So do yourself a big favor: Go out and play!

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn. E-mail her at christina@redchristina.com)
The The Sunday Readings
Sunday, May 10, 2009

John 15:1-8

The Acts of the Apostles again this Easter season is the source of the first reading for Sunday. This week’s reading from Acts highlights Paul. In an earlier passage, not read in this liturgy, the intensely devoted Jew, Paul, after having persecuted Christians, experiences the presence of Jesus in a stunning way on the road to Damascus. Paul completely converts to Christianity. Eventually, the Christian community accepts him, although—understandably given his previous hostility to Christ—some Christians had great anxiety about accepting him into their midst.

As had happened, and as would happen again, Paul’s new Christian intensity made enemies for him. Fellow Christians took him for his own safety to Caesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, a place now in ruins on the outskirts of modern Tel Aviv.

From Caesarea, a seaport, the septuagenarian Paul sent his way to Tarsus again, to safeguard his personal security. It would eventually be the beginning of Paul’s ministry. For the second reading this Easter weekend, the Church offers a selection from the First Epistle of Paul. The epistle refers to readers as “little children.” Obviously, adults composed the epistle’s audience, or most of the audience. Still, the epistle employs this term of endearment.

Those who follow Jesus indeed are God’s “little children.” However, it is more than a term of affection. Humans, regardless of their age, are children of God. Moreover, humans, again regardless of their age, are as naive and inexperienced as children. It is not a foolish comparison. Humans simply are limited.

St. John’s Gospel supplies the last reading. This reading has a deeply eucharistic undertone. In the sequence of events, at the supper Jesus gave the Twelve the wine that is the blood of Christ. As Pope John Paul II said, the Eucharist is the heart and source of true Christian life, strength and growth.

On this weekend, the Church again invites us to celebrate the fact that Jesus overcame death. He lives!

However, Jesus lives not afar and beyond our reach. If we drink the wine that has become in the Eucharist the Blood of Christ, then we are branches of the one, divinely planted vine that is Jesus the Lord. This Church offers us the fruit of God’s vine. The wine that is the blood of Christ is the Eucharist.

In this reading, Jesus says, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He trims me and takes away all my branches that do not bear fruit, so that the fruit borne by the vine may be abundantly available to the Father.” The Eucharist celebrates the fruit of divine life, the fruits of the Church. No wine, but the blood of Jesus, is the source of true strength and enduring life.

John 15:1-8

The Criterion Friday, May 8, 2009

The Sunday Readings

Daily Readings

Monday, May 11
Acts 14:5-18
Psalm 115:1-5, 15-16
John 14:21-26

Tuesday, May 12
Nehemiah, martyr
Achilleus, martyr
Pancras, martyr
Acts 14:19-26
Psalm 145:10-13, 18, 21
John 14:27-31a

Wednesday, May 13
Our Lady of Fatima
Psalm 122:1-5
John 15:1-8

Thursday, May 14
Matthias, Apostle
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26
Psalm 113:1-8
John 15:9-17

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen
Seeing our good deeds can help other people give glory to God

How do people come to be atheists? So many books and articles are written today about that, but it’s not as easy to understand.

The existence of God and his love seem so evident to us. What makes some people refuse to believe? (Ohio)

I don’t know all the answers, and I don’t think anyone does. My experience, however, suggests that some of our easy assumptions are off-track.

Before judging and categorizing “atheists,” we need to ask ourselves: What kind of God, what kind of God, are they rejecting? And why? The answer may not be as simple as we think.

Several years ago, the evening television news described a southern city in violent turmoil over an atheist couple whose son wished to join the Boy Scouts. His parents sued the local organization for mentioning God in the Scout oath. As the child left school, a group of adults and children, their faces distorted in anger and hostility, berated him for his godlessness. He was in tears. Could anyone not understand if his family reacts by thinking: If your God is anything like you, we want no part of it?

As the late sainthood Brazilian Archbishop Helder Pietro Camara once wrote, “Watch how you live. Your lives may be the only gospel your sisters and brothers will ever read.”

