Amid rubble, Haitians celebrate Church leaders’ lives and legacies

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (CNS)—Amid the rubble of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, Haitians celebrated the lives of the archbishop and vicar general of Port-au-Prince, both of whom were killed in the country’s Jan. 12 earthquake.

Church officials—including some from the United States—joined Haitians on Jan. 23 for the funerals of Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot, who died when the impact of the quake hurled him from a balcony, and Msgr. Charles Benoit, the vicar general whose body was pulled from the cathedral debris.

They were among more than 150,000 Haitians killed in the magnitude 7 quake. U.N. officials have said the final death toll might never be known.

Archbishop Louis Kebreau of Cap-Haitien, president of the Haitian bishops’ conference, celebrated the funeral Mass, and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Lafond of Port-au-Prince delivered the homily.

“In our prayer, we recall that Jesus, too, wept before the tomb of one whom he loved,” said the cardinal’s message. “With you, we recall in that his the resurrection and the life, offering himself to us and calling us to himself, even in our darkest hour.

“In the United States, our televisions, computers and newspapers have been filled with images of your unspeakable pain, suffering and loss,” he told them. “Each hour, see Haiti, page 10A.

Standing up for the unborn

Cardinal urges thousands at shrine vigil to embrace life

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Rosary in hand, Tom Potratz surveyed the throng gathered for the opening Mass of the annual March for Life on Jan. 21 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

“What he saw gave him a sense of satisfaction. Mixed among the crowd were more than 1,000 people, many of them of school age, from his hometown of Indianapolis.

Twenty years ago, when Potratz started attending the March for Life, Indianapolis was not well represented.

After a few years, Potratz recalled for Catholic News Service, he wondered what could be done to bring the same enthusiasm for making the annual trek to Washington that he saw in people from other parts of the U.S. to the young people of central Indiana.

Potratz, a member of St. Louis de Monfort Parish in Indianapolis, approached Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis, offering to organize bus trips for teenagers to attend the march and its related activities. The archbishop gave his blessing.

These staggering statistics are what inspire youths and adults to travel to Washington every January for the peaceful, prayerful protest against nearly four decades of legalized abortion in America.

This year, an estimated 300,000 people gathered in the nation’s capital for the pro-life march, including three buses of pilgrims with the official archdiocesan pilgrimage as well as many more groups from schools and parishes in central and southern Indiana.

For some of the youths, the march is an annual pilgrimage, but for others the pro-life trip was a new experience. Whether they were veteran pro-life marchers or first-time participants, each person was ready to stand up and defend the sanctity and dignity of life from conception until natural death.

Archdiocesan youths come out in large numbers for annual March for Life in nation’s capital

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Potratz, a member of St. Louis de Monfort Parish in Indianapolis, approached Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis, offering to organize bus trips for teenagers to attend the march and its related activities. The archbishop gave his blessing. Then recently retired, Potratz went to work.

The first year, 1996, he was able to get about 180 teenagers to fill four buses. Thereafter, the project grew. He stepped back from the effort a few years ago when parishes, schools and dioceses began sponsoring their own buses. This year, about 25 buses made the trip from Indianapolis to Washington.

“I’ve always known most kids are pro-life, but they’re a little reluctant to get up and stand in front because of what the popular media says,” Potratz said. "That’s until they come out here one time and they see 150,000 other youths. They say ‘Wow, it’s kind of cool to be pro-life. OK. I can do it now.’”

The teens from Indianapolis helped generate an atmosphere of excitement in the basilica as the time for the Mass neared. The congregation filled the aisles, side chapels, the vestibule and even part of the

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Archdiocesan youths arrived in Washington early on Jan. 21 then spent the day touring the Capitol, The Catholic University of America and the John Paul II Cultural Center, a museum dedicated to the pope’s life and papacy.

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opening Mass for the National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception adjacent to Catholic University. The basilica was packed to the brim with pro-life supporters from throughout the country. The sheer number of Catholics there was awe-inspiring as was the opening procession of seminarians, priests, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, which lasted almost 45 minutes.

In a moving homily which celebrated St. Agnes as a model of joy, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, praised the presence of so many youths at the Mass, calling them “a sure sign of infectious joy, the sign of life.”

Jan. 22 began with a Mass for archdiocesan pilgrims celebrated by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein in the crypt church of the basilica.

Newly ordained Father John Hollowell, the chaplain at Cardinal Ritter J.S.C. High School in Indianapolis, spoke directly to the people during his homily.

“The one thing that people respond to is witness—you,” Father Hollowell said. “When they see your joy, that is the only thing that will get them to question how they approach this issue of life. You are called to be a witness for life.”

Lauded by the Mass and holy Communion, the pilgrims set out for the march along Constitution Avenue in downtown Washington.

A rabbi who Buechlein said he was impressed by the presence of so many youths at the March for Life said, “I think the youths being here is a tremendous sign of hope for our Church now as well as in the future.” Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, the archbishop said. “There’s a lot of energy and enthusiasm as well as high ideals in these good and faithful Catholic youths. It is very encouraging.”

The teenagers’ excitement, energy and passion for the pro-life cause were evident by their songs and cheers during the march. The presence of so many youths was a great topic of discussion among some of the marchers.

Taylor Whittier, a homeschooled student from Morgantown, W.Va., said high turnout was encouraging.

“I think it says something about this generation, my generation,” Taylor said, “and also the generation that’s coming because it says that we care about life regardless of what our government is saying. It says that we really care about what’s happening in our country.”

Taylor said she was impressed by all the people who came to march for an end to abortion.

“I came on the march because I think it’s amazing to see all these people here standing for life even though the country [is] saying it doesn’t matter,” she said. “I just feel really passionate about it.”

The passion and dedication that the pro-life cause inspires in people is just one of the reasons that show how important it is to defend the life of unborn babies.

Ben Seiwert, a homeschooled student and member of St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County, said he is enthusiastic about doing his part to work for an end to abortion, and “is willing to stand up for all the babies who can’t talk for themselves.”

His sister, Courtney, who is a member of the Archdiocesan Youth Council, and Ben were glad that they traveled to Washington to stand up for the cause of life.

“I think it’s pretty cool seeing 300,000 people all here for the same cause,” Ben said. “You don’t see that for anything else really. It’s just a great thing to be a part of this, and I feel like I’m part of something so much more than just a small group.”

The March for Life is a much anticipated event every year because so many youths and adults are eager to stand up for their beliefs and try to make a difference in the country.

Ashley Niemeyer, a member of St. Thomas More Parish in Middletown, has participated in the pro-life pilgrimage for four years.

“It’s just something I love doing,” Niemeyer said. “There are so many people, and the energy is great out here. I just love being here.”

Hopefully, many of the teenagers said, next year’s march will be a celebration of pro-life victories and the overturn of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy.

But until then, like many Catholics across the nation, the archdiocesan pilgrims said they will continue to support life every day at home, at work and at school.

(Alexa Bowling is a homeschooled senior and member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. She serves as president of the Archdiocesan Youth for Life.)

Taylor Whittler of Morgantown, left, and Kate Wunderlich, right, a member of St. Barbara’s Parish in Columbus, pose for a photograph on Jan. 22 before the archdiocesan Mass for Life at the crypt church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on the morning of the 37th annual March for Life in Washington.

Emma Felck, a student at Lumen Christi School in Indianapolis and member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, carries a pro-life sign on Jan. 22 during the 37th annual March for Life in Washington.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary parishioners Rebekah Murphy, left, and Mary Cafin, right of Indianapolis, accompanied students, carry pro-life signs during the March for Life on Jan. 22 in Washington, D.C.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein processes into the crypt chapel of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington for the archdiocesan Mass for Life on Jan. 22. Seminarians Peter Jansen from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, left, and Sean Wilson from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, right, assisted the archbishop as altar servers during the Mass. They are students at Bishop Simon Bolívar 4-College Seminary in Indianapolis.

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Msgr. Richard Kavanagh was longest serving priest in archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

Retired Msgr. Richard T. Kavanagh died on Jan. 20 at St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove. He was 89.

Msgr. Kavanagh, who died of natural causes, had lived at the Hermitage since 1958.

His Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 27 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis, followed at the Priests’ Circle at Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis.

At 73 years, he was the longest serving priest in the history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, was the homilist at Msgr. Kavanagh’s funeral Mass.

A teenage member of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis when Msgr. Kavanagh was the pastor there, Msgr. Svarczkopf said in an interview with The Criterion that his pastor was instrumental in shaping his vocation to the priesthood.

“He was a really good pastor, a real shepherd, very inspiring,” Msgr. Svarczkopf said. “I try to be like him, but I don’t think I’m making it.”

In addition to being administrator and pastor of St. Michael Parish for more than 30 years, Msgr. Kavanagh oversaw projects that did not always have the biggest or most obvious significance that make up the archdiocese of Indianapolis today.

According to Msgr. Svarczkopf, he was active in the founding of the archdiocesan Catholic Youth Organization in the 1960s, and his parish was one of the earliest to have a community center and a youth group.

Three of those high schools—Cal Ritter, St. Monica and St. Michael—continue to operate in Indianapolis.

Father Thomas Scenna, memorial high school and Bishop Chatrand High School (now Rennisam Day School), was named after men who were close to Msgr. Kavanagh. He served Mass for them in his 70 years of priesthood.

Bardon’s brother died and Msgr. Kavanagh, who was 96 at the time, listened in on his father’s final moments before giving his final blessing.

“I didn’t know that he was coming,” Bardon said. “And I just kind of sat back and cried, knowing I was his pastor.”

Thirty-eight years later, Bardon’s husband died. And Msgr. Kavanagh, who was 96 at the time, listened in on his father’s final moments before giving his final blessing.

“I didn’t know that he was coming,” Bardon said. “And I just kind of sat back and cried, knowing I was his pastor.”


Pastor of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis.

From 1949-50, he served in different capacities, including as the assistant superintendent of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, and as the assistant director of charities, where he oversaw the Catholic Youth Organization, United States Organization and Boy Scout activities.

During this time, he served as the administrator of St. Mary Queen of Peace Parish in Danville, and as an associate pastor of Holy Trinity and St. Mary parishes in Indianapolis.

On Nov. 8, 1951, he was named the administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis. He became the pastor on Feb. 4, 1951, and would remain pastor until he retired in 1982.

During the 1960s, he also served as the dean of the archdiocese’s North Deanery. In the 1970s, he was the dean of the archdiocese’s West Deanery. In 1985, he was named the first director of the archdiocesan purchasing department. Pope Paul VI named him a domestic prelate in 1967.

Msgr. Kavanagh retired from active ministry in 1982.

Surviving are two nieces and a nephew.

Memorial gifts may be sent to St. Michael the Archangel Parish or Cathedral High School, both in Indianapolis, or St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove.

Governor presents Freedom Award to Father Kenneth Taylor for community advocacy

By Mary Ann Wyandt

Father Kenneth Taylor certainly wasn’t expecting to receive a 2010 Freedom Award from the Indiana Law Center in downtown Indianapolis.

The community service award from the State of Indiana and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission recognizes individuals who break down barriers that divide people.

The pastor of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis was selected for the archdiocesan Office of Multicultural Ministry’s service has been in Church and community life for 37 years, and Msgr. Kavanagh was ordained to the priesthood 31 years ago.

He also ministered at St. Monica, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Mark, and St. Michael the Archangel parishes in Indianapolis as well as the former Black Catholic Parish in Indianapolis.

“Breaking down barriers is something that continually needs to be taught and continually needs to happen,” Father Taylor said. “The one thing that is different from the time of Dr. Martin Luther King is that we’re not living in a society that is just black and white anymore.”

“It’s a multicultural society that we find ourselves in. It’s a multicultural church, and we need to learn how to get along with a variety of people. That is as much of a challenge today as it was fighting the segregation in the day of Martin Luther King.”

“It’s important and necessary to celebrate multicultural differences in society, said, rather than fear or avoid them in cities and neighborhoods.”

“I think part of the recognition [for the award] was that as an African-American Catholic priest in this diocese that in itself has broken down barriers,” Father Taylor said.

“So we don’t have that many African-American priests in the archdiocese, either now or historically, I think what I’ve been able to do as an ordained priest in the diocese was part of it and my multicultural ministry involvement.”

Scripture reminds people to love one another, he said, and help one another.

“I think that we’ve had the vision set by us by Pentecost where the Church, the faith community, is supposed to be inclusive of all people, no matter where they come from.”

Father Taylor said. “That vision is reinforced in [the Book of] Revelation when we get the vision of the throng of people before the throne of God, and every tongue, nation, race and people are represented there. That vision, I think, is what we’re all called to as a Church, as [members of] any faith community and as neighbors.”

He said the civil rights movement during the 1960s influenced his calling to the priesthood.

