Families unite in faith during Easter Vigil liturgies

By Mary Ann Wyand

Wallace “Wally” Miller celebrated his 58th birthday on April 3 in a special way. The Indianapolis resident was baptized by Father John McCaslin then received the sacraments of confirmation and first Communion during the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday at St. Anthony Church in Indianapolis. Miller’s wife, Debbie, was his Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults sponsor. Father McCaslin is the pastor of St. Anthony Parish and administrator of Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis.

Years of prayer result in husband’s baptism

By Mary Ann Wyand

Wallace “Wally” Miller celebrated his 58th birthday on April 3 in a special way. The Indianapolis resident was baptized by Father John McCaslin then received the sacraments of confirmation and first Communion during the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday at St. Anthony Church in Indianapolis. Miller’s wife, Debbie, was his Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults sponsor. Father McCaslin is the pastor of St. Anthony Parish and administrator of Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis.

Children in two families help their parents grow in faith

By Sean Gallagher

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that parents have the “responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children” (#2225). But what might be less known is that the Church teaches that children can return the favor and help their parents grow in holiness (#2227).

Carolyn Scott experienced this gift as she and her 8-year-old daughter, Mallory, prepared to be received into the full communion of the Church on April 3 in the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. Carolyn, who had been baptized in a Lutheran congregation, enrolled Mallory, who also had been previously baptized in a Protestant congregation, at St. Luke School in the fall of 2008 when she was in the third grade.

“Our daughter really took to religion and really wanted to start living those values that she was learning in the classroom,” Carolyn said. “She just really inspired me because of how seriously she took this.”

Last summer, the mother and daughter decided that they wanted to become Catholic so they signed up for St. Luke’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and Rite of Christian Initiation of Children programs.

In addition to learning about the faith in school, Mallory took classes in her RCIC program on Sunday mornings.

“They were helpful and I got to learn a little more,” she said. “I didn’t want to just go into it and not know what I was doing.”

Carolyn of the Easter Vigil, Carolyn got to see Mallory confirmed and receive her first Communion before she experienced the same sacraments.

Archbishop Buechlein is recovering from stomach surgery

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Since I announced last month that I would need to have surgery to remove a tumor from my stomach, I have had many inquiries about my health. I would like to thank everyone for their concern and prayers, and give you an update on how I am doing.

On April 22, a small tumor was removed from my stomach. The tumor is benign, and is not related to the Hodgkin’s lymphoma that I had in 2008. After a short stay at the hospital, I am back at home recuperating and doing well.

My doctors are recommending about six weeks of recovery time.

I regret the interruption this has caused in my normal obligations. I have especially missed meeting and confirming many of our youths this spring. I’d like to thank all the pastors and staff throughout the archdiocese who are helping cover my schedule during this time.

I would appreciate your continued prayers, and please know that I will continue to pray for all of you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
April 26, 2010
“As excited as she was and as happy as she was, it was really neat,” Carolyn said. “I’m really glad that I got to see her grow up before me.”

Mallory was grateful to be close to Christ in the Eucharist.

“I know that I can always look to Jesus,” she said. “And I know that I can always be assured that he is with me.” Todd Tatlock was baptized at St. Rose of Lima Church in Franklin on the same night that Carolyn and Mallory Scott were received into the Church.

And just as Carolyn was influenced by the example of her daughter, Todd credited the example of his 15-year-old son, Trent, in leading him to enter RCIA and eventually embrace the Catholic faith.

“It was definitely influential,” Todd said. “I kind of stepped back and thought, ‘Here’s a 15-year-old kid making a big decision. And here’s a 36-year-old man that has no guiding spiritual influence in his life. It’s probably time.‘ I had to do a whole lot of soul searching.”

Trent had chosen to enter the RCIA process with his mother, Julie, last summer after she decided to return to the Catholic faith of her youth.

“It was an answered prayer that led Julie to return to the Church. She had wanted to enroll their 9-year-old daughter, Taylor, at St. Rose of Lima School, but was concerned that she would have to be put on a waiting list. That was what had happened years earlier when she had tried to enroll Trent there.

“I went back and forth about it, and prayed about it because I thought that was where she needed to be,” Julie said.

To her surprise, Taylor was accepted as a student at St. Rose School.

“In my prayer, I was like, ‘What now?’ And it was like God said, ‘I would like you to have a relationship with me,’ ” said Julie, with emotion.

When Julie and Trent went to their first RCIA meeting, Trent was still unsure if he wanted to participate. In fact, he had chosen to go to a social event with some co-workers.

“There was every reason in the world for me to stay out there,” Todd said.

“There were boats, fishing to do, a cookout. It was a team-building event. But something was telling me that I needed to be there.”

So he left, went to the meeting and enjoyed learning about the faith during the next several months with his wife and son. Julie and Todd’s three young daughters, Taylor, Trent and Tara, were baptized on Feb. 14. Their marriage was blessed in the Church, also knowing as convalidatio, on March 24.

On April 3, Julie completed her initiation into the Church that had been cut short so long ago.

And Todd and Trent were baptized, confirmed and received their first Communion.

“I was standing there watching him go through that,” Todd said. “Then I went through it. We went back to clean up and dry off. And I looked at him and I said, ‘Wow! That was pretty neat.’ ”

“I was proud for him,” said Trent of his father being baptized. “It was great to see that happen, to see all the work that we had done, and all the classes, and to see him get baptized.”

That beginning also meant a lot to Julie.

“We had been anticipating [their baptisms] for almost a year,” said Julie, with joy. “It was just nice to see it finally come. We’re on our way to where we need to be.”

Catechumen learns about the faith, prayer and community in RCIA

By Sean Gallagher

Brett and Gail Pfeffer have worked hard through the years to pass on their children a firm foundation in the Catholic faith—taking them to Mass regularly, and sending them to Catholic grade schools and high schools. Yet Brett hadn’t taken the time to focus on his own life of faith until last summer—a beginning that led him to his baptism, confirmation and First Communion during an Easter Vigil Mass on April 3 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis.

“I was walking out of church this past summer before RCIA started, and it just hit me,” Brett said. “I felt right, and I’m thinking, ‘This is the time to commit myself.’

So he entered the parish’s RCIA process with Gail as his sponsor. By doing so, Brett, who was not raised in any faith tradition, tapped into a spiritual hunger to learn more and more about the Catholic faith.

“That’s a stack of books growing by the day,” Gail said.

One of the most important books for Brett is a Bible that he prayerfully reads on a daily basis.

“I get up every morning in solitude and read that—before I do anything, before I drink a sip of water, before I check my phone, before I turn the TV on,” he said. “I see that being a part of my life forever now. It’s just the way to calibrate my day and to pray.”

Brett also learned the value of becoming part of a community of believers. During Lent, he attended a series of Wednesday evening soup suppers at St. Luke Parish during which Father Noah Casey, the parish’s pastor, gave presentations on the faith.

During those events, Brett became friends with two older St. Luke parishioners, Donald Hagadorn and George Haeerle.

“We formed kind of a bond with Brett,” said Hagadorn, 91. “I think it helps somebody coming into a parish as big as St. Luke.”

“They’ve lost wives, kids, war buddies—but they yet walk in with just a freshness,” Brett said. “To me, that’s a void that I know I’ve had in my life that I’ve missed. And it’s faith that gets you through that.”

On the night of the Easter Vigil, Hagadorn and Haeerle surprised Brett by coming to the liturgy to help welcome him into the Church.

“When I’m walking back to be baptized, the tw o of them are in the back pew,” Brett said. “I looked over at Don, and he just winked.”

Gail was pleased, too, to see her husband of 25 years embrace the faith that has been a part of her life since her childhood.

“It’s a wonderful thing, and I’m thrilled for him, mostly because I think everybody needs [faith] in their life,” she said. “It’s been a great experience.”