We have endless evidence that people, we of Christian faith or other believers, sometimes instinctively tend to cut God down to our own size, to our own ways of thinking and acting, so that he will fit comfortably into our very limited minds. Then, in our zeal, we attempt, usually without realizing it, to impose that stunted idea of God on others. If they cannot accept our representation of God as well as what and how we feel God expects us to act, we are greatly threatened. We accuse them of being evil, enemies of God, enemies of good and enemies of life.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that by seeing our good deeds others will be moved to give glory to God. If so, then the opposite is also true. When our actions become mean-spirited and belligerently strident, we can make it incredibly difficult if not impossible for others, especially persons with little faith background, to recognize the compassionate, merciful and faithful God that we believe in.

We too often lack kindness, generosity and basic charity. We may even feel a self-righteous obligation to judge, disrespect and revile persons who do not see things our way. When that happens, it is wildly foolish to expect a change of heart or conversion to our understanding of God and His Word.

This does not deny that most of us are bathed each day in evident signs of God’s goodness, wisdom and beauty, and the millions of people who suffer from grinding poverty and savage genocides might not easily agree.

And we know the destructive force of intellectual pride and stiff-necked willfulness and greed for power which, as Scripture often reminds us, we all share to some degree.

It does say, however, that we need to move carefully and compassionately when we’re tempted to denounce others for not accepting faith in God, or what God wants, the way we do.

Faith, a living faith that drives our lives, is vital. But we sometimes forget that the God who lives is holy, totally “other,” beyond all human comprehension.

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, says the Lord. God has told us, ‘nor are you ways your ways. . . .’ As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts” (Is 55:8-9).

Who are these “atheists” who they are? Who is at fault? Who can tell? Our lives and desires and decisions are much more interwoven than we can imagine, and the web of disbelief has many strands.

I’m happy that it is God, and not me, who must unravel the moral complications.

(For a free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about all matters, the mother of Jesus, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3131, Peoria, Ill. 61612.

Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of dietzen@ad.com.)
Wife of Walton Collins. Mother St. Roch, Indianapolis, April 14.


BERRY, Barbara, 67, Christ the King, Indianapolis, A pri l 25. M other of Tammy James, Robin, and Tiffany Berry, Sister of M aria Halle and brother of M artin. M other of six. Step-grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of two.


The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a Director of Planned Giving to oversee the growth and administration of assets entrusted to the Catholic Church in Indiana. The responsibilities are focused on raising cash for the perpetual mission of the Archdiocese and account of the founding of the archdiocese and relationships with leaders in East Deanery parishes and schools and Scecina Memorial High School, an archdiocesan Catholic.

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The history book sells for $27 (plus $4.50 for shipping and handling). The coffee-table book contains tables, charts, and other colorful 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 photography that parallel the chapters in the archdiocese.

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The pope's pilgrimage will take message of peace to land of conflict

Pope Benedict XVI is set to begin a weeklong visit to the Holy Land, a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Christ and a journey through a political and interreligious minefield.

In many ways, the May 8-15 visit to Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories is the most challenging of the pope's foreign visits to date, one that will test his skills of communication and bridge-building in a region of conflict and mistrust.

A far-reaching communications mix-up at the Vatican, the pope can expect to find his every word and gesture under scrutiny by the world's media—especially when it comes to relations among Christians, Muslims and Jews, and the Israeli-Palestinian crisis.

Athough the world may measure the success of the visit in terms of international or interfaith diplomacy, Pope Benedict is going to the Holy Land first and foremost as a religious pilgrim.

"The priority is to witness to the truth of the Incarnation by visiting, as head of the Church, the places where the events of our redemption took place. That's the point," Franciscan Father David Jager, an Israeli priest and adviser to the Vatican, told Catholic News Service.

The pilgrimage has a special focus on peace. The pope, in announcing the visit, said he would be going to the Holy Land to pray for "the precious gift of unity and peace for the Middle East and all humanity."

Father Jager said that is extremely important at a time when hopes for peace among the population are the lowest in many years.

"The worst thing that can happen is the loss of hope for peace. For so him to speak openly of the possibility and the necessity of peace and reconciliation should thrust those values into the fore," Father Jager said.

"It's not a political negotiation of course; he's not going to produce a peace treaty or try to. But the fact that he keeps the value of peace in front of the people of the region, that will be a tremendous contribution by the Church," he said.