“I was in school during the height of the civil rights movement and observing all that was going on,” Father Taylor said. “I saw that the Church played a major role in the promotion of civil rights, and the end of segregation, separateness and division.”

That was very much a part of my motivation toward priesthood because I wanted to be a part of the Church in order to be a part of that change that was taking place in our society and our nation.”
Let's make 2010 a year of peace through growth in love and faith

We are now 10 years into the third Christian millennium. This has so far been a troubled decade dominated by terrorism, war and economic crisis. Surely we can do better than this.

Cardinal Francis E. George, in his recently published collection of essays, The Difference God Makes: A Catholic Vision of Faith, Communion and Culture, argues that all of our personal, political and economic problems stem from the radical separation of our spiritual lives from the life we lead. God is here now in our midst as well as he will come again; that the kingdom of God is 'every thing to every one' " God, in his infinite wisdom, has so planned it."

Let's face this challenge at the beginning of a new year. Looking back 2,000 years, it would be easy to give in to despair. Has any real progress been made since Christ first became one of us or since he redeemed us by his passion, death and resurrection? Have we learned anything as a result of the ups and downs of 2,000 years of Christian history? Or are we still stuck in our sins as individuals and as communities?

Fortunately, we begin each new year with the hope that Christ gives us each Christmas, and, indeed, each time we acknowledge him, and praise him, in our daily lives.

The saints teach us that we can get our metaphysics and our praise of God right in order. This is the challenge we face as individuals and communities who seek to live in a just, rightly ordered society characterized by peace and love.

One as a hard as it may sometimes be to believe, love is growing in our anxious hearts and in our troubled world. The seeds of love were planted by God at the beginning of time. They were renewed in my life through the miracle of Christ's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. As hard as it may sometimes be to believe, love is growing in our anxious hearts and in our troubled world.

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, celebrated Mass on the opening day of the bishops' annual fall meeting in Baltimore on Nov. 26.

Looking Around

William Byron, SJ

Responding to the crisis in Haiti

There are big differences between leaders and managers. Managers administer; they mind the stores. But leaders innovate.

Mangers hold the fort, leaders develop new frontiers. The manager imitates; the leader originates.

Democratic Gov. Ed Rendell of Pennsylvania proved himself to be an innovative leader in his response to the crisis in Haiti.

As a result, 54 orphans are now in Pittsburgh awaiting adoption and new interest is being shown to children already adopting in Pennsylvania orphanages.

The earthquake occurred on a Tuesday. The governor was on the ground in Haiti for six hours following the Monday, having chartered a plane from Republic Airlines. He assembled a rescue team from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the Red Cross and Catholic Charities of Pittsburgh. U.S. Rep. Tim Murphy, a western Pennsylvania Democrat, was on the flight, and he used his contacts in the White House and State Department to obtain visas for the children.

A multinational team that was part of the medical team on the relief flight told the Pittsburgh Post Gazette: "I felt a little safer with Gov. Rendell on board, and I don't think any of what transpired would have if the governor had not been on board. Clearane for the plane to land, getting the kids to the airport, special visas; I think without him, none of it happens." Rendell agreed to accompany the Pittsburgh group after Haiti's ambassador to the United States told him that his help might be needed to cut through any red tape on the orphanage flight. "The ambassador said, 'If problems crop up, you are the only one to get it done.'" said Rendell at a press conference upon his return. "To some extent, that proved true."

The objective was to get two and a half tons of supplies donated by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center down to Haiti and to bring the children back. The governor and his team accomplished both.

As the rest of us contribute whatever we can to the relief effort, we have to think long-term about eliminating poverty in Haiti. As David Brooks pointed out in the New York Times when a magnitude 7 earthquake hit the San Francisco Bay Area on Oct. 17, 1989—remember seeing it on TV?—the world watched a World Series game between the Oakland A's and San Francisco Giants as 53 people were killed. When an earthquake of the exact same magnitude struck near Port-au-Prince on Jan. 12, 2010, uncounted thousands died.

The difference? Poverty. The skyscraper construction, a weak economy, a colonial legacy, illiteracy and widespread political corruption describe the collapsed infrastructure of a broken nation. Rebuilding it will require centrally applied economic assistance, education, engineering, political stability and integrity in government.

It will also take a lot of time. It will require a comprehensive, coordinated, centrally funded strategy, not a series of uncoordinated and competing programs. The world to help itself, and become responsible for its own actions.

Letters to the Editor

People of the world must become responsible for their own actions

It was nice to see John Fink address Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical "Charity in Truth." Actually, the encyclical seems to be more of the "same old, same old" where the U.S. is concerned.

We are told by the pope that redistribution is necessary—where have we heard that before? and we, the U.S., should review our lifestyles. Our lifestyles: Who was first on the way to help Haiti after the earthquake? Who is almost always first on the line to help whenever any tragedy strikes anywhere? Who is known throughout the world for its help? Who are we, for being the sucker and the patsy whenever help is needed? The United States. The word "redistribution" brings me because of what we consistently hear today from our president.

I don't mind helping. My parents taught me to do just that. I mind doing it for someone else who will not even try to do for themselves, and who feel I owe it to them.

Politicians went from saying global warming was "killing climate change" when blizzards hit Copenhagen, Beijing, London and several other European cities at the time of the global warming meeting.

Of course, we have climate change. God, in his infinite wisdom, has so decreed. Think of it as spring cleaning. Every so many millennia, God decides it's time to clean house, and the climate changes. These changes were occurring before man. Are we to blame for them as well? I wouldn't think so.

I do not want to save the world. I want the world to help itself, and become responsible for its own actions as I expect to be responsible for mine.

This is God's natural order of things, and man should be very careful in trying to manipulate that.

Barbara L. Maness

Letters to the Editor

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This is God's natural order of things, and man should be very careful in trying to manipulate that.
Las escuelas católicas transmiten la rica herencia de nuestros antepasados

Esta semana tenemos buenos motivos para festejar con nuestras escuelas católicas. Al tiempo que celebramos, cabe destacar que desde los abuelos de nuestro país hasta las escuelas católicas parroquiales y los sistemas de educación secundaria han sido un sello distintivo de la Iglesia católica de Estados Unidos.

En la fundación de nuestro “sistema” escolar católico tuvo gran influencia el hecho de que era una iglesia de pueblo. También tuvo que ver con la preservación de nuestra fe y cultura católica en medio de una cultura nacional predominantemente protestante.

En aquel entonces las circunstancias en las que se encontraban nuestros antepasados no eran acogedoras. Con el fin de poder transmitir la fe católica a las generaciones posteriores, decidió que era necesario contar con escuelas propias en las cuales sus hijos pudieran aprender acerca de la fe y la tradición católica.

Los valores de ese aspecto de nuestra herencia católica marcaron mis primeros años en la escuela elemental. El traba, el baile, el costo, seguido de ésta ha sido una de las fuentes importantes que han tenido incidencia sobre mi formación con respecto a nuestras escuelas católicas.

En el condado de Dubois, durante mi primera infancia, todavía existían escuelas de un solo salón hasta octavo grado. Las llamábamos “casas escuela.”

De hecho, en las afueras de Jasper había una Escuela Buechlein, cerca de la granja de mi abuelo Buechlein. Aproximadamente a una milla de mi hogar de infancia había una Escuela Buechlein. Los nombres de las escuelas hablaban de su origen de inmigrantes alemanes.

El hermano de mamá, tío Adam, enseñaba en la Escuela Buechlein y yo pasé allí los primeros dos años de la primaria. En cierto modo, era como la escuelita en el hogar. La mayoría de nosotros, aproximadamente 25, éramos primos y todos católicos. Un viejo chisme era recibir un correo con un sobre de cartón con una carta para leer al salón en el cual, grado por grado, recibíamos y compartíamos la lección del día, mientras que los demás géneros trabajaban en su propio trabajo y practicaban la escritura en la pizarra.

Los sábados en la mañana íbamos a la escuela St. Joseph en Jasper para que los hermanos de la Providencia nos impartieran educación religiosa. En esos sábados en la mañana veíamos el programa de la Comunión y el momento de recitar el rosario. Nuestra familia se dirigía regularmente a St. Joseph para la elección de los sábados en la tarde. Era allí donde el pastoreo, monseñor Leonard Wernsing, animaba a mis padres en repetidas ocasiones para que nos trasladaran a mi hermano y a mí a la escuela St. Joseph. Yo estaba en tercer grado y Charlie en séptimo. Y fue entonces cuando nuestra educación católica pasó a ser aún más influenciada y dirigida por los hermanos de la Providencia.

La escuela St. Joseph de Jasper era la primera que fundó Santa Theadora Guérin—otra inmigrante católica. Yo recordaba que el mayor de los hermanos de la Providencia en St. Joe, se llamaba Charlie y a los 8 años, era también un maestro de la escuela.

Además de recibir una excelente formación académica, también sentimos bases sólidas para nuestra fe, tradición y cultura católica. Así mismo, me gustaría agregar que mi vocación al sacerdocio tiene sus raíces en el ambiente de St. Joe, además de en el hogar, por supuesto.

Mi generación de católicos puso experimento de muchas formas algo de esta tradición. A pesar de la influencia de los hermanos de la Providencia y nuestras maestras, muchos de los que recibimos nuestras enseñanzas religiosas en el hogar también fueron católicos. En nuestra escuela católica, cada día se leía un fragmento de la Biblia. De la misma manera, recuerdo que después de la escuela, en mi casa, mi mamá leería la Biblia en voz alta.

En muchos de los momentos de vida en mi hogar, la fe y la educación religiosa eran parte fundamental. Como católicos, nos criábamos con un sentido de responsabilidad hacia el entorno en el que estábamos. Mi mamá siempre nos decía que para ser buenos católicos, teníamos que ser buenos lectores de la Biblia y que teníamos que asistir a la misa y a la confesión.

Hay muchas cosas que aprendi de esta educación que me han ayudado a formar quién soy hoy. Algunas de estas lecciones que aprendí son las siguientes:

1. Trabajo duro: que vale la pena el esfuerzo.
2. Respeto a la autoridad: que también tiene su importancia.
3. Amor a los próximos: que es una de las virtudes más importantes.
4. Fe en Dios: que es la base de toda nuestra fe.

En resumen, creo que nuestras escuelas católicas son una parte importante de nuestra formación y educación religiosa. A pesar de los cambios que han ocurrido a lo largo de los años, creo que las escuelas católicas siguen siendo un lugar donde se enseña la fe y la tradición católica en una forma que es accesible para los estudiantes.

La escuela St. Joseph en Jasper es una escuela que ha sido importante en mi vida. Allí recibí una excelente formación académica y además, aprendí mucho sobre nuestra fe y cultura católica. A pesar de los cambios que han ocurrido a lo largo de los años, creo que las escuelas católicas siguen siendo un lugar donde se enseña la fe y la tradición católica en una forma que es accesible para los estudiantes.

En muchas maneras, la educación religiosa en nuestras escuelas católicas ha sido una forma importante de preparar a nuestros hijos para la vida adulta. A pesar de los cambios que han ocurrido a lo largo de los años, creo que las escuelas católicas siguen siendo un lugar donde se enseña la fe y la tradición católica en una forma que es accesible para los estudiantes.

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Events Calendar

January 30

St. Bartholomew Parish, cafeteria, 1306 27th St., Columbus. Pro-life rally, students in grades 7-12, 1:30-3 p.m. Information: 821-324-2334.

January 31
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 30 S. Downey St., Indianapolis. Open house, 1:30 p.m. Information: 317-357-3316.

St. Christopher School, 5301 W. 6000 S., Indianapolis, “Meet Me at Lourdes,” a married couples’ retreat, 7:30-11 a.m., $30 per person, childcare included. Information: 317-804-4410.

February 1


February 2
St. Geoffrey the Archbishop Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. Senseman,” for Moms Program with Rita Burns Presence in Our Everyday Lives: A Morning Retreats and Programs

February 3
St. Geoffrey the Archbishop Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. “One Lord,” for Catholics who have been away or feel alienated from the Church, 7 p.m. Information: 317-241-6314.

February 4
St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Keep the Fire Burning,” a non-guided reflection day, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person, childcare included. Information: 317-637-3983.

February 5
St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 2222 E. 85th St., Indianapolis. “Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus,” Father Jim Farrell, presenter, 7 p.m. Information: 812-926-0606 or carolyn.meyer@wstps.org.

February 6
St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Meet Me at Lourdes,” a married couples’ retreat, 7:30-11 a.m., $50 per person. Information: 317-289-3234 or jmatthews@pcrhs.org.

February 7
St. Edward the Confessor, 2023 Fourth St., Aurora. A non-guided reflection day, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person, childcare included. Information: 317-370-1189.

February 8
St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 2222 E. 85th St., Indianapolis. “Living the Call of Jesus,” Father Patrick Gal, presenter, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Information: 812-336-6846.