Catholic faith of her youth. Summer after she decided to return to the spiritual influence in his life. It’s making a big decision. And here’s a 36-year-old man that has no guiding spiritual influence in his life. It’s probably time. I had to do a whole lot of soul searching. Trent had chosen to enter the RCIA process with his mother, Julie, last summer after she decided to return to the Catholic faith of her youth.

“I was standing there watching him go through that,” Todd said. “Then I went through it. We went back to clean up and dry off. And I looked at him and I said, ‘Wow! That was pretty neat.’ ”

“I was proud for him,” said Trent of his father being baptized. “It was great to see that happen, to see all the work that we had done, and all the classes, and to see him get baptized.”

That beginning also meant a lot to Julie.

“We had been anticipating [their baptisms] for almost a year,” said Julie, with joy. “It was just nice to see it finally come. We’re on our way to where we need to be.”

It was an answered prayer that led Brett to return to the Church. He had wanted to enroll their 9-year-old daughter, Taylor, at St. Rose of Lima School, but was concerned that she would have to be put on a waiting list. That was what had happened years earlier when she had tried to enroll Trent there.

“I went back and forth about it, and prayed about it because I thought that was where she needed to be,” Julie said.

To her surprise, Taylor was accepted as a student at St. Rose School.

“In my prayer, I was like, ‘What now?’ And it was like God said, ‘I would like you to have a relationship with me,’ ” said Julie, with emotion.

When Julie and Trent went to their first RCIA meeting, Trent was still unsure if he wanted to participate. In fact, he had chosen to go to a social event with some co-workers.

“There was every reason in the world for me to stay out there,” Todd said.

“There were boats, fishing to do, a cookout. It was a team-building event. But something was telling me that I needed to be there.”

So he left, went to the meeting and enjoyed learning about the faith during the next several months with his wife and son. Julie and Todd’s three young daughters, Taylor, Trent and Tara, were baptized on Feb. 14. Their marriage was blessed in the Church, also knowing as convalidatio, on March 24.

On April 3, Julie completed her initiation into the Church that had been cut short so long ago.

And Todd and Trent were baptized, confirmed and received their first Communion.

“I was standing there watching him go through that,” Todd said. “Then I went through it. We went back to clean up and dry off. And I looked at him and I said, ‘Wow! That was pretty neat.’ ”

“I was proud for him,” said Trent of his father being baptized. “It was great to see that happen, to see all the work that we had done, and all the classes, and to see him get baptized.”

That beginning also meant a lot to Julie.

“We had been anticipating [their baptisms] for almost a year,” said Julie, with joy. “It was just nice to see it finally come. We’re on our way to where we need to be.”

It was an answered prayer that led Brett to return to the Church. He had wanted to enroll their 9-year-old daughter, Taylor, at St. Rose of Lima School, but was concerned that she would have to be put on a waiting list. That was what had happened years earlier when she had tried to enroll Trent there.

“I went back and forth about it, and prayed about it because I thought that was where she needed to be,” Julie said.

To her surprise, Taylor was accepted as a student at St. Rose School.

“In my prayer, I was like, ‘What now?’ And it was like God said, ‘I would like you to have a relationship with me,’ ” said Julie, with emotion.

When Julie and Trent went to their first RCIA meeting, Trent was still unsure if he wanted to participate. In fact, he had chosen to go to a social event with some co-workers.

“There was every reason in the world for me to stay out there,” Todd said.

“There were boats, fishing to do, a cookout. It was a team-building event. But something was telling me that I needed to be there.”

So he left, went to the meeting and enjoyed learning about the faith during the next several months with his wife and son. Julie and Todd’s three young daughters, Taylor, Trent and Tara, were baptized on Feb. 14. Their marriage was blessed in the Church, also knowing as convalidatio, on March 24.

On April 3, Julie completed her initiation into the Church that had been cut short so long ago.

And Todd and Trent were baptized, confirmed and received their first Communion.

“I was standing there watching him go through that,” Todd said. “Then I went through it. We went back to clean up and dry off. And I looked at him and I said, ‘Wow! That was pretty neat.’ ”

“I was proud for him,” said Trent of his father being baptized. “It was great to see that happen, to see all the work that we had done, and all the classes, and to see him get baptized.”

That beginning also meant a lot to Julie.

“We had been anticipating [their baptisms] for almost a year,” said Julie, with joy. “It was just nice to see it finally come. We’re on our way to where we need to be.”
Arizona governor signs much-criticized immigration bill into law

PHOENIX (CNS)—Thousands of protesters gathered outside the state capitol and hundreds more at a state office building in Tucson on April 23, as Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer announced that she had signed into law an immigration bill that has been harshly criticized by civil rights groups, religious leaders and even President Barack Obama, who called it “misguided.”

The law will require police to ask people encountered in the course of their duties for proof of their immigration status, and makes it a crime to be in the state illegally. Federal law treats presence in the country without permission to be a violation of civil law, and does not require people to carry proof of their immigration status.

Brewer had been bombarded with mail, phone calls and e-mail messages since the legislature sent her the bill on April 19.

Throughout the week, protesters gathered at the capitol and thousands of high school students who walked off their campuses to join the protest. Students left high school buildings in Tucson to do the same at a downtown state government building on April 23.

Among those present to veto the bill were the state’s three Catholic bishops and Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, who called it “the country’s most retrogressive, mean-spirited and useless anti-immigrant law” on his blog.

Archbishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson said he will ask the general counsel of the Diocesan Web site on April 26, Bishop Kicanas said he believes the law needs to be challenged for reasons beyond the constitutional questions that many opponents of the bill have raised. Among his objections to the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act is that it “does not address the critical need for border security to confront drug smuggling, weapons smuggling and human trafficking.”

Bishop Kicanas also objected to the law on the grounds that it “ sends a wrong message about how our state regards the importance of civil rights” and local law enforcement from their primary role in protecting public safety, puts additional pressure on depleted law enforcement resources, discourages people from reporting crimes if they lack legal immigration status, makes criminals out of children who were brought to the United States by their parents, risks splitting families apart, and could cause further damage to already strained state economy.

In a phone interview with Catholic News Service on April 23, Bishop Kicanas said he hopes violence will not result from the tension in Arizona that led to the law’s passage by the legislature and has accompanied its signing by Gov. Brewer.

“I hope that whatever is done will be civil and not lead to violence,” he said. “Emotions can lead to irrational behavior.”

However, religious leaders, in particular, must work with their communities to ensure that people realize violence is not the way to address the situation.

Along with Bishops Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix and James S. Wall of Gallup, N.M., whose diocese includes parts of northern Arizona, Bishop Kicanas had called for a veto of the bill and for a more comprehensive approach at the federal level to solve immigration problems.

At a press conference announcing that she was signing the bill, Brewer said she would make Arizona safer. She emphasized that “racial profiling is illegal,” and that the law stipulates that police need not ask about residency status if it would impede a case.

In his remarks at a naturalization ceremony at the White House earlier on April 23, Obama said failure to enact immigration reforms at the federal level opened the door to “irresponsibility by others…” which threatened to undermine basic notions of fairness that we cherish as Americans as well as the trust between police and their communities that is so crucial to keeping us safe.

Obama said he had instructed the administration to study the civil rights and other implications of the legislation. Several prominent organizations, including the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union, have threatened lawsuits to stop it from being implemented.

The turbulent atmosphere in Arizona around the legislation led Rep. Raoul Grijalva to close his district offices early on April 23 after threats of violence were received by the staff.

Grijalva opposes the legislation, and has encouraged an economic boycott of the state as a protest.

Nationwide, rallies in support of federal comprehensive immigration reform long planned for May 1 were expected to have new focus and determination as supporters of comprehensive reform zeroed in on the Arizona bill as a consequence of Congress’ delay in dealing with the dysfunctional immigration system.