The first leg of the pope's trip will take him to Jordan for a series of carefully chosen liturgies and encounters, including a visit to a mosque in Amman. That event, and the fact that Pope Benedict is spending several days in Jordan, reflects his aim to reach a wide Muslim audience.

In 2006, Pope Benedict prayed in a mosque in Turkey, a gesture that spoke volumes to the Islamic world. In Amman, the pope will deliver a speech outside the mosque to Muslim leaders, diplomats and rectors of the University of Jordan. The audience and setting make it likely that the pope will revisit the themes of his speech in 2006 in Regensburg, Germany, but this time making sure his remarks on reason and faith do not unintentionally offend his listeners.

For Jordan's Catholic faithful, who number about 75,000 in a population of 6.2 million, the big event will be the papal Mass in an Amman soccer stadium on May 10.

Two smaller papal events in Jordan should not go unnoticed. His first appointment in Amman is at the Regnum Pacis center, a special needs facility that has inspired Christian-Muslim dialogue and collaboration. Here the pope is likely to emphasize the importance of the "dialogue of life" and social cooperation among followers of the Abrahamic faiths.

The pope will also lay the cornerstone of the new building of the University of M abdaa, which is being built by the Latin patriarchate. Blessing cornerstone stones is a common practice among Christians but, in Amman, this papal visit, which Palestinians see as an instrument of reconciliation, will be a tremendous contribution by the Church," he said.

The pope will celebrate Mass on May 14 in Jerusalem, at a site considered holy by both denominations. The pope will be the first pontiff to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, the site where tradition says Jesus was arrested and later that day was crucified.

Arafat, the last Palestinian leader, once said the pope was the only non-political figure able to come to the area and speak to both parties. After the pope's visit in 2000, the Israeli government welcomed the pope's interfaith statement to the Muslim world.

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The pope travels to Jerusalem on May 13, and later that day visits the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, in what Vatican aides view as a central event of the trip. When Pope John Paul II visited in 2000, his visit was greeted with warm appreciation. Many considered it a turning point in his pilgrimage.

Pope Benedict has spoken eloquently about the Holocaust, and as a German he has recalled growing up as a witness to the brutality of the regime that targeted Jews for extermination. Vatican sources said, however, that the pope will not be going to Yad Vashem to apologize as a German, but to invoke a wider lesson on the dangers of racism and anti-Semitism.

On May 12, his first full day in Jerusalem, the pope visits sites sacred to Islam, Judaism and Christianity. He begins at the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's holiest shrines, and proceeds to the Western Wall, sacred to Jews.

The two sites lie adjacent to each other and in the past have been the scene of bitter skirmishes between Palestinians and Israelis. The same day, the pope will meet separately with the city's two chief rabbis and the grand mufti.

Much of the pope's itinerary follows in the footsteps of Pope John Paul II's Holy Land pilgrimage in 2000. Pope Benedict, for example, will pray at Mount Nebo in western Jordan, where Moses glimpsed the Promised Land but died.

And, like his predecessor, he will visit the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized and the southernJerusalem neighborhood of Abu Dis, which Palestinians see as an instrument of reconciliation, will be a tremendous contribution by the Church," he said.

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The pope will make a daylong visit on May 13 to the West Bank city of Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus and today a key administrative center of the Palestinian Authority, whose officials will welcome the pontiff at the presidential palace. The main religious event of the day is a Mass in Major Square.

That afternoon, the pope will visit the Al-Aida Refugee Camp, where some 5,000 Palestinians live. The visit, which already politically charged, Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem said recently that the camp, which has a giant key installed atop one of the camp's gates, symbolizes the "right to return," the principle that Palestinian refugees have a right to return to the homes in Israel that they have been forced to leave at various times since 1946, when the war for Israeli statehood began.

In addition, Israel has objected that the platform being built to host the Al-Aida event is too close to the Israeli separation wall, which Israel has designated as a 400-mile-long security barrier through the West Bank and which Palestinians see as an instrument of repression.

The pope will celebrate Mass on May 14 in Nazareth, the city where Jesus grew up, and later visit the Grotto of the Annunciation and hold a prayer service with the Catholic leaders of Galilee. Like his Mass earlier in the week in the Josefat Valley near the Garden of Gethsemane, these liturgies and moments of prayer and reflection will offer moral support to the dwindling Christian population in the land where the Church was born.

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