February 9
St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Men’s Night at the ‘Burg,”” Franciscan Father Carl Haever, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m, free-will donation. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburg.org.

February 10

February 11
St. Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico. “Our Lady of Lourdes,” a married couples’ retreat, 7:30-11 a.m., $50 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.womens.stvincent.org.

February 12
St. Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Be My Valentine–A Married Couples Retreat,” Benedictine Father Noël Paweski, presenter, 2 p.m., coffee and dessert following presentation, no charge. Reservations: 502-896-6753 or M Zoeller@stmeinrad.edu.

February 13
St. Christopher School, 21 N. 17th Ave., Salem. “Couples Retreat,” Benedictine Fr. Tom Derick, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or M Zoeller@stmeinrad.edu.

February 14

February 15

February 16

February 17
St. Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “On the Road to the Abbey of the Holy Cross,” Benedictine Father Noël Paweski, presenter, 2 p.m., coffee and dessert following presentation, no charge. Reservations: 502-896-6753 or M Zoeller@stmeinrad.edu.

February 18
St. Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Be My Valentine–A Married Couples Retreat,” Benedictine Fr. Tom Derick, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or M Zoeller@stmeinrad.edu.

Monks profess temporary vows at Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Benedictine Novice Gary Edward Watts and Benedictine Novice Joseph Michael Luckett have completed their novitiate, a year of prayer and study of the monastery’s way of life. As is the custom during the profession of temporary vows, they were assigned a religious name. Novice Gary will now be known as Brother Adam. Novice Joseph will be known as Brother Luke. Temporary vows are typically for three years. Brother Adam, 30, was born in Nicholasville, Ky., where he was an intern at Saint Meinrad Archabbey and studied at the monastery’s school of theology. He earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy at The Catholic University of America. After graduating, he worked as a paralegal, high school teacher and dean of students. Brother Luke, 45, was born in Weston, W.Va., where he attended Lewis County High School. He was a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Salem, Va. He was a teacher at Benedictine Holy Cross School in Radford, Va., and later worked in information technology for a company in Roanoke, Va.

The three-year period of temporary vows provides a continuing opportunity for the monk and community to determine whether monastic life is the right vocation for him. 

Two men begin novitiate at Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Michael Luckett and Timothy Wymore were clothed in the Benedictine habit on Jan. 19 at St. Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad during a brief ceremony at the monastery entrance.

They now begin a year of monastic formation, including study of the Rule of St. Benedict and monastic history. Novice Michael, 21, was born in Louisville. He grew up in Raischo, Cucamonga, Calif., where he was a member of St. Peter and Paul Parish. He attended Damien High School in La Verne, Calif. In 2009, he earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, Calif., before coming to Saint St. Meinrad.

Novice Timothy, 24, was born in Grand Forks, N.D. He grew up in Madison, Wis., where he attended James Madison Memorial High School and was a member of Our Lady Queen of Peace Church. He earned a bachelor’s degree in 2007 at the University of Notre Dame. During college, he was an intern with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dubois County. Following college, he spent two years working for the National Right to Life Committee.

As a novice, the two take a year off from formal studies and studies. The novitiate is a time of prayer and learning intended to help a novice discern his vocation as a monk. At the end of this year, a novice may be permitted to profess temporary vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and community in the monastery of St. Meinrad. 

95th birthday celebration

Retired Father Hilary May, who lives in Hauptsbundt, Ind., celebrated his 95th birthday with several family members on Jan. 17. With the death of his wife, Margaret, on Jan. 20, Father May is now the oldest priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The pastor of the former St. Patrick Parish in Madison for more than 40 years, he will celebrate the 70th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood later this year.

VIPS

Raymond J. and Patricia L. (Norris) Mayrer, members of St. Roch Parish in Salem, Va., will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 4. The couple was married on Feb. 4, 1960, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Indianapolis.

They are the parents of eight children: Kathy Dejlofa, Patty Ralston, Ann, Margaret, Mary Lou, Ric, Paul and Steve Mayrer. They have 18 grandchildren.

William and Nadadera (Fletcher) Beaver, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 30. The couple was married on Jan. 30, 1960, at St. Joseph Church in Indianapolis.

They are the parents of four children: Gayle Avey, Marcia Ewbank, Ann Sellers and Mark Beaver. They have nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Nick and Patricia (Loe) Seats, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 23. The couple was married on Feb. 23, 1960, at St. Therese Church in Indianapolis. They are the parents of three children: Kimberly Sherrill, Richard and Ronald Seats. They have four grandchildren.

The Catholic Criterion Friday, January 29, 2010
Indiana Catholic Conference opposes state immigration proposal

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

The American dream: a good job, a safe place to live for family, and the belief that if one works hard enough, economic prosperity will result.

This dream and the 1980s economic boom inspired a wave of Hispanic immigrants to journey to the United States. Unlike the immigrants who landed at Ellis Island, the federal government was unprepared to respond to the influx of Mexican immigrants creating today's federal immigration quagmire.

Father Steve Gibson, the pastor of St. Mary Parish in East Chicago, Ind., in the Gary Diocese, a parish with a large Hispanic community, said the pathway to legal citizenship can commonly take more than a decade to attain and, for many, there is no clear legal way to gain entry into the United States.

These immigrant families—many of whose parents are undocumented and children are American citizens—will suffer if a state proposal aimed attightening up immigration enforcement becomes law—a proposal that the Indiana Catholic Conference opposes.

Senate Bill 213, authored by Sen. Mike Delph, R-Carmel, increases penalties for driving without a driver's license or falsifying identification, and encourages local law enforcement officials to arrest individuals suspected of being undocumented.

It has since been reassigned to the Labor Committee and Senate Bill 213 after hours of testimony by those who support and oppose the bill.

Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director, who testified in opposition to the bill, said: “Immigration is, first and foremost, a humanitarian concern and a moral issue.

Immigration is not a new phenomenon. The majority of us in the room, including myself, descended from immigrant families. "In Indiana, we are experiencing many of the human consequences of a federal immigration system that is both broken and inadequate," Tebbe said. "Here, as throughout the nation, many immigrant families are separated, a lost job, traffic arrest can contribute to frustration, alcohol abuse and other social evils—and expulsion.

Undocumented immigrants are not citizens and are aliens in the legal sense that they are alien to the land, even our human family—they are our brothers and sisters, Tebbe said.

"Because of the harmful impact on human life and human dignity, the Church has stated that the status quo is immoral," he said. "We are insisting in calling for comprehensive reform of the U.S. immigration system.

"UnAuthorized presence in the U.S. is usually a violation of civil, not criminal law," Tebbe said. "The legislation creates criminal penalties for many things that are incidental to daily life: driving a car to work, renting an apartment, using public institutions that are designed to protect and promote the common good."

Tebbe told the panel that the provision in Senate Bill 213 to encourage local and state law enforcement officers to become immigration officers would be a worst terroristic racial profiling by law enforcement. "This, too, is happening already in some communities," he said. "We are witnessing an increase in profiling by some local law enforcement officers. Law-abiding persons are being bullied over and being taken to jail because of looking Hispanic. The economic and emotional effect on the family when this happens is significant and unnecessary as well as the offense against the human dignity of the person."

In addition to the moral and practical concerns of the Church raised by Tebbe, others testified in opposition to the bill, including David Silvestre Reyes, a Latino Community Relations Council, who also cited concerns about an increase in racial profiling.

Kathy Williams, who represents social service organizations, raised concerns about an increase in human suffering. Ed Roberts, representing the Indiana Manufacturing Association, voiced the potential problems that the proposed new law could cause employers, and Velia Delcastillo, an immigration attorney for the Federation for Immigration Reform (fIRE) and the American Legion testified in support of the bill, claiming that the legislation would help law enforcement catch criminals and protect against terrorism.

"If this bill passes, there is no doubt that the consequences would be disastrous for people of color said Delcastillo for the economy of northwest Indiana."

Father Gibson said: "The same concern we are expressing to the victims of tragedies throughout the world is the same comparison we should show to our immigrants who live around us."

Senate Bill 213 was reassigned to the Senate Appropriations Committee, and will undergo another hearing to consider the fiscal impact of the legislation. Bills must pass committee by Jan. 29.

All bills must pass their house of origin by Feb. 3 and "cross over" to the second house.

(Bridget Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.)
Voices for the voiceless
Like David, youths march for life in God's name, priest says

By Mary Ann Wyand

The first Book of Samuel’s account of David fighting the mighty Goliath (1 Sm 17) was an appropriate reading for Mass on Jan. 20 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis when Father John Hollowell preached a homily to archdiocesan youths about to depart for the 37th annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

"The Psalms relate that the Lord uses the lowly to humble the proud, he explained, and the Israelis triumphed because they placed their belief and trust in the power of God. "The game plan for our battle has not changed from that of the Israelis," Father Hollowell said. "The ark of the covenant was a box with poles on each side, and in and around the living God was truly present. The Israelis carried the ark of the covenant with them into all of their battles, and so do we. He is present in us because we consume the Eucharist at Mass. We become really and truly an ark of the covenant bearing God’s true presence inside of ourselves."

A teenage “jean-wearing, iPod-listening, gum-chewing ark of the covenant,” he said, the youths would “stand arm in arm with an invisible host” during the March for Life.

"A warrior is not someone who is armed with nothing other than a few slings and stones, but these people who are fighting for God and mock us shall learn that it is not by sword or spear or scimitar that the Lord does his damage," he said.

"The first Book of Samuel’s account of David fighting the mighty Goliath was an appropriate reading of David fighting the Philistines. "We are preparing to march upon them armed with nothing other than a few posters and banners," Father Hollowell said. "Just as Goliath mocked David, we will be mocked as well—or, perhaps worse, we will be ignored."

"The new Psalmists will laugh, he said, and ask, ‘Is this what you send to fight your battles—teenagers?’ … But these are people who are doing God’s will and are strong in the Lord."

"We are preparing to fight our battles—teenagers? … But these are people who are doing God’s will and are strong in the Lord."

"We are preparing to fight our battles—teenagers? … But these are people who are doing God’s will and are strong in the Lord."
As we begin another calendar year and a new decade, it causes us to think about our many blessings and gifts, and even the challenges which lie before us. At the start of a new year, I always reflect on where I have been and what still needs my attention. I call this my personal portfolio, just as one also has a stock portfolio. I am called to take stock of my life. What are my dividends? How have I profited from my investments?

This year’s theme for Catholic Schools Week is “Catholic Schools: Dividends for Life.” When I first saw this theme, my mind went to the stock portfolio. Then the light bulb went off in my mind and I realized all the dividends that Catholic schools have paid over many years. It’s a totally different type of profit, one I am still blessed by each day.

There are four major qualities of Catholic education: faith, knowledge, discipline and morals. They are qualities I have valued since entering the first grade at St. Patrick School and graduating many years later from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in Terre Haute. These gifts or dividends become a part of who we are and what we do—a personal portfolio.

Let me reflect on each of those qualities as they pertain to my life.

Faith is my personal relationship with God, and certainly with others, too. My religion classes, as did all my other subjects and service opportunities, allowed me to express my faith and belief in God, my classmates and later my colleagues. Knowledge means acquiring information and then transferring its importance. For me, knowledge also means the academic excellence which exists in our schools—not only in test scores, but also in teaching the whole student in body, mind and spirit.

Ninety-eight percent of our students graduate from high school, and an amazing 97 percent continue to higher education. What a dividend for our business world. It doesn’t get much better than that.

We all know the importance of discipline. For me, it says that I needed to pay attention to my school lessons and be able to apply those skills for a happy and fruitful life. Discipline helped me achieve my dreams and goals—another great payoff!

Morals are a MUST. Finding a way to be happy and balanced is not easy. Knowing right from wrong is one thing, and doing it is another. Morals lead to integrity, be it in business, education or whatever field one chooses.

At the end of 2009, most publications listed the top 10 stories of the year and even the decade. In every case, these lists caused us to pause and reflect on the hallmarks mentioned. We have our own stories to remember and consider. What we do reflects who we are and helps to write our story for the future. I ask you to think about the dividends of Catholic schools and commit yourself to the continued support of Catholic school education.

And so it is that Catholic schools produce dividends for life. The whole world benefits when we share these dividends with others. I am grateful to have had that experience. God bless.

(Annette “Mickey” Lentz is the chancellor of the archdiocese and the executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Education and Faith Formation.)
Faith guides students’ efforts to make a difference

By John Shaughnessy

The images range from fun to heartwarming.

They also offer connections that spread from the 75th anniversary of Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning to the horror of earthquake-devastated Haiti.

One of the images is this constant—the way that Catholic school students across the archdiocese strive to make a difference in their communities and the world.

I have a look at five special efforts that show that service is a way of life and an expression of faith for Catholic school students.

A special connection

Faith guides students’ efforts to make a difference

By John Shaughnessy

...even though they are young, they have the ability to cause great change in a world that needs it so desperately.