Deep poverty can be reversed, Catholic Charities USA president says

CLEVELAND (CNS)—One-time industrial powerhouse cities such as Cleveland have been hit hard by a long-term economic downturn that can still see significant declines in poverty as long as appropriate measures are undertaken, the president of the federal government, the president of Catholic Charities USA said.

Addressing the gathering of civic leaders, government agencies and religious organizations, including the Catholic Charities of Cleveland, were a series of regional leadership summits to discuss poverty as part of Catholic Charities USA’s biennial celebration on April 22.

Father Larry Snyder said steps to provide affordable housing, encourage hiring, enact living wage laws, and increase access to food, nutrition programs and health care are needed to lower the country’s 13.2 percent poverty rate.

Cleveland, which has topped the list of the nation’s poorest cities twice since 2003, was targeted by Catholic Charities USA for one of the summits because of its many community-based programs involving poor and uninsured people.

The summits are part of the agency’s nationwide campaign to cut poverty in half by 2020. Previous summits have been held in St. Paul, Minn.; Portland, Ore.; San Antonio; San Jose, Calif.; Atlanta; Albany, N.Y.; and Nashville, Tenn. Three more summits are planned on April 29 in Chicago, June 17 in Newark, N.J., and Sept. 25 in Washington.

Information gathered at the summits will be used to promote the gilation “that will give communities the tools and resources to reduce poverty in areas such as affordable housing, employment and living wages, adequate food and nutrition, and access to health care,” Father Snyder told the gathering of civic leaders, government officials and about 200 Church representatives from Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Indiana.

“You may ask why we have the audacity to undertake an initiative,” Father Snyder said. “My response is that we do it because we have no choice.”

As a member of the President’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, Father Snyder said he has seen how individuals can make a difference in the lives of poor people. He cited the story on the audience to take steps “to dramatically change our country’s approach to helping the most vulnerable populations among us,” and “envision strategies that will have a dramatic significant impact in reducing the number of children and families for whom poverty is the context of their everyday lives.”

Father Snyder also said that while the current economic recession has been challenging, Catholic Charities is focused on reducing the causes of poverty while remaining committed to supporting local programs that have proven to be successful.

“You can ask the question: ‘Why should we make this a priority?’” Father Snyder said. “As Americans, I believe we should have the political will to do this because it speaks loudly and clearly to the kind of society we aspire to. Millions of Americans are counting on us to change the trajectory that we are on. I find a bridge out of poverty for them.”

“For while we need to talk about statistics and poverty measurements, let us never ultimately take our sights off the faces of the individuals who need our help,” he added.

During an interview with the Catholic Universe Bulletin, the Cleveland diocesan newspaper, Father Snyder said he was inspired by several of the comments of local leaders in the poverty fight. He cited the Building Health Communities program, which works with the Catholic Charities of St. Augustine Health System to plan health screenings for poor residents in Cleveland’s Central neighborhood, one of the city’s poorest areas.

One of its projects helps county residents growing fruits and vegetables on vacant city lots and selling them to employees at nearby St. Vincent Charity Hospital, operated by the health system.

He said the ideas mentioned during the Cleveland summit echoed those discussed around the country at other summits.

Catholic Charities USA is also developing what Father Snyder called a National Consumer Advisory Board, a group of people who have received social services from Catholic Charities agencies. Their expertise will be tapped to help others who have received services from those affected by poverty and families need.

“We have to get in partnership with community groups and religious groups and Catholic Charities project alone.” It’s everybody,” said Leonard Calabrese, president of Catholic Charities USA, who has talked about the need to build partnerships with better help and health care, transportation and human services. pointed to the National Catholic Social Studies Committee.

Thomas Mullen, president and chief executive officer of Catholic Charities Health and Human Services of the Catholic Charities of Cleveland, told the gathering that cutting poverty in half in a place such as Cleveland would be a challenge because of the city’s status as one of the poorest in the country. The programs are compounded by the city’s 10.6 percent unemployment rate and a massive number of home foreclosures.

“Where Mullen becomes optimistic is in the participation and passion of people throughout the diocese as well as Northeast Ohio, who are beginning to understand that communities must work together to end poverty.”

“Cleveland is a great community,” he said. “We’ve got a lot of committed people here.”

People rally against Arizona’s new tough immigration law outside the state Capitol in Phoenix on April 25. Protesters depicted the law as a violation of U.S. civil rights. Others rewrote their call for federal immigration reform.
Dedicated, in the March 22 issue of America magazine, Father William Karg, a retired priest of the Diocese of Cleveland, described what he does, activities that he said are similar to those of about 90 percent of retired priests. He wrote that he celebrates Mass and hears confessions at some 23 locations, volunteers at a drop-in center for the homeless run by the Catholic Worker Movement, and offers spiritual direction and help with campus ministry at Akron University.

He also wrote that one of his high school classmates in Indianapolis, now retired, serves as the chaplain for religious sisters, encouraging them to seek spiritual direction, but he didn’t give his classmate’s name.

He and our 30-plus retired priests are not alone. There are now about 10,000 retired priests in the United States. According to statistics from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), the Catholic University of America, “Dioceses now have one retired priest for every two active priests.” And that ratio will likely grow as more and more of our priests reach retirement age.

In Indianapolis, there is approximately one retired priest for every four priests who have not yet retired.

Most priests naturally prefer to do priestly ministry rather than administrative work. As one of the priests in the CARA study said, “If I win the lotto, I’d retire tomorrow—and do ministry until I died.”

Perhaps we should follow, to a certain degree, a suggestion made by Father Karg in his America article, and have lay administrators carry out all of a parish’s administrative duties except those that, according to the Church’s canon law, pastors alone are responsible for.

We are grateful to all our retired priests for the many years of service they have given to our parishes and our archdiocese. Those who prefer not to remain active in priestly ministry undoubtedly deserve to pursue their other interests.

Keep our retired priests in your prayers. And if you see them, as you’re likely to do sometimes relatively soon in your parish, thank them for their continued service.

—John F. Fink

Retired priests continue to minister in many ways

DURING THIS Year for priests, we must not neglect our retired priests.

“We are grateful to all our retired priests for the many years of service they have given to our parishes and our archdiocese. Those who prefer not to remain active in priestly ministry undoubtedly deserve to pursue their other interests.”

—John F. Fink

God’s ways are different from the ways of the world

In response to the high priest’s order not to preach in the name of Jesus, the 28% 90%

Christians and all believers are called to build up the kingdom of God. As Peace Corps approaches, we are reminded that with the power of the Holy Spirit all things are possible.

Children and all believers are called to build up the kingdom of God. As Peace Corps approaches, we are reminded that with the power of the Holy Spirit all things are possible.

Making a Difference/Tony Magliano

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT in the media concerns most parents, but many still say they do not control their children’s use of it.

The results presented here are based on a national random digit-dial telephone survey Feb. 16-20, 2010, of 500 parents of children ages 2-14.

The margins of error from sampling is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Source: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Tony Magliano writes for Catholic News Service.)
Durante mi recuperación de la cirugía he reflexionado mucho acerca del agudezamiento de la conciencia, amén de lo que es la maldad y el dolor que ésta ha causado a las víctimas del abuso, especialmente por nuestros fieles sacerdotes.

Rezo con agradecimiento por aquellos que siguen expresando su confianza en la fe que ellos han conquistado y ofrecida por Cristo a todos nosotros pecadores.

Otro elemento que me ha ofrecido mucha fortaleza es el poder de Dios, que no es el poder de las cosas materiales, sino de su amorosa misericordia. Aún cuando siento que el mal seguirá ahí, pero será más fácil de soportar si lo considero como el obsequio insondable del amor de Dios.