—Tyler Mayer

So, on Oct. 28, students, teachers, staff members and parents from Bishop Chatard High School students take a break during a day of painting walls, raking leaves, cleaning rooms and playing with children at Christine House, a multiservice community agency in Indianapolis.

Bishop Chatard senior Ari Pappas, left, freshman Robyn Van Vliet and sophomore Molly Marsh hand out food and household items at the Food Link food pantry.

Bishop Chatard High School students pose outside a vacant home in Indiana Polis that they helped to renovate during a school-wide community service day on Oct. 28.

Students and teachers from Bishop Chatard High School were so proud.

Hula Hoops for Haiti

The students wanted to let a unit of American soldiers serving in Afghanistan know how much of their dedication meant to them.

"One of our students has an uncle serving in Afghanistan," said Kathy Schubel, the school's principal. "So the students decided to send them stockcings for Christmas. The students sewed the stockings themselves. They brought in their personal things and did some appliqués on the stockings—stars and hearts. Most of them had never done sewing or hand-stitching before, but they also did different things to raise money so they could fill the stockings."

The project came to a peak in early December when the students mailed the stockings, which they had stuffed with small personal hygiene items.

"The recent tragic events in Haiti have altered our focus," Spitznagel said. "We plan to continue our efforts to help Haiti."

The theme for this year’s Catholic Schools Week—a time when the school traditionally holds a fun event to help a serious cause—was "The Wood Chop." The students were so proud.

"The wood is a way of providing heat for the poor there. They also offer connections that spread from the 75th anniversary of Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning to the horror of earthquake-devastated Haiti.

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A special connection

Faith guides students’ efforts to make a difference
New approach to student leadership creates deeper faith, tighter bonds

By Sean Gallagher

CLARKSVILLE—A main goal of any high school is to prepare its students to become mature, well-rounded adults who can be strong leaders in their communities.

Catholic high schools also seek to form their students to be faith-filled leaders.

At the start of this academic year, Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville launched a major overhaul of its student leadership structure to better achieve that goal.

Instead of having a student council and class officers like most high schools do, Providence now has what is called the “house system.” There are eight houses that include groups from all four of its classes in the senior high school.

The junior high school at Providence has one house.

Each house is named for one of the values that are hallmarks of Providence. They also have a color and a patron saint.

There are 10 elected leaders in each house and 80 in the senior high school as a whole, which contrasts with 20 under the previous model.

This large group of leaders has been charged, with the rest of the members of their house, to organize at least four school-wide activities each year.

“It’s really been nice,” said Providence senior Travis Cunningham. “I’ve gotten to know a lot of underclassmen that I wouldn’t have gotten to know otherwise. I’m finding a new way to bond with people.”

Travis is a member of the House of Truth, whose color is green and has St. Gertrude for its patron saint.

The house system’s requirement of having each class organize a spiritual activity also reinforces Providence’s Catholic identity, according to Providence senior Kameron Johnson.

“Even at a Catholic school, it’s not realistic to show your faith a lot of times,” said Kameron. “And I do think just seeing upperclassmen being very genuine with their faith in an environment could really affect freshmen or sophomores. It might make them more愿意 to keep the cycle going when they’re upperclassmen and show their faith to people.”

Kameron is a member of the House of Faith, which has teal for its color and St. Gregory the Great as its patron saint.

The house system also presents new ways for students and teachers to get to know each other.

“Even at my house, the teachers are on subcommittees, but aren’t leading them,” said Providence senior Jacob Kraft. “They’re in there throwing out ideas and giving us their knowledge of what Providence may have used to be like. They’ve been able to interact with us on our own level, I guess, instead of just as a teacher.”

Jacob is a member of the House of Justice, whose color is red and whose patron saint is St. Aloysius.

A main reason for implementing the house system was to renew the spirit that filled Providence in previous years, according to Leslie Mills, the director of leadership and service at Providence.

Many of Providence’s teachers and administrators are graduates of the New Albany Diocesan school. Mills is a member of the Class of 1993.

“Something had been lost since I had left,” Mills said. “I think things got stale. I think that we had the same student leaders every year. It was such a small crop to pick from because a lot of people didn’t feel like they could jump into those leadership positions.”

Mills now sees a renewed spirit in the atmosphere.

“New faculty and staff leadership is emerging,” said Ernstberger. “It has re-energized some faculty and staff, but has also been galvanizing for other teachers to become a more vital part of the school community. Relationships with students are strengthening, and a new sense of commitment to and ownership of Christian leadership is being felt by [the] faculty and staff, too.”

The house system even includes Providence graduates. Each graduating class, dating back to 1955, has been assigned to one of the eight houses in the school. Providence president Joan Hurley believes the house system will foster strong, ongoing relationships with graduates.

“Our hope is that these alumni will catch up with the students now in the houses, perhaps attend one or two of their meetings and support the projects each house conducts,” Hurley said. “I believe that by tying the alumni to our existing student body, and allowing interaction through our Web site and other means, the house system grows and brings alumni closer to the school and its present student body.”

Even after just a few months, senior Jacob Kraft can see how the house system is making a difference to the school.

“I think the house system can catapult Providence to be so much better,” Jacob said. “It’s already good. But I think the house system has so much more to offer. It will create a bigger sense of community.”

To learn more about the house system at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville, log on to www.providencehigh.org/node/506.
By John Shaughnessy

Lynn Henning’s question about Jesus and how we live our faith would challenge anyone.

So just imagine what it must have been like for the third-grade students in Henning’s religion class when she asked to write an answer to this question: “If Jesus came to Earth today and walked into our room, what would he find that is good and bad in our world?”

The answers that Henning received from her third-grade class at St. Monica School in Indianapolis impressed her.

Here is a selection of those answers:

Hilton Sanchez—“One day, Jesus came to Earth and this is what he saw. Jesus was very happy because he saw families going to church. He was also sad because he saw friends fighting. He could see that people were respecting nature and protecting endangered animals.

“As he walked along the Earth, he saw countries at war and divided families. So Jesus continued walking and he saw all the pollution. Sometimes, he saw people performing good services and also people taking part in the sacraments. Jesus said, ‘With prayer, the world can be a better place.’”

Taylor Wendland—“I think that Jesus would like for the third-grade students in this year is for them to connect what we learn from our books to their everyday lives,” she said. “We talk quite a bit about how God wants us to live and what that means to them. They learn about the sacraments, Scripture and prayer. But more importantly, I want them to know how those things can help make a difference. How can they be the change in our world?”

—Lynn Henning

### Guardian Angel Guild raises funds to help students with learning disabilities

By Mary Ann Wyand

Guardian angels are a continual source of help for God’s people.

The whole life of the Church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of angels,” the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains. “… From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded and sustained by their watchful care and intercession” (#34-4936).

For half a century, Catholic education in the archdiocese has benefited from the charitable work of a dedicated group of guardian angels who tirelessly raise funds for resource programs and resource teachers at schools and St. Mary’s Child Center in Indianapolis.

Since 1959, members of the Guardian Angel Guild in Indianapolis have helped God’s children with developmental disabilities to reach their educational potential at Catholic schools and look forward to a better future.

Guardian Angel Guild members and guests celebrated the organization’s 50th anniversary on Sept. 24 during a luncheon in Indianapolis. The theme was “Celebrating Yesteryear, Envisioning Tomorrow.”

Guild president Ginny Maher, a member of St. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis, said the volunteer organization began “when a group of mothers put their heads together and acted into action” to ensure that students with learning disabilities receive the resources they need at Catholic schools.

 Maher said five decades of guild fundraisers have benefited hundreds, if not thousands, of students with special needs.

During 2009, she said, the guild distributed more than $32,000 to archdiocesan schools to support resource programs, students and instructors.

“Looking to the future, Maher said the guild hopes to serve more students, financially support more resource programs in schools and establish an endowment for future needs.”

“We continue our mission to help children with developmental disabilities to reach their potential,” she said, “through testing and support to succeed in every aspect of their educational endeavors.”

During his keynote speech, Evansville Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger—a former archdiocesan vicar general, chancellor and superintendent of schools—thanked the guild members for helping Catholic school students with learning disabilities.

“The Guardian Angel Guild had a key role, and still does have a key role, of providing that kind of assistance to our Catholic schools,” Bishop Gettelfinger said. “There is no way to even describe what kind of an effect you have had on these young people for a lifetime.”

He praised the guild members for “the effort that all of you make on an annual basis to raise funds and then generously contribute to help young people” with special needs to be able to receive a Catholic education.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Guardian Angel Guild’s financial support dating back five decades enabled Catholic schools and St. Mary’s Child Center to serve students with learning disabilities, he said, even before federal and state disability laws required public schools to provide special education coursework.

During the early years, Guardian Angel Guild members also helped tutor students that needed help with mathematics and reading skills at some of the Catholic high schools and grade schools in Indianapolis. Now there is a resource room or special education teacher at each Catholic school in the Indianapolis area.

Guild members said it has been a pleasure to help the archdiocese serve parents who want a Catholic education for their children with learning disabilities.

Maher said the guild continues to help pay for diagnostic evaluations, special equipment, technology, educational materials and extra training for teachers to better serve students.

“We also help with the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education’s SPED program [Special Religious Development for children and adults with special needs],” she said, as well as “instructional materials for students with language challenges, autism, Aperger’s syndrome and dyslexia to pinpoint what they need and then provide the equipment that would best assist them.”

“It’s such a good feeling to think that we are maybe making a difference in a child’s life,” Maher said, “by offering something that they need.”

Above, in her religion class at St. Monica School in Indianapolis, third-grade student Taylor Wendland imagines Jesus coming to Earth and saying, “With prayer, the world can be a better place.”
After 50 years in classroom, teacher still inspires students

By John Shaughnessy

When Marilyn Dever-Miles retires as a teacher someday, she will head to her hallway closet where she has stored boxes filled with notes and cards from her students of the past 50 years. “Letters thanking her for preparing them for college.”

Letters of appreciation for how the demands she made of them now help them in their jobs. “Birthday cards telling her how much of a difference she has made to their lives.”

“When I retire, I’ll get the boxes out, I’ll go through them and I’ll cry,” says Dever-Miles, who teaches English at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. “The students used to send me notes. Now, they send e-mails. Those mean so much. One of them doesn’t just make your day, it makes your month.”

At 71, Dever-Miles has been “making the days” of students for five decades—making those days more challenging and inspiring. “At 50 years, to still be viewed by your peers and your students as the most energetic and passion-filled teacher, I just find that startling,” says Chuck Weisenbach, Roncalli’s principal. “After 50 years, she’s still at the top of her game.”

Dever-Miles shares her approach to teaching. “Maybe it’s also the challenge of staying ahead of them. Sometimes they win, and sometimes I win.”

As she shares that last thought, her eyes get bright, and even flash a touch of mischief. Her look becomes a mixture of warmth and intensity as she talks about her approach to teaching. “Hold a tight rein and you’re OK. Let up on the reins, and you’re dead,” she says. “One of my goals is to be a good example. I want them to see a good example of a good Catholic woman—someone who is fair, firm and friendly. And someone who is fun. Never discounts fun— I think we do sometimes. It’s good for them to see me go to church, too. Kids hate a phony, and they look for it in adults. You better not be a phony if you want their respect.”

While she seeks respect, she also demands punctuality and organization from her students. “I want to teach them things they’ll need later in life,” says Dever-Miles, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. “Organization and punctuality are the two biggies for me. I don’t allow tardies, and I don’t take late assignments.”

She teaches English—and stress writing, grammar and vocabulary—because she believes it’s the foundation of so much of what people do in their careers. She teaches at a Catholic school because she sees the difference that an emphasis on faith can have on students. “I want to go to a Catholic grade school, a Catholic high school and a Catholic college,” says the 1960 graduate of Marian University in Indianapolis. “We get the basics of our religion, and we can practice it every day. The kids can go to Mass every day. We can pray in class. And we really push service. Your religion is more accessible here.”

So is love. Consider this note from a former Roncalli student: “I really see Jesus in you. Your great faith and trust in God is obvious through your MAs attendance and your kind words. I have truly been blessed to know you as my teacher and role model.”

There’s also this note from a former Roncalli student who is studying in college to become a teacher: “You are still the best teacher I have ever had. After high school, I have had six semesters of college professors and you still knock them all out of the park. … I learned how to always write my best, and always take the time to correct my mistakes. I am very conscious of bringing materials to class, and being on time. You truly made a difference, Mrs. M. Miles.”

While notes from students through five decades have filled boxes in her hallway closet, she has showered her students with written praise, too. “She writes congratulatory notes and good-job notes to students who are in the play, to athletes who have made the all-county team, to kids who have done well on the Spelling Bowl team,” Weisenbach says. “She calls parents with good news about their children. She’s unbelievable.”

More than anything, she believes. She believes in her students. She believes in her ability to make a difference in their lives. “My kids are my legacy,” she says, tapping her fingers with emphasis on a table. “It’s anything and everything I’ve done to help a kid—whether it was to help them through some drama in their life, or help them with their faith, or help them do well in college. That’s my legacy. These are my kids. Don’t you ever think otherwise. Whether they want to be or not, they are my kids.”

Criterion staff report

The usual oaths was one of the special touches that Katie Aebersold used in her zany experiment to add fun and real-life communication skills to the French classes she teaches at Our Lady of Providence J/Sr. High School in Clarksville.

With her left hand on a French translation of the Bible and her right hand raised, junior Catherine Aubyre became the first student to take the oath— to adopt the name for their snail. “I, Catherine, swear to take full responsibility for the escargot named Rosel, to provide him with safe housing, adequate clothing and educational opportunities. … I also swear to never spill salt or eat shrimp, lobster or crab in the presence of my escargot. I do solemnly swear.”

Before the ceremony ended on Nov. 30, 11 French students became proud adoptive parents of their very own snail. Since then, the snails have helped the students communicate better in French.

“I was looking for something that would help them communicate real-life situations in the French language,” Aebersold said. As a adoptive parents, the students had to introduce themselves to teachers and staff members around the school in French. They have also used the French language to write about experiences they have created for their snails.

“Before this, they wrote about themselves and that’s hard,” Aebersold said. “This has made them more creative with the language and more comfortable with it. They’re making houses for the snails, and they’ll have to take them on spring break with them. They’ll have to send me a postcard from wherever they are.”

A first-year teacher at Providence, the 24-year-old Aebersold discovered the snails at www.adoptaneescargot.com while searching online for teaching resources.

She introduced the concept to students during National French Week when she gave them a baby keepsake box. Students had to guess what was inside the boxes before they opened them. Looking inside, the students found a snail shell that came with a personality profile. Students were matched with a snail profile that had some of their same interests and even fears.

“Laughter filled my room,” Aebersold recalled. “Students had to pick a name for their snail and then introduce their snail to the class.” Students have enjoyed the project. “It was nothing like I had ever done before,” Kristin Simmons said. “I will always remember this experience.”

Classmate Candace Popp noted, “It’s an interesting experience. It helps me to learn how to use the French language in everyday life.”

For Aebesold, the unusual project is just one more memorable moment as a teacher. “It’s been terrific,” she said about her first year of teaching at Providence. “It’s a testimony to the wonderful atmosphere at Providence. It’s a dream job at a dream school.”

At 71, Roncalli High School teacher Marilyn Dever-Miles has spent 50 years leaving her mark on the education and the lives of her English students.
An answer to a parent’s prayer

GREATER INDIANAPOLIS DEANERY SCHOOLS

Indianapolis North Deanery
- Bishop Chatard High School
- Roncalli High School
- St. Mark the Evangelist School (K-8)
- St. Philip Neri School (P-6)
- St. Simon the Apostle School (K-12)

Indianapolis Central Deanery
- Cathedral High School
- St. Lawrence School (P-8)

Indianapolis South Deanery
- St. Simon the Apostle School (K-12)

Indianapolis West Deanery
- Central Catholic School (K-8)
- St. Mark the Evangelist School (K-8)

Private Schools
- Bishop Chatard High School
- Roncalli High School
- St. Mark the Evangelist School (K-8)
- St. Philip Neri School (P-6)
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A meaningful victory

CYO group uses basketball to help youths with disabilities

By John Shaughnessy

During 36 years of working for the Catholic Youth Organization, Bernadette Price has always appreciated the moments of sportsmanship when young players show they know there is something more important than the numbers on a scoreboard.

A noter one of those splendid moments came into focus for Price as she snapped pictures after a game between a team from Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis and a squad from Damar Services Inc., a program that strives to provide recreational activities to help people with developmental disabilities lead successful lives.

The Damar team was playing in its first year in the CYO league, at the invitation of the CYO’s executive director, Edward Tinder.

As a teenager from the Damar team stood at the foul line waiting to take a free throw, a player from the Good Shepherd team walked up to him, patted him on the back and offered sincere words of encouragement, telling the Damar player, “Hey, you can do this. Just take your time.”

“It was a moment to savor for Price, who also serves as a moderator of the youth group at Good Shepherd Parish.

“The encouragement they gave during that game was amazing,” Price recalls. “I honestly couldn’t tell you what the score was. It means, ‘Kids are coming and we’re going to do a fun activity.’ It’s good for them to have that interaction with the CYO kids. Research shows that for children in treatment, their length of stay is shortened when they’re around positive social peers.”

So when Tinder extended the offer to have a boys’ basketball team from Damar play in the CYO league, the Damar staff viewed it as another winning situation for the youths who are developmentally disabled and behaviorally challenged.

Their involvement was enhanced when the Good Shepherd teams offered to serve as mentors for the Damar team.

“One of the biggest impacts our kids has been being around positive social peers,” says Jim Porter, the recreation director for Damar. “The other thing is that they are competitive, and they wanted to play against other talented teams. That really gives them a lot of confidence and makes them feel good about what they are doing.”

That confidence developed from the first time the Damar players stepped onto the court.

“For a lot of the first half of our first game, our guys were ahead,” Porter notes. “That set the tone to make our guys feel they belonged. They had some anxiety about this because they viewed this as a real basketball league. For them to feel they belonged was just great.”

Meaningful victories:

The Damar team eventually lost that first game. They didn’t get a win during the rest of the season either, at least not on the scoreboard, but Porter said more meaningful victories were gained.

“We definitely saw improvement on the sportsmanship side for our guys,” Porter says. “They see good sportsmanship being modeled on the other teams and they model it themselves. For us to go up at the end of the game, shake hands with the other team and say, ‘Good game,’ that’s a good thing for our kids. They feel like they’ve competed. They feel like they’ve given a good effort, and they feel good about themselves.”

The youths at Good Shepherd Parish feel the same way. Alex Schoettle has helped at Damar for more than four years. He plays on a high school basketball team at Good Shepherd Parish, and he and his teammates have served as mentors to the youths on the Damar team.

“They were competitive,” Schoettle says. “They were in the game with us. Afterwards, we talked to them and took a couple pictures with them. We talked about basketball and how school is going—the normal things any high school kids talk about. It’s been rewarding watching them play.”

The connection continues off the basketball court, too.

“Damar has shaped who I’ve become through high school,” says Brooke Propes, a member of Good Shepherd Parish and a senior at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. “We go there a lot, and we get to know the kids. They have so many challenges, and yet they’re usually smiling. The children there make me realize how lucky I am. It’s changed my relationship with God and others. It’s made me think about what I might want to do later in my life—maybe work with people who have disabilities. I love Damar.”

It’s all part of the difference that mentoring can make in the lives of young people, Price says.

“It also shows just how special teenagers are today, she adds. “I am amazed at how busy kids are today and how competitive things in our world can be.”

Price says, “Here are two groups of kids who are from different worlds, but it doesn’t matter. They care about each other. They all mix and mingle together. It shows the youth of today are definitely headed in the right direction.”
Prayers for God and Mary
Holy Name School students promote the rosary

By Mary Ann Wyand

**BEECH GROVE**—"I pray the rosary." Holy Name School eighth-grade students in Beech Grove are proudly wearing T-shirts they decorated with this message. They made the T-shirts after watching a "YouTube" video during religion class about a teenager who promoted his Catholic faith as well as his devotion to Jesus and Mary in this way.

Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove and the religion teacher at Holy Name School, said she enjoys teaching students to pray the rosary as part of their vocation to know, love and serve God.

She makes handmade rosaries, a skill that she learned last March from her mother, St. Paul parishioner Kay Etienne of Tell City, who taught her the Marian prayer during her childhood. Sister Nicolette gives one handmade rosary to a Holy Name student every week to promote this devotion.

Father Stanley Pondo, the pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, blesses the students' rosaries after school Masses.

Sister Nicolette displays dozens of rosaries and 10 Marian images on a bulletin board with information about some of the Marian feasts and Holy Names throughout the world.

During religion class on Jan. 13, Holy Name eighth-grade students said their teacher inspires them to pray because she has a strong faith and deep love for Jesus.

Ashley Kedra said she drew large, colorful letters on her T-shirt with bright markers because she wants to make a bold statement about her Catholic faith. She said praying the rosary is important to her because it's a way to talk to God and Mary.

"I feel like I know and love God so much more closely because I have in my entire life," Sister Nicolette said. "I love that I am continuing to grow in my faith. I think the rosary has helped me to get more in touch with my relationships with Mary, our Blessed Mother, and her son, Jesus."

She asked her sisters to donate their extra rosaries for a classroom display.

"Every rosary is so unique and so beautiful," Sister Nicolette said. "I've given several away because sometimes the students become attached to a certain rosary. At the end of the school year, I allow them to take one if they want it."

"I just fell in love with the devotional part of the Church, and I don't want my students to miss out on that," she said. "It seems like the older I get, the more devotional I have become. I love adoration, and I love that my students are learning about the practice of praising God in adoration and by praying the rosary."

Sister Nicolette said she is pleased that her students are willing to pray the rosary.

"They love it," she said. "They love to come in and pick a rosary off the [bulletin] board and pray. I teach grades four through eighth, and all my students enjoy doing that. I have students who tell me all the time that it's so calming to be able to walk in the classroom and pray even a decade of the rosary."

During spring break last year, she spent three days with her mother in Tell City learning how to make rosaries. "Ever since then, I've been making rosaries every day," Sister Nicolette said. "I love that it's a gift that my mother gave me. I think that's wonderful because the Blessed Mother is so important in my life, and it's important to me that my mother taught me how to do it."

"When my mom and I sit down and make rosaries, a whole new level of peace and calm comes into both our hearts," she said. "And what do we have in the end? We have a beautiful gift that we can give to people to encourage them to pray."

Holy Name School eighth-grade students Ben Coons, right, and Jake Farnworth, left, of Beech Grove pray a decade of the rosary on Jan. 13 during religion class. Ben, Jake and other classmates recently decorated T-shirts with the message "I pray the rosary" to promote their Catholic faith as well as their devotion to Jesus and Mary.

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Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, left, shows a rosary to Marian University senior and student teacher Liz Hetis, right, of Atlanta, Ga., during the lunch break on Jan. 13 at Holy Name School in Beech Grove. Sister Nicolette's brother, Bishop Paul D. Etienne, a former diocesan priest and was recently installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Cheyenne, Wyo.

Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne uses special pliers to connect rosary beads during her lunch break on Jan. 13 at Holy Name School in Beech Grove. Her mother, St. Paul parishioner Kay Etienne of Tell City, taught her how to make rosaries.

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Eight-year-old students at Holy Name School in Beech Grove wear T-shirts they decorated with the words "I pray the rosary" as they pose for a class picture on Jan. 13 with their teacher, Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, who is seated in the middle of the first row. "Teaching is like oxygen to me," Sister Nicolette said during the lunch break. "It gives me life, and I know I give the students that I teach life as well."
The phone call that changed Philip Kahn’s life and led him to return home after 22 years came from a friend he has known since the first grade. The caller wanted to know if Kahn (pronounced Kane) would be interested in returning home to help ensure the future of the Catholic schools that had shaped his life and the lives of so many other people. As a 1987 graduate of Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, “She knew I loved the schools,” Kahn recalls. “The more I went through the interview process, the more I got excited about the opportunity. I always felt they were my schools even though I was gone for a number of years. Coming back to help try to make them bigger and better was a motivating factor for me.”

Kahn got the job, and since August, he’s been enjoying the responsibility of taking the two schools to an even higher level. “It’s really been pretty neat,” says Kahn, a 1987 graduate of Shawe. “My wife and I are back home, and I’m helping the schools I grew up in. It’s neat knowing that every day at work can lead to something new and exciting for the community. It’s a close-knit community down here. There are 400 students pre-K through seniors. It’s a family atmosphere. We are the Catholic schools here. A lot of dedicated people have helped Pope John and Shawe be the great places they are.”

Six years later came the life-changing phone call from a friend he has known since the first grade—Jill Mires, the principal of Pope John XXIII School. “He’s always had leadership skills since high school,” Mires says. “I thought of him and how he had been in the education field and the business field. I thought that mixture would be a good combination for us. He’s very friendly, very outgoing, a people person. And he has a true love for the schools. They’re very dear to him.”

Kahn’s main focus is to increase the enrollment and the fundraising success of the schools. “My goal is to ensure the legacy and future of these schools in this community for a long time to come,” Kahn says. “I’m traveling around a lot, I truly believe we have a diamond in the rough down here. As great as our product has been, we’ve just scratched the surface. If we can raise more money and improve the product, it would be better for everybody. I’m excited.”