Además, me he sentido fuerte porque la iglesia, con todas sus limitaciones, ofrece la cruz del árbol de Cristo, y en ella puedo encontrar el amor de Dios y de Su amorosa misericordia. ¡Que ellos realicen sus promesas como sacerdotes con júbilo y fe y den vida a aquellos que llaman en nuestro nombre y en el nombre de Dios, y en Su misterio, en Su amorosa misericordia!
Events Calendar

April 30-May 29

May 1
St. Vincent Hospital, Schaefer Rooms, A, B and C, 2001 W. 18th St., Indianapolis. “Safe Sitter” class, 9 a.m., $45 per person. Information: 317-338-4437.

St. Francis Hospital, Cancer Center, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. Skin cancer screenings, 9 a.m.-noon, free, reservation required. Information: 317-782-4422.

St. Rose of Lima Church, 114 Lancaster Drive, Martinsville. “Musical Recital of Disney’s Cinderella,” 7 p.m., free, will donation, no registration required. Information: 317-738-3929.

May 2
St. Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, to Monte Cassino Shrine, one mile east of the Archabbey on State Road 62, St. Meinrad. Monte Cassino pilgrimage, 8 a.m., lunch included. Information: 812-375-6501.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Indianapolis, located on 925 South, 8:30 a.m. east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Mass, noon, on third Sunday holy hour and prayer, groups of 10 pay the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Emile Burwick, celebrant. Information: 317-831-4142 or stmmshea@sbcglobal.net.

May 4
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Aging Gracefully: Thrive or Extinct? of Aging - How 60s and over?, Benedictine Father Noel Muelleter, presenter. Information: 800-581-4905 or MZeller@saintmeinrad.edu

May 6
St. Francis Hospital, 1215 W. 116th St., Indianapolis. Open house and enrollment for 2010-11 school year, 6:30-8 p.m. Information: 317-331-4142 or stmmshea@sbcglobal.net.

May 7
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Lumen Debating meeting, 6:30 a.m., Mass, breakfast and program in Pizza Hall, 515 members, $20 non-members. Information: 317-475-3447 or e-mail mmasig691@comcast.net.

May 8
St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 363 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Singles Seniors, meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-4207.

Retreats and Programs

May 1
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. Sixth annual Women’s Day, “Women of Change,” Franciscan Sister Olga Wettkind, presenter, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $30 per person includes lunch and is due April 27. Information: 800-682-0988 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

May 5
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “A Thomas Merton Seminar–Bridges to Contemplative Living: Writing Yourself into the Book of Life,” session two of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, Mass, 5:15 p.m., supper, 6 p.m., session, 6:30-9 p.m., $65.95 per person includes book and supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

May 6-9
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Aging Gracefully: Thrive or Extinct? of Aging - How 60s and over?,” Benedictine Father Noel Muelleter, presenter. Information: 800-581-4905 or MZeller@saintmeinrad.edu

May 10
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Men’s Night at the ‘Burgh,” Benedictine Brother Carl Hawver, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

May 11
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Talk—Women of Wisdom,” session four of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, registration fee is $7 per person. For more information or to register for the program, call Sharon Spencer at St. Christopher Parish at 317-241-6314, ext. 121, or send an e-mail to her at spencer@stchristopherparish.org.

Archabbot Lambert Reilly to discuss praying with St. Teresa of Avila

“Dare We Pray with Teresa of Avila—Contradict Me with the Truth” and “Where Will This Prayer Lead Us?” are the topics for a morning of recollection presented by retired Benedictine Archabbott Lambert Reilly of Saint Meinrad Archabbey on May 15 at St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., in Indianapolis.

Archabbott Lambert presented retreats to blessed Teresa of Calcutta and the Missionaries of Charity in India, and has been a retreat presenter in many other countries. Registration with coffee and donuts begins at 8:30 a.m. The program concludes at 11:30 a.m. The early registration fee is $5 per person, and the same day registration fee is $7 per person. For more information or to register for the program, call Sharon Spencer at St. Christopher Parish at 317-241-6314, ext. 121, or send an e-mail to her at spencer@stchristopherparish.org.

Archabbott Lambert Reilly to present program on May 7 in Richmond

Tatiana, an internationally known Catholic songwriter originally from Croatia, will present “Let It Be—Mary’s Story,” a Christian music concert at 7 p.m. on May 7 at Holy Family Church, 815 W. Main St., in Richmond. The concert is sponsored by the Richmond Catholic Community. A free-will donation will be collected. For more information, call Holy Family Parish at 765-962-3902.

Hispanic Health Fair

April 18 as his sister, Juanita, and their mother, Elvia, wait for their turn for the free medical test at St. Mary Parish in New Albany. More than 300 Latinos participated in the health fair, which was co-sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.

José Angel Gonzalez has his blood pressure checked by Floyd Memorial Hospital employees on April 18 as his sister, Juanita, and their mother, Elvia, wait for their turn for the free medical test at St. Mary Parish in New Albany. More than 300 Latinos participated in the health fair, which was co-sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.

HISPANIC HEALTH FAIR

Four Sisters of Providence reviewed the free services, including medical, dental and vision care, at the Hispanic Health Fair in New Albany. One of the services being reviewed is blood pressure care. The Hispanic Health Fair is a community event designed to give Latinos a chance to receive free medical tests.

The members of the St. Jerome Catholic Church, Indianapolis, were among the people who received medical tests at the Hispanic Health Fair in New Albany.

The event was held on April 18 at St. Jerome Catholic Church in New Albany. The fair was sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish.

Archabbot Lambert Reilly to discuss praying with St. Teresa of Avila

“Dare We Pray with Teresa of Avila—Contradict Me with the Truth” and “Where Will This Prayer Lead Us?” are the topics for a morning of recollection presented by retired Benedictine Archabbott Lambert Reilly of Saint Meinrad Archabbey on May 15 at St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., in Indianapolis.

Archabbott Lambert presented retreats to Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and the Missionaries of Charity in India, and has been a retreat presenter in many other countries. Registration with coffee and donuts begins at 8:30 a.m. The program concludes at 11:30 a.m. The early registration fee is $5 per person, and the same day registration fee is $7 per person. For more information or to register for the program, call Sharon Spencer at St. Christopher Parish at 317-241-6314, ext. 121, or send an e-mail to her at spencer@stchristopherparish.org.

Hispanic Health Fair

The members of the St. Jerome Catholic Church, Indianapolis, were among the people who received medical tests at the Hispanic Health Fair in New Albany. The fair was sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.

JoseAngelGonzalezhashisbloodpressurecheckedbyFloydMemorialHospitalemployeesonApril18ashis sister, Juanita, and their mother, Elvia, wait for their turn for the free medical test at St. Mary Parish in New Albany. More than 300 Latinos participated in the health fair, which was co-sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.

Hispanic Health Fair

April 18 as his sister, Juanita, and their mother, Elvia, wait for their turn for the free medical test at St. Mary Parish in New Albany. More than 300 Latinos participated in the health fair, which was co-sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.

JoseAngelGonzalezhashisbloodpressurecheckedbyFloydMemorialHospitalemployeesonApril18ashis sister, Juanita, and their mother, Elvia, wait for their turn for the free medical test at St. Mary Parish in New Albany. More than 300 Latinos participated in the health fair, which was co-sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry of the New Albany Deanery, the Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana and St. Mary Parish. In addition to the blood pressure check-up and diabetes screening, participants were able to get educational information about healthy diets and other medical topics. Recent immigrants often do not have a family physician or health insurance so the health fair was a valuable community resource.
Dr. and alcohol awareness is theme of annual hoop fundraiser

By John Shaugnessy

Considering the stakes, the basketball game that was played at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis on April 16 had a significance that extended far beyond most games. Of course, there was the usual intense competition that marks any athletic contest between two Catholic institutions. But the Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs game that pitted doctors from St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers against staff members from Roncalli High School was of a higher purpose than bragging rights.

But more than money was needed to bring back the onion dome. A lot of fortune and love for Oldenburg was also required. That was what fueled the efforts of people like Gary Munchel, Jeff Paul, Paul Selkirk and William Selk in order to add another spire to the ‘Village of Spires’.

“Dr. Marvin Christie, left, and Dr. Don Kerner pose for a photo before the annual Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs basketball game on April 16 at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. Twenty-six years ago, Kerner started the annual game that raises funds for alcohol and drug awareness programs for high schools on the south side of Indianapolis. For all those years, Selk has coached the team of doctors from St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers.”

Competitors reached the goal of raising funds for an alcohol and drug awareness program during an April 16 basketball game that matched staff members from Roncalli High School in Indianapolis against doctors from St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers. Brian Lauck, an assistant coach for the Roncalli football team, swoops toward the basket in the Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs game.

“I'm just thrilled to see it up,” said Franciscan Father David Kobak, Holy Family's pastor. “It's a thrill to see that Onion comes back. A lot of fortitude and love for Oldenburg was also required. That was what fueled the efforts of people like Gary Munchel, Jeff Paul, Paul Selkirk and William Selk in order to add another spire to the ‘Village of Spires’.

“Dr. Marvin Christie, left, and Dr. Don Kerner pose for a photo before the annual Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs basketball game on April 16 at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. Twenty-six years ago, Kerner started the annual game that raises funds for alcohol and drug awareness programs for high schools on the south side of Indianapolis. For all those years, Selk has coached the team of doctors from St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers.”

Competitors reached the goal of raising funds for an alcohol and drug awareness program during an April 16 basketball game that matched staff members from Roncalli High School in Indianapolis against doctors from St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers. Brian Lauck, an assistant coach for the Roncalli football team, swoops toward the basket in the Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs game.

“I'm just thrilled to see it up,” said Franciscan Father David Kobak, Holy Family's pastor. “It's a thrill to see that Onion comes back. A lot of fortitude and love for Oldenburg was also required. That was what fueled the efforts of people like Gary Munchel, Jeff Paul, Paul Selkirk and William Selk in order to add another spire to the ‘Village of Spires’.

“I’m just thrilled to see it up,” said Franciscan Father David Kobak, Holy Family's pastor. “It's a thrill to see that Onion comes back. A lot of fortitude and love for Oldenburg was also required. That was what fueled the efforts of people like Gary Munchel, Jeff Paul, Paul Selkirk and William Selk in order to add another spire to the ‘Village of Spires’.

Oldenburg—Oldenburg is a town nestled among the hills that dot the landscape of southeastern Indiana. As you drive into town from the south along State Road 229, you first see it as you drive down one of those hills. What stands out in the view are the four spires that dot its skyline, known by many in the area as the “Village of Spires.”

What stands out in the view are the four spires that dot its skyline, known by many in the area as the “Village of Spires.”

Two spires are on buildings on the campus of the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis.

The other two are on the current and former church of Holy Family Parish in the center of the town.

One parish priest was still recognized as a way for the villagers to pay tribute to the history of Oldenburg, which was founded by German immigrants in 1837.

The parish’s “onion dome” was a spire shaped like an onion, which sat atop a stone church that served as the parish church from its construction in 1846 until the parish’s current brick church was built in 1862 to accommodate the town’s growing Catholic population.

The spire on the stone church was modeled after similar architectural features of Baroque churches in central Europe. It was removed from the stone church in 1949 after it had fallen into disrepair.

A 25-year effort to restore it finally came to fruition on Feb. 3 when a new steeple, modeled after the original, was installed on the stone church that now serves as the offices of Holy Family Parish.

“It's a dream come true,” Selk said.

“Many times how it is that something has been gone that long—61 years—and then comes back.”

Selk said the efforts to restore the onion dome and the work done in organizing the town’s annual Freudenfest are indicative of the love for Oldenburg seen in a growing number of its young adults.

“Oldenburg has one of the programs that have played all 24 years—Pat Enright, Bob Robinson, Don Rockey, Phil Snyder and Tom Wiser. The team has also been coached during those 24 years by Dr. Marvin Christie.

“He’s the glue that keeps our team together,” Kerner says. “It’s been very gratifying to see the response of the physician community. We’ve had well over 100 physicians play in these games over the 24-year span. The docs tell the host high school that we will double the gate [proceeds] up to a total of $5,000. There is no expense for the school. The more attendance they have, the more money they raise. For the past 10 years, the range that schools have gained from the game has been $6,000 to $10,000.”

Nearly every high school on the south side of Indianapolis has held one of the Docs vs. Jocks vs. Drugs games, according to Kerner. This year’s game marked the first time it has been played at Roncalli during the 24 years.

“Most of the schools’ administrators understand the problem is there with alcohol and drug use,” Kerner says. “The schools want to either participate in programs that are public or private, don’t have the funds to support these programs. They are willing to participate in this program because if the message gets to just a few students who don’t go down the road of drugs or alcohol, it’s well worth it.”

Selk thinks that the town’s future, like the new onion dome, is on good footing.

“It’s a solid base,” he said. “That’s pretty obvious. These things that they’re doing are important to the children of the town. It’s a beautiful, quaint village. It’s a solid base.”

But more than money was needed to bring back the onion dome. A lot of fortune and love for Oldenburg was also required.

That was what fueled the efforts of people like Gary Munchel, Jeff Paul, Paul Selkirk and William Selk in order to add another spire to the ‘Village of Spires’. The parish’s “onion dome” was a spire shaped like an onion, which sat atop a stone church that served as the parish church from its construction in 1846 until the parish’s current brick church was built in 1862 to accommodate the town’s growing Catholic population.

The spire on the stone church was modeled after similar architectural features of Baroque churches in central Europe. It was removed from the stone church in 1949 after it had fallen into disrepair.

A 25-year effort to restore it finally came to fruition on Feb. 3 when a new steeple, modeled after the original, was installed on the stone church that now serves as the offices of Holy Family Parish.

“It’s a dream come true,” Selk said.

“Many times how it is that something has been gone that long—61 years—and then comes back.”

Selk said the efforts to restore the onion dome and the work done in organizing the town’s annual Freudenfest are indicative of the love for Oldenburg seen in a growing number of its young adults.

Selk thinks that the town’s future, like the new onion dome, is on good footing.

“It’s a solid base,” he said. “That’s pretty obvious. These things that they’re doing are important to the children of the town. It’s a beautiful, quaint village. Oldenburg is 110 percent pure Americana.”

(To continue, see next page)
Welcome, new Catholics

Catholics received the Eucharist at Indianapolis parishes. The list includes Catechumens and Candidates since last Easter. Most of the people listed here received their first Eucharist.

Catechumen Eugene Earls of Indianapolis cries tears of joy after being baptized during the Easter Vigil Mass on April 3 at St. Anthony on the Bank in Indianapolis. The 445 candidates listed were baptized in other Christian traditions, and were received into the full communion of the Catholic Church with a profession of faith, confirmation and reception of the initiation sacraments.

The 445 candidates listed were baptized in other Christian traditions, and were received into the full communion of the Catholic Church with a profession of faith, confirmation and reception of the initiation sacraments. Most are listed in the parishes where they received their religious formation and the reception of initiation.
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

“Our Lady of Fatima: Our Special Patron in Many Ways!”
A Day of Reflection

with Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel
Vicar General, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
May 13, 2010
9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Sixty years ago Archbishop Paul C. Schulte established a retreat ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He chose as patron for this ministry Our Lady of Fatima. This day of recollection will reflect on who Our Lady of Fatima is, her message, and why Mary is the model disciple and model for us today.