Part of that excitement comes from returning home to Madison with his wife of 12 years, Tania, and their two sons, Phillip, 4, and Connor, 1. After graduating from Shawe in 1987, Kahn attended a college in Alabama and later served as an assistant basketball coach at colleges in Georgia and South Carolina before taking a job with Lilly in 2003.

Coming home is Kahn’s way of paying some debts from his past. “I’ve always felt like whatever successes I’ve had, and the person I’ve become religiously, were molded by the education and the environment I’ve experienced at these two schools,” he says. “My mom sent me here as a single mom. It meant a lot to me when I was here, but it meant even more when I was away from the situation. This is my opportunity to give back.”

ISTEP scores for archdiocesan students well above state averages

Criterion staff report

In the spring of 2009, 10,828 third- through eighth-grade students from more than 60 Catholic schools within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis took the Indiana Statewide Test of Educational Progress (ISTEP). Previously, the test had been given to students in the fall. After moving to a spring test, students across Indiana have shown a slight decline in the percentage of students meeting the new proficiency standards. The average of archdiocesan students at each grade level passing both the language arts/English and mathematics is above both the Indiana state averages. The archdiocesan percentages range from 87 percent at third grade to 91 percent at sixth grade. The trend continues. Simply stated, the longer a student remains in archdiocesan schools, the greater the growth in student proficiency.
Committee charged to find new Catholic education leader

By Sean Gallagher

William Kurtz knows what it means to find a winner.

In 2004, when he coached Roncalli High School’s first state championship football team in 1985.

And for nearly 25 years since then, Kurtz has worked in the business world, which is a lot of things that need to be considered in education and in catechesis and faith formation. And it’s very important that we find a leader who can take us to this next level in these areas.

For her own part, Lentz sees a lot of importance in the effort for the future of Catholic education and faith formation in central and southern Indiana.

“Education, at this point, is at many, many turning points,” she said. “There are just a lot of things that need to be considered in education and in catechesis and faith formation. And it’s very important that we find a leader who can take us to this next level in these areas.”

The timeline of the work of the search committee, according to Kuntz, will be to make recommendations of finalists to fill the position by mid-April.

It is hoped that the new executive director could begin work soon thereafter or by the start of July at the latest.

“It’s an exciting opportunity for those of us on the search committee,” Kurtz said. “And certainly it’s one that we’re all taking very seriously. We want to do a great job for the archdiocese.”

“The talent and the passion that [the members] bring to the search committee position to do the job well. We’re committed to do it to the very best of our ability.”

Part of that will be to cast a wide net for candidates.

“I think it’s very important that we find a person of vision and leadership who can take us to the next level of education and faith formation,” Lentz said. “I think it’s very important that they do a thorough search, and that it be a national search.”

“I think there will be a large candidate pool because the job is very attractive,” Kurtz said. “It’s a very meaningful position. On the flip side, we’re looking for a 10. And there are not a lot of 10s in this world.”

As Kuntz reflected on finding a winning person to serve as executive director of OCE, his thoughts turned back to his experience as a football coach.

“We’re going to expect our new executive director to win Super Bowls in the world of education, just like Mickey has.”

Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director of the archdiocesan secretariat for Catholic education and faith formation, sits among the approximately 1,000 students from Catholic schools from across the archdiocese during a Catholic Schools Week Mass celebrated on Jan. 31, 2007, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Annette “Mickey” Lentz, executive director of the archdiocesan secretariat for Catholic education and faith formation, was among the approximately 1,000 students from Catholic schools from across the archdiocese during a Catholic Schools Week Mass celebrated on Jan. 31, 2007, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

92.8% on four years or less

Percent of graduates entering college (2008): 97.4%

NOTE: A few figures above this line include private Catholic high schools.

Average tuition rates, first child (estimated): Catholic $3,458

Non-Catholic $4,615

Interparochial high schools: $7,000

$9,000

NOTE: Elementary tuitions are set at the parish level and vary greatly. Schools receive parish subsidies except for private Catholic high schools, which are not included in these figures.

Estimated operating costs of Catholic schools in the archdiocese FYE 2008:

Elementary schools cost-per-pupil: $4,663

Interparochial high schools cost-per-pupil: $7,156

Total operating cost of archdiocese schools: $108 million

(Estimated using 2008-09 K-12 enrollment (18,817) excluding capital costs and private high school costs)

Annual savings to Indiana taxpayers (estimated): $214 million

(Estimated at aggregate Indiana public school 2008 K-12 composite estimated expenditure per pupil of $11,366. 2008-09 Catholic school K-12 enrollment, (18,817 students) excluding private high schools)

Catholic schools: 72

Elementary schools: 61 (29 in Marion County)

High schools: 11 (seven in Marion County)

Includes four private high schools

Preschool programs: 46 (Pre-K programs for 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds)

Extended care programs: 57 (Pre-K, 4-8, and after-school care or both)

Professional staff: 1,000 (full-time and part-time)

Enrollment 2009-10 (Unofficial Oct. 1, 2009, enrollment):

Total pre-school-12: 22,580

Preschool: 1,779

Elementary (K-8): 15,158

High school (9-12): 5,643

Religious composition: Elementary 15% 10%

High school 90% 10%

Non-Catholic: 15% 10%

NOTE: A approximate demographic figures for seven Indianapolis' center city schools are: 74% minority, 47% non-parishioners and approximately 78% qualified for Federal Lunch Program.

High school graduation rate (2008):

88.2% on four years or less

Percent of graduates entering college (2008): 97.4%

NOTE: A few figures above this line include private Catholic high schools.

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By Bob Kelly
Special to The Criterion

The spirit and intensity often rise to a higher level when teams from Catholic high schools compete against each other in sports.

And yet there is a bond that connects the coaches and student-athletes of these schools—the bond of faith.

In fact, one of the emphases of Catholic high school sports programs is how coaches strive to deepen their players’ faith during athletic seasons.

Ty Hunt, the head coach of the varsity football team at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, works hard to get his players involved in events where they have the opportunity to get in touch with their faith.

“One of the first things I did was to start going to Mass as a team on the Fridays before we play the game,” Hunt says. “We have started to transfer this program over to our basketball teams, too.

“We take the kids to the chapel, not to pray for a good performance or a win, but to instill upon them it is to pray for their blessings of good health and to give thanks for the support we get from our community.”

The girls’ basketball program at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis is also looking for opportunities to help the players build their faith in God and each other.

“We have a pre-game devotional, and we look at a passage of Scripture and find other motivational tools, such as poems to help them build life lessons,” says a licia Michaelsen, an assistant girls’ basketball coach at Bishop Chatard High School.

Michaelsen recalled how the team reached out to others last season by raising money to support cancer research.

“It is to help build faith in each other so they can count on each other, and become friends and not just teammates,” M. Moorman says. “There is more to it than competition.”

Jean Kesterson says that faith is at the core of the girls’ volleyball program that she coaches at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

“We talk about our mission statement when we play we want to set the goal—building the teammates’ faith in each other,” Scecina softball coach Tom M. Moorman says.

“We have a practice every time the students feel they can help each other with homework or assist each other with other concerns in their lives.”

“It is to help build faith in each other so they can count on each other, and become friends and not just teammates,” Moorman says. “There is more to it than competition.”

“We are involved in a program called ‘Lucious’ Training Wheels,’” M. Marsh notes. “The girls teach special-needs kids how to ride a bike. It shows them how they can be a role model, and they find out that there is more to life than just playing the game of volleyball.”

Besides trying to help build the players’ faith in God, the girls’ softball program at Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School has another goal—building the teammates’ faith in each other.

Father John Hollowell celebrates Mass on Sept. 25, 2009, for members of the varsity football team of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. As a chaplain, teacher and assistant football coach at Cardinal Ritter, Father Hollowell celebrates Mass on the Friday afternoon before every football game—continuing the emphasis that head coach Ty Hunt has of making faith a crucial part of the teenagers’ football experience.

High school sports strive to teach values and deepen faith

‘It is to help build faith in each other so they can count on each other, and become friends and not just teammates. There is more to it than competition.’

— Tom Moorman
Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School softball coach

Above, during a basketball game on Dec. 18, 2009, Bishop Chatard High School basketball player Nikki Kimack, left, is part of the Lady Trojans’ swarm that surrounds Neely Marks, a player from Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School.

Cathy Doyle, right, and Rachael Kimack add to the pressure.

Left, a Scecina softball player heads toward home plate in a game during the 2009 season.

Scecina softball coach Tom Moorman strives to build his players’ faith in each other and in their relationship with God.

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Participants at annual March for Life urged to keep up their efforts

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Despite overcast skies, the mood at the Jan. 22 annual March for Life in Washington was decidedly upbeat as speaker after speaker urged the crowd to keep up their efforts in the pro-life arena.

Several speakers told the tens of thousands at a rally on the National Mall—bundled in winter gear and holding aloft placards with pro-life messages or banners identifying where they were from—that they knew they were in the majority, and would continue to make inroads in society and in government policies.

A through-the-rally’s opening prayer asked God to grant the march participants “the courage to be a voice for the voiceless,” this group hardly seemed to be lacking bravery. They shoved stamna by simply showing up in vast numbers—many as repeat marchers—despite calls for sleet and freezing rain, which never materialized.

A statement posted on the March for Life Web site later did not give a count, but said the size of the crowd for this year’s rally and the march that followed it “far exceeded” last year’s number. In 2009, the organization estimated the crowd to be 100,000.

The U.S. Park Police, which has responsibility for the Mall, and the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia have not given official crowd counts for any demonstration since about 1995.

During the rally, a glance at the banners across the mall showed that the participants included people from Texas, Michigan, Ohio and Massachusetts. The relatively subdued crowd cheered enthusiastically when speakers stressed that abortion should never have been part of health care reform legislation before Congress or when the speakers criticized President Barack Obama’s support for legal abortion.

Nellie Gray, president of the March for Life Educational Defense Fund—“the group that organizes the march—told participants that their presence at the 37th annual march represented “a whole new surge” for the pro-life movement to not only continue to educate government officials about the immorality of abortion, but also to show a united front.

Those involved in the fight against abortion generally called for a return to civil changes, but are also giving support for pregnant women and women who have had abortions.

Several speakers on the podium with Gray highlighted the pro-life movement’s outreach efforts, and urged participants to support pro-life doctors and pharmacists, and to let members of their community know about the available pregnancy centers or post-abortion counseling programs.

With the U.S. Capitol in the background, 23 Catholic bishops and 21 members of Congress joined pro-life leaders on the rally’s stage.

Among the bishops were Cardinals Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities; Justin Rigali of Philadelphia. Several of the lawmakers were Catholic, including U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., who is co-chairman of the House Pro-Life Caucus; and Rep. Al “J” Cao, R-La.

Cao led the group in a pro-life cheer and then urged them to “speak loudly for leaders to understand we are pro-life.

He encouraged the participants to keep up their efforts, stressing that the “fight will be long and hard,” and that young people, who made up a large percentage of march attendees, would need to see the efforts through.

Brownback told the crowd that “for the first time you live in a majority pro-life country,” referring to recently released Gallup poll results showing 51 percent of Americans to be pro-life on the abortion issue and 42 percent of Americans as pro-choice.

“You have done it—persuading others—keep it up,” he said.

Each year when President George W. Bush was in office, marchers received a greeting from him expressing support for the pro-life cause. He usually spoke via a telephone hookup from the White House or from other locations if he was traveling.

As he did last year, Obama issued a statement expressing his continued support for what he said he reaffirmed—“every woman’s fundamental constitutional right to choose whether to have an abortion,” and “each American’s right to privacy from governmental intrusion.” He said he was committed “to working with people of good will to prevent unintended pregnancies, support pregnant women and families, and strengthen the adoption system.”

“Today and every day, we must strive to ensure that all women have limitless opportunities to fulfill their dreams,” he said in the statement released in the evening.

After the rally, participants walked to the Supreme Court, then many planned to meet with their representatives to lobby for pro-life measures. The marchers talked with one another, sang and prayed as they made their way down Constitution Avenue.

As a marchers were lining up in the street, Father Paul Hrezo, spiritual director for the college seminarians at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, said it was important to be at this event “to be counted with others and give witness to what we believe.”

The priest, who is a veteran marcher, came with about 80 people.

Even though many marchers have made this event an annual one, some in the crowd told Catholic News Service that this march was their first.

Two women from SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Turnersville, N.J., said they had never attended the march before because they weren’t quick enough to get seats on the parish-sponsored buses.

They were pleased simply to see the turnout. Theresa Ramie, taking pictures of the crowd, said she was surprised to see people “coming from all directions.”

She also was confident that the sheer number of people had made an impact, either in Washington or in their local efforts.

“Let’s hope people are listening,” she said as her friend nodded in agreement.