We look forward to celebrating our feast day with you!

The day will include silent reflection time, Mass, the rosary, and a brief period of Eucharistic Adoration.

$35 per person

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House is, her message, and why Mary is the model disciple and model for us today.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Registration, check-in and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5353 E. 56th Street
Indiana, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

Parish center dedication

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House is, her message, and why Mary is the model disciple and model for us today.

On May 13, 2010, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis celebrated the 175th anniversary of the founding of St. Michael Parish. The blessing and dedication ceremony was part of an ongoing series of events to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the New Albany Deenincy parish. The day included a special Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Joseph M. Siegel, who bestowed the title of Patron of the Parish on St. Michael.

The ceremony was followed by a community picnic on the church grounds.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House is, her message, and why Mary is the model disciple and model for us today.
Bishops and priests are called to spiritual fatherhood

By Archbishop Robert J. Carlson

In his apostolic exhortation “Romani Pontifici” (“I Will Give You Shepherds”), the late Pope John Paul II reminds us that “priests by means of the sacrament of orders are tied with a personal and indissoluble bond to Christ. ... The sacrament of holy orders is conferred upon each one of them as individuals, but they are inserted into the communion of the presbyterate united with the bishop.”

A priest’s primary bond, the fundamental and indispensable relationship that creates and sustains his ministry, is with Christ. Nothing can replace this intimate, indissoluble connection between Christ and his priests.

At the same time, as the Holy Father reminds us, this bond of love between Christ and his priests has a communal dimension. When a priest receives the sacrament of holy orders, he is joined with his brother priests and his bishop in a presbyterate.

The bishop shares his ministry with his priests. Together, they carry out the Lord’s work — by their proclamation of the word of God, by their celebration of the sacraments and by their pastoral leadership.

In John 21:15-17, Jesus questions St. Peter’s love for him three times before putting St. Peter at the head of his flock, the Church, and then invites him to tend and feed his sheep. The spirituality of the bishop and the priest is the same as that of the Galilean fisherman who became the first pope and the head of the Church.

We are called to love the Lord with our whole heart and soul. Bishops and priests are called to share the love they have received in the depth of their hearts from the Father as they take up their role as spiritual fathers.

I find this sense of spiritual fatherhood, love for others in Christ, in St. Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians (1 Thes 2:1-12). Here the disciple, or spiritual father, is called to be a positive influence, to lead a transparent life, base his ministry only on spiritual authority, show affection toward those he is called to serve, and be known for unselfish living.

The spiritual father gives himself completely in proclaiming the Gospel. Therefore, we understand that preaching the Gospel is not merely pronouncing words, but the giving of oneself in love. It is the role of the spiritual father expressed through attentive listening, and anchored in one’s prayer and discernment.

St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars and patron saint of parish priests, expressed this love when he prayed for the conversion of his parishioners, and said he would undergo any suffering that would send to him.

On another occasion, when asked about the great sinners that came to him, he said that he would only give them a small penance and then make up the difference in his own life through prayer and mortification.

In Philippians 2:1-3, St. Paul describes this behavior as selfless friendship: “If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solicitude in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.”

Spiritual fatherhood is rooted in a theology that is Trinitarian and Incarnational. The late Cardinal François Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan suggests four characteristics found in a spiritual father:

• Intimacy — A relationship of love and tenderness with others. Just as the Good Shepherd knows his sheep, so the bishop and priest are called to listen attentively to those entrusted to their care, and always be welcoming and forgiving, bringing the healing hands of Christ.

• Dedication — A decision to give his life for his sheep, giving of himself generously without reserve. And it does not matter whether or not others respond. What counts is the total gift of the spiritual father.

• Evangelization — Reaching out to every person and every aspect of human life. We are never stopped by rejection or indifference. Rather, we are always trying to build relationships on love.

• Unity — “That they may be one” (Jn 17:11). Zacchaeus changed, Matthew changed. Mary Magdalene changed and the boy possessed changed. Everyone who finds Jesus changes.

Recently, I led a pilgrimage retreat with 22 priests from the Archdiocese of St. Louis to Ars, France, to the church where St. John Vianney ministered to his people and to the thousands who came to him for spiritual guidance.

I believe it is important for me as a bishop to pray for and with my priests. It is also important for priests to gather with each other and with their bishop as a presbyterate.

When a bishop and his priests are growing in holiness together, they are in the best possible position to efficaciously preach the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, and serve the pastoral needs of the people entrusted to their care as spiritual guides and fathers.

(Archbishop Robert J. Carlson leads the Archdiocese of St. Louis and is chairman-elect of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.)

Discussion Point

Priests value a close relationship with their bishop

This Week’s Question

As a priest, what is one kind of support that you especially appreciate receiving from your bishop?

“Support in whatever ministry you are assigned and do every day. Our parish has a particular ministry to the poor, and [our bishop] points out the importance of my work, encourages me to continue and supports us in any way he possibly can.” (Father Joseph McNulty, Cleveland, Ohio)

“The bishop of El Paso is about the friendliest bishop I’ve ever met. For example, he recently called to ask about a member of our parish who was sick. He cares about us [priests] and knows us by our first names. He has a tremendous warm and personal relationship with the priests in the diocese.” (Jesus Father Edwin Gros, El Paso, Texas)

“It’s important if there is an understanding that the bishop/priest relationship is more like father and son than boss and employee. I value receiving the attention, approval and fatherly affection of a bishop who I look to as a spiritual father.” (Father Philip Halfacre, Ottawa, Ill.)

“I think the best support from a bishop is praying for priests of his diocese. It means a lot because he is our leader, our local shepherd.” (Father John J. Mitchell, White Bear Lake, Minn.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Have you ever obtained an indulgence? How was it obtained, and what was your intention?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
Psalm 42 is a longing, a thirst, for God. It's a psalm of a man who feels distant from God and yearns for His presence. It's a psalm of seeking God's comfort and guidance in times of need.

Psalm 43 is another longing psalm, expressing the deep desire of the psalmist to be with God, to have His presence in his daily life. It's a statement of faith, acknowledging that even in times of doubt and uncertainty, God is still the provider of all good things.

Psalm 44 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the goodness of God and acknowledging His power over all creation.

Psalm 45 is a psalm of a man's love and dedication to a woman, expressing the hope that their love will be remembered for generations to come. It's a psalm of commitment and faithfulness.

Psalm 46 is a psalm of refuge and shelter, a reminder that God is our refuge and fortress, an ever-present help in times of trouble. It's a psalm of trust and confidence in God's protection.

Psalm 47 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating God's majesty and glory. It's a psalm of acknowledging God's greatness and praising Him for His deeds of salvation.

Psalm 48 is a psalm of meditation on the beauty of God's name and His majesty. It's a psalm of understanding the greatness of God and the beauty of His name.

Psalm 49 is a psalm of awareness and self-reflection, a reminder that the wisdom of the world is fleeting and the power of riches is temporary. It's a psalm of understanding the transience of life and the importance of focusing on what truly matters.

Psalm 50 is a psalm of confession and repentance, a reminder that God is a forgiving God and that true repentance is necessary for forgiveness. It's a psalm of acknowledging our sins and seeking God's mercy.

Psalm 51 is a psalm of prayer, a plea for forgiveness and new life. It's a psalm of acknowledging our need for grace and the power of God's love to transform us.

Psalm 52 is a psalm of prosperity and judgment. It's a psalm of acknowledging the implications of our actions on others and the importance of living a life that honors God.

Psalm 53 is a psalm of meditation on the transience of life and the beauty of God's name. It's a psalm of understanding the greatness of God and the beauty of His name.

Psalm 54 is a psalm of trust and confidence in God's protection. It's a psalm of acknowledging the power of God to protect us from our enemies and to bring us peace.