Divided Christians must unite in bringing Gospel values to world, pope says

ROM E (CNS)—Divided Christians can and must be united in meeting the modern challenges of secularization, threats to human life, environmental destruction, war and injustice, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“[It] is precisely the desire to proclaim Christ and bring the world the message of reconciliation that makes one experience the contradiction of Christian divisions,” the pope said on Jan. 25 as he closed the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Leaders of Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant communities in Rome joined the pope for the annual prayer service at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, offering prayers and proclaiming the readings.

The Week of Prayer 2010 focused on the common Christian vocation to witness to Christ in the world.

When the modern ecumenical movement was launched, the pope said, it started with a conference of missionaries from different denominations who gathered in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910 to reflect on ways to promote Christian unity in order to preach the Gospel more effectively.

The obvious question, he said, was, “How, in fact, can unbelievers accept the proclamation of the Gospel if Christians, while all referring to the same Christ, are in disagreement among themselves?”

Lively is “a problem of important condition for greater credibility and effectiveness,” the pope said.

“However, Christians are still are divided on important issues of dogma, doctrine and Church discipline, which must be overcome through prayer and theological dialogue, he said.

“At the same time, the pope said, Christians already can proclaim together “the fatherhood of God, Christ’s victory over sin and death through his cross and resurrection (and trust in the transforming action of the Spirit.”

“While we are on the path toward full communion, we are called to offer a common witness in the face of the increasingly complex challenges of our time, such as secularization and indifference, relativism and hedonism, deep social divisions regarding the beginning and end of life, the limits of science and technology, and dialogue with other religious traditions,” he said.

The pope told the Christian leaders that they also must work more closely on “sanctifying creation, the promotion of the common good and peace, the defense of the centrality of the human person, (and) the commitment to defeating the miseries of our time, such as hunger, poverty, illiteracy and the unequal distribution of goods.”

Pope Benedict said working for Christian unity is not a specialty to which a few individuals or a few Churches are called, but rather it is part of fulfilling Christ’s will for all who follow him.

Unity is something for which all Christians must work and pray, he said.
Haiti

continued from page 14

we see the faces of the widows and orphans, and all of those who have lost family and friends and all of their life’s possessions.”

He said the U.S. Church was committed “to doing everything we can so that you may rebuild and renew and begin again your lives of faith and family and service to Haiti.”

Archbishop Dolan, who also serves as chairman of the board of Catholic Relief Services, was accompanied by Msgr. David Malloy, general secretary of the U.S. bishops’ conference.

Back in New York on Jan. 25, Archbishop Dolan declared the funeral to Catholic News Service as “a therapeutic and holy occasion to grieve.”

“We had a longing to express our sorrow,” he said.

Archbishop Dolan said that, while standing in front of the devastated cathedral, he noticed the crucifix that stood at the front of the building appeared to be untouched.

“It brought to the tear, this crucifix, rising tall in thît darkness ... rising from this coticific ‘why’ grasping from the Haitian people. It was a very powerful symbol,” he said.

Bishop Thorton G. Wenski of Orlando, Fla., and Oblate Father Andrew Sttull, director of the U.S. bishops’ Church in Latin America office, also attended.

Bishop Wenski told Catholic News Service on Jan. 25 that Bishop Latfuntant, in his homily, told the hundred gathered that the funeral was not only for the deceased clergy, but that it represented funerals for the thousands of other people who died in the disaster and had not had a proper funeral.

He said this was not the wrath of God, but it does not mean that we are to build a new Haiti in which people will have hope and prosperity,” Bishop Wenski said.

Archbishop Most’s body was one of the first recovered after the earthquake.

Archbishop Bernardho Auzu, papal nuncio to Haiti, asked that it be taken to the coastal city of St. Marc because there was no electricity in Port-au-Prince.

clergy asked that the archbishop’s funeral be at the cathedral.

A statement from Caritas, the Church’s network of charitable aid agencies, said when Msgr. Benoit’s body was found, his hands were around a reliquary with a host inside.

The archbishop and the vicar general were buried in St. Alavis’ Cemetery in the Haitian capital.

Caritas official: Agencies must gear up to help Haitians in long term

LIMA, Peru (CNS)—Nearly two weeks after the Haitian earthquake, Catholic aid agencies must gear up to provide longer-term food, health and psychological care to people who lost their homes and property.

But even the titanic aftershock of aid pouring into the devastated country is swarmed by the overwhelming needs of people who lost their homes, families, jobs and property from the Jan. 12 quake, said Hector Hanadab, a Caritas emergency coordinator for the Latin American Caribbean.

“There is still a great lack of assistance,” Hanadab told Catholic News Service in an e-mail interview. “There are not enough donors for the 3 million people who have been affected and more than 200,000 injured survivors of the earthquake.”

On Jan. 24, a government spokesman said an estimated 150,000 bodies had been buried, and state officials said the death toll could be as high as 200,000.

About 2 million people were affected in Port-au-Prince, and 1 million more in other cities, including Jacmel, Getreicher, Carrefour and Petit-Goave, Hanadab said. So far, 500,000 people who lost their home are living in flimsy tents around the Haitian capital, he said.

“There are specific high-risk groups that need assistance, including pregnant women, people with chronic illnesses, children who have been orphaned, and people who were injured and who, because of trauma and complications, had to have surgery postponed,” Hanadab said.

In a country where health care was scant and about 75 percent of the population lived in poverty even before the quake, the basic foods are food, health care, water, sanitation services and housing.

“Support for children and women is important,” said Hanadab.

The destruction in Port-au-Prince has caused the displacement of people to other provinces and to the Dominican Republic,” Hanadab said. “People who have lost their homes and jobs are flooding there to look for help because of the lack of assistance.”

Many families are still searching for their loved ones, a quiet that is even more difficult because so many of the injured were evacuated to hospitals in the Dominican Republic, he said.

In addition to the Dominican Republic, many other injured were evacuated to emergency U.S. health care facilities.

Looking beyond the immediate needs, Hanadab added, “because of the breakdown of the Haitian economy, it is crucial to create temporary jobs immediately and sustainable employment in the long term.”

Caritas, the Catholic Church’s aid network that includes Catholic Relief Services in the United States, has delineated a relief plan that includes immediate food, shelter, health care, water and sanitation, and psychological and social assistance for about 40,000 affected families, or 200,000 people, Hanadab said. The Vatican had asked CRS, which already had a large presence in Haiti, to take the lead in the Caritas effort.

“The strategy we are using is to coordinate with state and parishes, as well as the diocesan Caritas offices in Port-au-Prince, Jactel and other dioceses, to identify the priority needs and groups, in order to channel the urgent assistance immediately. So far, we have been able to disburse aid to 26,500 families,” he said.

Caritas also provided relief equipment and medical tents.

The Caritas office is providing lodging and support for about 280 families from Mexico, South Africa and Jatutaca, who have brought equipment, medicines and

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Don’t be afraid to begin the healing process.
Mark reports Jesus’ message that reign of God is at hand

By Fr. Robert L. Kinast

The Gospel of Mark is a compact, action-based account of Jesus’ public ministry.

Unlike the Gospel of Matthew, which is structured around five major discourses, a continuous journey is the structure for Mark’s Gospel.

In Galilee, Jesus moves back and forth across the Jordan River, and culminates in Jerusalem with pivotal events at each transition.

The ministry of Jesus begins in Galilee, the region where he grew up.

His message is simple and direct. The reign of God is at hand, and anyone who wishes to enter it must change his or her old way of living.

Jesus elaborates this message not with extensive teaching—but there is only one major parable, that of the sower(Mk 4:1-9)—but with healings and other signs.

Eleven healings are described in detail, beginning with a man possessed by an unclean spirit (Mk 1:23-26).

Mark’s Gospel also relates the stories of Jesus’ discourses (Mk 1:14-44), his miracles at Cana (Mk 2:10-12), a woman with hemorrhages (Mk 5:25-34), two daughters of parents who want to set him out (Mk 5:41-43 and Mk 7:29-30) and a deaf man (Mk 7:31-35).

There are several other general references to people bringing their sick to Jesus, who heals them (Mk 6:56).

Jesus also feeds crowds of 5,000 and 4,000 (Mk 6:34-44 and Mk 8:1-9), and twice calms a storm at sea (Mk 4:39-41 and Mk 6:48-50).

All these actions are intended to validate his message and indicate the kind of behavior expected in the reign of God—selfless concern for and service of one another.

Overall, the response of the villagers and townspeople is admiration, astonishment, wonder and gratitude. Their reactions are offset by the criticism of the scribes and some Pharisees, who question Jesus’ authority to forgive sins (Mk 2:27).

Mark presents the story of the Galilean phase of Jesus’ ministry (Mk 1:21-5:20), symbolizing that those who have faith will see whereas those who do not have faith remain blind.

Jesus predicts the crucifixion when he appears to his disciples for the third time (Mk 16:13). That journey has had many other transitions and activities, and it has not yet come to an end.

(Father Robert L. Kinast is a pastoral theologian in Prairie Village, Kan.)

Mark's Gospel records many miracles

This Week's Question

What is your favorite passage from the Gospel of Mark? Why?

"Mark records a lot of healings and miracles, but I like the story of the Phoenician woman’s faith (Mk 7:24-30). Although she is an outsider and a woman—which made her doubly looked upon in those days—she believes in Jesus, and dares to come to him and ask [for] help. Such a moved little in his hometown of Nazareth because of the people’s lack of faith there (Mk 6:5-6)."

O’Fallon, Ill.

"I like the passage in Mark where Jesus says that the second most important commandment is to ‘love your neighbor as yourself’ (Mk 12:29). It doesn’t talk about loving only the people that you choose. ... It’s a lesson for everyone, including other religions, to love and embrace all people.” (Mary Clement, Swansboro, N.C.)

"Mark writes in a way that is clear and easy to understand, and I especially like his account of the Transfiguration (Mk 9:2-8). It lifts the veil of the Man from heaven. It makes me think [about] how spectacular it would have been to have lived then and witnessed it myself.” (Regina Pett, Akron, Ohio)

"I think the parable of the sower (Mk 4:1-20) is very visual and dramatic. As a teacher, I’ve [presented] it in play form with young children. I like it too because, although Jesus presents a lot of parables, with this one he asks the Apostles if they understand it and he explains it.” (Jan Bel, Visalia, Calif.)

Lend Us Your Voice

A upcoming edition asks: What is your favorite passage from the Gospel of John? Why?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to openeers@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. All contents are copyrighted © 2010 by Catholic News Service.
Asia, too, has its immigration problems. Problems create migrants in Africa, and seeing more immigrants from Africa continues today. But Europe, too, is always been a migrant country, and that “a social phenomenon of epoch-making throughout the world represent, he said, Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical “Charity but medical complications dictated some refuse to avail themselves of United States. For weeks, I worked to deepen my understanding of blacks in this country. I had been anything but silent in the way an artist at work is silent. That’s all I want.”

Soon it will be February, and the annual celebration of Black History Month. Considering this, along with the recent Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday and the seasonal Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday and the seasonal

There are blacks, again like some whites, who believe that black values are often at odds with white values. They fear losing their identity to the majority culture or not being able to measure up to the national ideal, because the nature of their work, they will always be different. Their color constantly puts them in the role of The Other. Like all racial and ethnic minorities, they fear being branded as less valuable citizens than the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants and other whites who wholly founded this country. It reminds them of the early idea in our political system that a Negro only counts as three-fifths of a man.

But everyone, black or white, should remember that America is an experiment in human justice. The American system, which other who wrote the Constitution and fought for political independence were seeking inclusion in. I’ve seen the fact that all men are created equal by their Creator with an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Of course, this is an extension of the Christian belief that all (even women) are created by a loving God with the inherent freedom to discern and do God’s will. It is only fair that all of us, black, white or what-have-you, should be able to make choices which
determine our own fate.

A gain, the only catch in this arrangement is the fact that we are human. We may be made in God’s image, but we aren’t perfect. The chief example of this is that the very society which set out the idealistic path of equality promptly allowed the institution of slavery. It took a Civil War to end its legality.

To add insult to injury, it took another century before laws and practice finally changed enough to make true racial equality possible. Today, non-discrimination is the name of the game and I’mCrow is no more.

Sounds good, but in fact we have not yet realized the Christian ideal of communal equality before God. The result is we have the disaffection of many blacks, and the disaffection of many whites as well. Some may think that celebrating Black History Month gives them a passes eventful in an inclusive society such as ours. But I think they provide an opportunity for all of us to examine our own motivations and behaviors in light of what it really means to be a Christian.

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

Debra Tomaselli

Living God work through me in the stillness of life

For weeks, I worked to deepen my relationship with God, but no matter how many prayers that I repeated, I felt distant and untouched. The same routines that formerly delivered a glimpse of his presence now failed to create a stir. In fact, the busier I got searching for him, the more removed from him I seemed to become.