Psalm 55 is a psalm of rest and peace. It's a psalm of acknowledging the power of God to bring us rest and peace in times of trouble.

Psalm 56 is a psalm of fear and trust. It's a psalm of acknowledging our vulnerability and the power of our fear, but also the power of faith and the assurance that God is always with us.

Psalm 57 is a psalm of confidence and trust. It's a psalm of acknowledging our vulnerability and the power of our fear, but also the power of faith and the assurance that God is always with us.

Psalm 58 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 59 is a psalm of prayer and petition. It's a psalm of acknowledging our need for grace and the power of God's love to transform us.

Psalm 60 is a psalm of confidence and trust. It's a psalm of acknowledging our vulnerability and the power of our fear, but also the power of faith and the assurance that God is always with us.

Psalm 61 is a psalm of prayer and petition. It's a psalm of acknowledging our need for grace and the power of God's love to transform us.

Psalm 62 is a psalm of meditation on the beauty of God's name and His majesty. It's a psalm of understanding the greatness of God and the beauty of His name.

Psalm 63 is a psalm of meditation on the beauty of God's name and His majesty. It's a psalm of understanding the greatness of God and the beauty of His name.

Psalm 64 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 65 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 66 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 67 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 68 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 69 is a psalm of prayer and petition. It's a psalm of acknowledging our need for grace and the power of God's love to transform us.

Psalm 70 is a psalm of prayer and petition. It's a psalm of acknowledging our need for grace and the power of God's love to transform us.

Psalm 71 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 72 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the mighty deeds of God and His great majesty. It's a psalm of recognizing the greatness of God and the power of His love.

Psalm 73 is a psalm of meditation on the beauty of God's name and His majesty. It's a psalm of understanding the greatness of God and the beauty of His name.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 2, 2010

• Acts of the Apostles 14:21-27
• Revelation 21:1-5
• John 13:31-33a, 34-35

As throughout this Easter season, the Acts of the Apostles supplies the first reading for this weekend’s liturgy. This reading tells the story of some of the missionary activities of Paul and Barnabas. Although eventually they parted, Paul and Barnabas, Paul’s disciple, visited several places in Asia Minor that were prominent cities in the Roman Empire of the first century A.D. Ancient traditions see all the Apostles as missionaries. Most of them indeed went far and wide to proclaim the Gospel, although for most of the Apostles little detail has been lost or are kept only in pious traditions. However, Acts reports many of Paul’s efforts in evangelizing. It is more than a travelogue. It reveals the conditions in which these two great figures in early Christianity lived out their mission as Apostles. It is a lesson about the faith of Paul and Barnabas.

Speaking to Christians in the cities that they visited, Paul and Barnabas realistically reported the hostility and difficulties were ahead. Their warnings hardly came from paranoia or as a strategy to build regard for themselves by fabrication. The culture of the Roman Empire was absolutely hostile to the values of the Gospel. Moreover, the political order was becoming hostile. Paul and Barnabas faced hostility and endured difficulties. Nevertheless, they were undaunted. Ignoring risks, rejection or setbacks, they continued to move from city to city, from Christian community to Christian community, proclaiming Christ. Their faith inspired and impelled them. For the second reading, the Church this weekend offers a passage from the Book of Revelation.

This book, the last book of the New Testament in the translations and versions that have been used for centuries, is highly poetic and symbolic, moving and strikingly beautiful in its imagery. Often, its symbolism is very involved or unique to the first century. As a result, understanding the book is not always easy without reading scholarly commentaries along with the text itself. However, the meaning of Revelation is not beyond human intelligence. The book looks to the spiritual life, to life in a world transformed by Christ. This reading gives a vision of heaven symbolized by the holy city of Jerusalem, but a transformed Jerusalem, and a vision of God. It looks into eternity and to the place there for all who love God. St. John’s Gospel is the source of the last reading. This is not a Resurrection Narrative, but is strongly reminiscent of the Resurrection and of the Lord’s death on Calvary. Jesus obviously refers to the Crucifixion and to rising from the dead. Eternal life is open to humans who follow the Lord in obedience to God, in sacrifice and in faith.

Reflection

Last month, the Church called us, with joy and the deepest faith, to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus after the terrible event of the Crucifixion. Gradually, gently but unrelentingly, the Church has called upon us personally to respond to Jesus, to bond ourselves with the salvation that Jesus offers us. This weekend’s readings proclaim the sacrificial death of Jesus as well as the rising of Christ from the dead, and also calls upon us to respond to follow the Lord.

As the second reading from Revelation, eternal life with God in heaven will be our reward. But we still are in this life. We become authentic disciples by loving God, each other and all people as Jesus loved everyone. In this love, Jesus died on Calvary as a sacrifice. In the Resurrection, Jesus triumphed. We can walk the same path. We must walk the same path. Empowering us spiritually, guiding us, are the Apostles, still with us in their successors to early bishops, such as Barnabas. Through them and with them, we find strength and access to the Lord.

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

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

My Journey to God

Easter Sky

When I awoke
I looked up high
And saw the bluest and clearest
calmest of skies
I heard birds sing with such merriment
delight
I felt the hope and promise
of the risen Christ

Yes, there will be fear and doubt
in me sometimes
That is when
I will look up high
And remember that forever
I walk secure and in peace
beneath an Easter sky.

By Cathy Lamperski Dearing

(Cathy Lamperski Dearing is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.)

Daily Readings

Monday, May 3
Philip and James, Apostles 1 Corinthians 15:1-8
Psalm 19:2-5
John 14:6-14

Tuesday, May 4
Acts 14:19-28
Acts 145:10-13b, 21
John 14:27-31a

Wednesday, May 5
Acts 15:1-6
Psalm 122:1-5
John 15:1-8

Thursday, May 6
Acts 15:7-21
Psalm 96:1-3, 10
John 15:9-11

Question Corner

Fr. John Dietzen

Fasting and abstaining from meat help Catholics share in suffering of Jesus

As our parish Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults group was wrapping up after Easter, they asked me why the Church insists so much on abstaining from meat on days of abstinence. We had no good answer. We all agreed that eating fish on Lenten Fridays is no special penance because we like fish, and even cheese dishes, at least as much as meat. (New York)

A Considering the importance that occasional abstinence from meat has in the tradition of Christian spirituality, there is precious little information on why this should be so. What we do have, however, is curiously fascinating.

Long before Christianity, as we know, the Hebrew people kept a tradition of occasional abstinence, not only from pork, for example, but even from all meat. We find evidence of this in several biblical passages, such as the story of Daniel and his friends, who rejected meat offered to them by the king and chose to eat only vegetables (Dan 1:8-16).

Their reasons apparently went beyond devotion to Jewish laws concerning “unclean” food. At least in that Old Testament story from the Book of Daniel, they were determined to avoid all meat and perhaps other foods as well. From the beginning, it seems, Christians embraced some forms of abstinence by avoiding certain kinds of food along with fasting by limiting the amount of food as ascetical practices. It was not that meat or any other creature was bad and to be avoided. Rather, the purpose was, among other intentions, to do penance, to share voluntarily in the sufferings of Christ, and to assure control over the use of these good things so they would not begin to control us.

As St. Augustine, a bishop in North Africa from 396 to 430, explained in a letter for the second Sunday of Lent, “We keep from wounding meat, which we have enjoyed the whole year, so that at least for these few days we may live more in the Lord.”

Q Sometimes send the family of a deceased friend a card promising a Mass intention. Someone I know died recently who was not Catholic, but a good Christian and friend. Is it all right to send a Mass card for him, even though the family or be in poor taste? (Louisiana)

A It is permitted to offer Mass for non-Catholic Christians. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith liberalized the law in this matter in 1976 following requests in several countries for priests to celebrate Mass for deceased persons buried in other Christian traditions. The Masses may be announced publicly, in the parish bulletin, for example.