Then I needed to put my life on hold to undergo minor surgery. I expected to return to my routines of prayer and work today, but medical complications dictated extended bed rest. Instead, I spent the day feeling isolated, devalued and frustrated.

Finally, I picked up my copy of a book called Divine Embrace by Ken Gire. I flipped to a page where the author addresses a spiritually dry period in his life, a time when he, too, was searching for a deeper relationship with God and found it lacking. He, too, reflects, “God had indeed been silent. But silent in the way an artist at work is silent. He had been quietly at work in me, forming Christ in me.” With that thought, I relaxed. My eyes settled on the page.

That night, I dreamed I was walking on the beach, surrounded by a group of priests. As the waves crashed against the shore, one priest spoke about how God is always near us. He said, “God never leaves our side.”

The next morning, the sound of the birds awakened me. I opened the window, and the soft chirping of the birds welcomed me. I decided to meditate on the words of the priest. I closed my eyes and rested for a few minutes. As I opened my eyes, I noticed the sun shining through the curtains. I smiled and thought, “God is always near us.”

The priest smiled and disappeared, but an overwhelming delight filled me. God seemed to whisper, “You understand. This is how I am with you.”

I thought about the words of the priest and how they related to the words in my book. I realized that God is always near us, even in the most difficult times of our lives.

As he has done in the past, Pope Benedict called for effective cooperation between reason and religious faith. “A reason always stands in need of being purified by faith,” he wrote, and this is also true for political reason. For his part, he said, “It deepens always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face.”

Families can help and be helped by Haitians

To make a significant contribution to the economy of their country of origin through their labor. They also contribute to the public sphere and the private sphere.

An inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As he has done in the past, Pope Benedict called for effective cooperation between reason and religious faith. “A reason always stands in need of being purified by faith,” he wrote, and this is also true for political reason. For his part, he said, “It deepens always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face.”

One is never too old to make a change in life. As I look back on my life, I realize that I have made many changes. I have moved cities, changed jobs, and even changed my religious beliefs. But through it all, I have remained true to my core beliefs and values. I have always believed in the power of love and compassion. I have always believed in the power of community and unity. And I have always believed in the power of change.

As I look forward to the future, I am excited about the possibilities. I am excited about the opportunities to make a difference. I am excited about the possibilities to love and be loved. I am excited about the possibilities to build a better world. And I am excited about the possibilities to make a change in my life.

So, let us make a change in our lives. Let us make a change in the world. Let us make a change in the future. Let us make a change in our hearts and minds. Let us make a change in our lives.

Debra Tomaselli lives in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Her column appears in several diocesan newspapers. Her e-mail address is dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Msgr. Owen E. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 31, 2010

• Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19
• 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13
• Luke 4:21-30

The Book of Jeremiah is the source of this weekend’s first reading.

Regarded as one of the major Hebrew prophets because of the extent of his recorded writings and the brilliance with which he wrote, Jeremiah was descended from priests. He was from a small village, Anathoth, only a few miles away from Jerusalem.

As was usual for prophets, Jeremiah was not universally popular, to say the least, among his contemporaries. His prophecies drew sharp rebukes. Critics accused him of blasphemy, a crime that had death as its punishment in the Hebrew code of law.

It was this statute that centuries later led to some of the demands for the crucifixion of Jesus.

Despite the rejections and denunciations based on falsehoods, Jeremiah never paused in his prophetic mission of insisting upon faithfulness to God and of demanding loyalty to God as a personal and national imperative.

Furthermore, despite all the criticisms, he never doubted that he was on a mission from God.

When God called Jeremiah to the mission of prophets, during the reign of King Josiah, who reigned about 640 B.C. to 609 B.C., God told Jeremiah to be prepared for harsh responses to his prophecies.

As its second reading for this weekend, the Church offers us a passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

It is one of the loveliest and best known sections of the entire corpus of Pauline literature. It is the beautiful explanation of love, this ability which is unique to humans in nature.

It is clear and straightforward. It is greatly inspiring.

Paul then reveals what happens when a person embraces the Gospel.

Imperfections fade away. Knowledge increases. Maturity is reached. The insecurities and smallness of youth pass away.

St. Luke’s Gospel is the source of the last reading.

Jesus, as the story clearly states, appears in the synagogue in Nazareth. In earlier verses, which are not part of this weekend’s reading, Jesus stands to read aloud a section of the Book of Isaiah.

In this section, Isaiah recalled his own calling to be a prophet. Isaiah gave details as to what this calling meant. It meant that he was God’s spokesman, sent by God to bring liberty to the oppressed, hope to the poor and sight to the blind.

Then, continuing in the passage read this weekend, Jesus declares that this prophecy has now been fulfilled. In other words, Jesus is the long awaited spokesman of God.

At first, the audience is impressed. But then Jesus recalled an incident, mentioned in the Old Testament, in which God showed mercy upon gentiles.

This mention of divine favor for anyone outside the Chosen People infuriated the audience in the synagogue as much that they tried to murder Jesus.

He, of course, escaped from them.

Reflection

The readings this weekend very much put us, as humans, in our place. It is a place that we do not readily acknowledge.

It is a realization that we are quite limited, as a human race and as individuals, in our ability to perceive and to judge. Thus, it was the same with the contemporaries of Jeremiah and the people whom Jesus offended in the synagogue.

The mysteries revealed in the liturgies of Christmas, the Epiphany and the Lord’s Baptism say quite directly that God has not left us to our doom. He has supplied what we lack because of our limitation. He has given us strength through grace and the truth revealed ultimately in Christ Jesus.

As the Gospel makes clear, no one is beyond God’s mercy, but we must do our part in receiving this mercy. We must love others with a love that is as pure as that described by St. Paul.

First, however, we must face the fact that we need God.†

Confession puts our sins in God’s hands for reconciliation and healing

A few weeks ago, you answered a question about degrees of sinfulness and mentioned venial sin. I think I understand mortal sin, but what is venial sin exactly? Could you give me a list of them? (Florida)

A bit of history about the Church’s attitude toward sin should help you understand the answer to your question.

In the beginning of Christianity, apart from those mainly based on the natural law—the Ten Commandments, for example—one sin was particularly identified as the big one: abandoning one’s faith in Christ because of fear or pain or death. That was the option often faced by Christians during the Roman persecutions of the 3rd century. Either be faithful to Christ and die or deny Christ and live.

Those who chose to live, but who later wished to return to the Christian faith faced lengthy public penances conducted by the bishop. When these were completed, sinner could be reconciled with the Church once, but only once. As time went on, other moral offenses—murder, bestiality, adultery and abortion of unborn children among them—also required extended public penance. Dying without ritual forgiveness of these sins resulted in, so it was believed, the loss of eternal life.

Not much formal attention was given to lesser sins, which could be forgiven by acts of penance and by the celebration of the Eucharist and other spiritual works.

Hundreds of years later, in the 6th century and earlier, Irish monks began to introduce into the rest of Europe the kind of confession with which we are most familiar—individual private confession and absolution one on one with a priest.

Oriigen viewed suspiciously by Church authorities, this form of confession was at first discouraged and forbidden, but later became the required way of sacramental forgiveness in the Roman Catholic Church.

To achieve some degree of consistency and clarity, monks prepared lists of sins and penalties called “penitentials” for confessors to use in this process of reconciliation with God.

By around the 13th century, the terms “mortal” and “venial” came to distinguish between more and less serious offenses.

Mortal sins were fatal to one’s relationship with God and neighbor.

Venial sins, coming from the Latin word “venia,” which means “pardon or forgiveness,” were more easily forgiven.

Though varieties of expressions were used to describe them, three elements had to come together for a sin to be grave: It’s not healthy for us to try to do this

One must be aware of the serious nature of the act at the time that it is committed.

There must be full, conscious desire to commit the sinful action.

Doubt about or lessening of any of these conditions renders the offense less grave, and the decision of committing a venial sin is no sin at all.

This may sound complicated, but generally the Church relies on people to use good sense, enlightened by the teachings of Christ, to determine what is serious and what is not.

It’s clear that the conceivable ways one might offend against love of God and neighbor—by race, greed and other social evils—are numerous and complex.

Fortunately, a more comprehensive and detailed list of sins has not been attempted.

It’s not healthy for us to try to do this either, except to attend to the leanings in our lives that could become more sinful, and to seek ways to improve that part of our life, which is what a great part of the graces of sacramental penance are for.

But let’s not do only what our Catholic ancestors did: Put all our faults and sins trustingly into God’s hands for forgiveness and healing.

(A free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about the sacrament of penance is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail to jdietzen@stpaulpeoria.com)
Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order prints and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are not of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


DUNBAR, Patricia, 63, St. Nicholas, Sunman, Nov. 7. Wife of Jerry Dunbar. Sister of Howard Bischoff.


GAMBLE, Evelyn, 100, St. Andrew, Richmond, Jan. 14. Sister of George Block.


PROVIDENCE Sister Brendan Harvey ministered for a year in Taiwan, where she helped begin a school for children with disabilities that later expanded to four sites. She helped write the text for the first-grade edition of the Go to Grand through Music Series. Providence Sister Brendan Harvey ministered in Taiwan and co-authored several children’s books.

PROVIDENCE Sister Mary Magdalene Schwartz served as a grade school teacher and college registrar.

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Executive Director
Catholic Education and Faith Formation

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking an Executive Director of Catholic Education and Faith Formation. This position is an administrative leadership role with a focus on strategic planning and implementation of innovative educational initiatives. The position will be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive faith formation plan and ensuring the successful execution of the Archdiocese’s strategic plan.

The successful candidate will:
- Lead the development and implementation of the Archdiocese’s Catholic education and faith formation strategy.
- Work closely with the Archdiocese’s academic leaders to ensure alignment with the strategic plan.
- Serve as a key member of the Archdiocese’s leadership team, contributing to the development of the Archdiocese’s mission and vision.
-具有 at least 15 years of experience in leadership roles in the field of Catholic education and faith formation.
-具有 a demonstrated record of success in the areas of curriculum development, program implementation, and strategic planning.
-具有 a strong ability to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences, including educators, parents, and community leaders.
-具有 a strong commitment to Catholic education and faith formation, with a proven track record of success in this field.

Interested candidates should submit a resume and a letter of interest to the attention of the Search Committee at oce@archindy.org. Applications are encouraged and will be accepted until a suitable candidate is identified.
Aging with grace

St. Paul Hermitage has been a home for the elderly for 50 years

By Mary Ann Wyand

BEECH GROVE — A new chapter begins. The Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove are looking ahead to future plans for their ministry to the elderly at St. Paul Hermitage.

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Hermitage, which the Benedictine sisters built in 1959 at 501 N. 17th Ave., adjacent to their monastery and former girls’ school, at the request of then Archibishop Paul C. Schulte.

A building is called a testament to the quality care given to the residents and dedication of our sisters and staff.

Chapter 37 of the Rule of St. Benedict instructs Benedictine monks and sisters throughout the world to always be “compassionate toward the old.”

During the past half century, the Beech Grove Benedictines have provided a loving home and quality health care for 1,014 senior citizens at the Hermitage, including a number of retired diocesan priests who reside in apartments in the newly wing of the third floor. They have had the honor of caring for these wonderful people in their golden years until they achieved their heavenly reward,” Sister Juliann said. “... The addition of the new health care wing nearly 13 years ago was a huge undertaking for our community. Because of this wing, we were able to offer even more comprehensive care for our residents. That is the beauty of St. Paul Hermitage. We continually seek ways to enhance the lives of our residents. Our care for the elderly is second to none and, God willing, we will be able to continue this outstanding care long into the future.”

Sister Mary Ann McNulty is thankful for the loving care provided by Benedictine Sister Sharon Bierman, a licensed health facility administrator and the eighth sister to direct the Hermitage, and other staff members.

Sister James McNulty moved to the Hermitage on May 15, 2004. When she died on Feb. 8, 2008, she was grateful that he did not have to face her death alone.

“My family was here except for a son, who was in Chicago,” he said. “I had tremendous support from Sister Sharon and all the employees. They came on the morning following her death, knocked on the door, and extended their sympathies. It was a comfort to share the last years of their married life at the hermitage. M.C. Nulty said. “We were very happy for the 60-plus years of our marriage.”

Now that he is widowed, M.C. Nulty finds companionship with other residents and attends daily Mass at the Hermitage chapel.

“We welcome each person as we would Christ. Our residents and staff care about one another. We are a family. This is a ministry of love.” — Benedictine Sister Sharon Bierman

Benedictine Sister Sharon Bierman, center, the eighth administrator of St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove, talks with residents Care Bosler, left, and James Marshall, right, on Nov. 17 in the hermitage lobby.

BEECH GROVE — As the new year begins, the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove are looking ahead to future plans for their ministry to the elderly at St. Paul Hermitage.

The front door of the 50-year-old retirement home operated by the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.