This happens especially when the deceased person showed special respect for the Catholic faith or held public office in service to the whole community. These Masses are not only permitted, said the decree, they are encouraged for reasons of patriotism, friendship or gratitude and have, in fact, become rather common.

Only two conditions apply in this situation:

1. The family of the deceased must request it or at least not be opposed to a Mass being celebrated.

And there should be no scandal resulting either for Catholics or those of other faiths because of the announced intention for the Mass.

Q Your column recently discussed older widows and widowers who were reluctant to marry because they thought they would lose their Social Security benefits. They should know that the Social Security Act now allows remarriage after age 60 without endangering their benefit checks. (New York)

A I am grateful to the reader for this information about remarriage for senior citizens. Individual eligibility for continuation of benefits after remarriage may be verified by calling the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.

(A free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about annulments 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@aol.com.)

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Msgr. Owen F. Campion


DAVIS, Alfred, Jr., 80, St. Mary, Richmond, April 16. Husband of Betty Davis. Father of Jamie Smith and Brad Davis. Grandfather of two.


KLEESE, Edward C., 88, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, March 27. Father of Ed and Mike Kleese. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of six.


PINEDA, Carmen Amaya, 55, St. Mary, New Albany, April 12. Mother of Jose Luis, Eloy and Osiar Ganda. Grandmother of five.


SCHMITT, Cornelia Ann, 80, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, April 10. Sister of Vivian Schmitt.


TRI-COUNTY ASPHALT

Paving Indiana Since 1948

CALL FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATES

• ASPHALT DRIVeways

• SEALCOATING

Discounts for Senior Citizens and non-profit organizations


LICENSED & BONDED BY THE CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

Given the Choice

our clients would rather not be here

They’d much prefer to purchase their groceries, obtain their health care, and have their homes from retail establishments which offer them. So they purchase routinely.

So if you can, please donate to an organization of your choice which serves the needy. If you can’t, please donate to:

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
3001 E. 30th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46218
Or donate online at www.svdpindy.org

Mourners

Mourners visit a sculpture outside St. Adalbert Cemetery in Niles, Ill., commemorating the 1940 Katyn massacre. The sculptor, Wojciech Soweyen, was killed in a plane crash on Oldenburg Smolensk, Russia, along with Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife, Maria, and Catholic clergy, including Archbishop Tadeusz Pietka, Poland’s military archbishop. They were on their way to a service commemorating the Katyn massacre where the Soviet secret police murdered about 22,000 Polish nationals.

Franciscan Sister Loretta Feeney served as a teacher and principal

Franciscan Sister Loretta Feeney died on March 22 at St. Clare Hall, the health care facility for the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 91. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 25 at the motherhouse chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

The former Aina Louise Feeney was born on June 12, 1918, in Indianapolis. She entered the Oldenburg Franciscan community on Sept. 8, 1935, and professed her final vows on July 2, 1941.

Sister Loretta ministered as a teacher and principal at Catholic grade schools in Indiana and Ohio for 49 years. In the archdiocese, she served at St. Mary School in Greensburg, Little Flower School in Indianapolis and Holy Name School in Beech Grove.

Sister Loretta also taught at the Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg. From 1987 until her retirement in 1997, Sister Loretta served as a clinical assistant at the Deeney Resource Center at the motherhouse.

Surviving are many nieces and nephews. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036.
Tragedy, adventure and faith shape priesthood of Father John Meyer

(Editors’ note: In conjunction with the Year for Priests, The Criterion is publishing a monthly feature titled “Faithful Fathers.” For previous installments in the series, log on to www.CriterionOnline.com)

By John Shaugnessy

MADISON—Twenty-five years have passed, but the tragedy still shapes the priesthood of Father John Meyer as he cares for the faithful in many ways in this southern Indiana community.

The tragedy unfolded on Aug. 31, 1985, when a massive fire spread through the rectory of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight and killed the beloved pastor, Father Richard Smith, and two friends who were visiting him, Father William Fisher and Father Kenneth Smith.

Just ordained in 1982, Father Meyer was assigned to be the administrator of the parish following the tragic loss—his first assignment in leading a parish. It was a daunting challenge considering the circumstances and the fact that Father Meyer had a fear of speaking in public.

“The people grieving for their pastor and worrying about their future, I started to worry less about how scared I was as a young priest,” he recalls. “I felt, ‘I’m going to go out that day, stood with the people and said, ‘My heart is with you. I’ll do my best to let that day, stood with the people and said, ‘My heart is with you. I’ll do my best to let them know it’s going to be okay.’”

That’s what I want to be as a pastor. My focus is to love them. While I know that sounds simplistic or a very common Gospel theme, that’s pretty much my daily prayer—that I be nourished by the presence of God, that I can take that gift of love to whoever I meet that day and whoever I serve that day.”

That approach continues to guide the 54-year-old priest today as he serves the archdiocese in multiple roles—the pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison and Most Sorrowsful Mother of God Parish in Versailles, chaplain of Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, dean of the Seymour Deaneey, and the priest who attends to the spiritual needs of students at Hanover College in Hanover.

A native of southern Indiana who has served most of his priesthood in that part of the archdiocese, Father Meyer recently received an Honored Alumnus Award from the parish and school of his youth—St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Aurora.

Life in the fast lane—I drove a sports car until I was assigned to Starlight. I always felt the need for speed. I’d mention that sometimes in my homilies. The parishioners at Most Sorrowsful Mother of God picked up on it and gave me the gift of 30 laps on the Kentucky Speedway in the Richard Petty Driving School. I got up to 150 miles per hour on 30 laps. It was intense, a real thrill. I’d like to do it again. Closeness of family—“I’m lucky to have my mom [Ruth] in the parish and the youngest of my three sisters [Carla] in the parish. And I’m close to her two daughters, Abbey and Audrey. I don’t have a lot of time to spend with them, but it’s nice to have them close.”

The joy of ministering to young people at Shawe and Hanover—“Early on in my priesthood, I was worried about how to relate to young people. But I feel very comfortable ministering to them. I’m always thinking about high school and college, and a young adult in college. I want them to feel they can talk to me about their day-to-day struggles and their lives. I want to make them feel the Church is theirs, and to have a role in it.”

Coming full circle in his vocation—“I was to pin down a sacramental moment, it was in my junior year of high school. My uncle, Father Benedict Meyer, was in the missions in Peru and Brazil for most of his priesthood. That summer, he took me and my cousin, Benno, down to Mexico City. We drove down there. We got to see Mass in the original Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. That was cool.”

“Over the years, I’ve been here [and connected to Shawe], we’ve done lots of mission trips to Mexico with our youths and adults. As a priest, I’ve been able to go back there and show the kids the new basilica. I celebrate Mass with them in a little chapel.”

His most unusual job—“After my senior year in high school, things got confusing for me as far as my future. I took a year off and worked most of that time for the Aurora Casket Company. As I say all the time, that job just killed me.”

Pivotal moment in his vocation—“I was still kind of lost after that year. I went back to St. Mary’s and talked to Father Harold Ripperger about helping out at the parish. I painted and did some janitorial wok. It was during that summer that I started thinking about Saint Meinrad and the seminary. A friend was talking about it, and I thought I’d check it out.”

“My birthday—July 21, 1974—my mom and dad and I went to visit Saint Meinrad. Archdiocesan Daniel [Buechlein]—Father Daniel then—was the only one in the office on that summer day. I asked him what I should do about coming to the seminary. I really fell in love with Saint Meinrad and the atmosphere there.”

“Defining qualities in Catholics in the southern part of the archdiocese—”They’re self-sufficient, they’re independent, they’re close to one another, and they look out for one another.”

Special interests—“Due to a recent failed foot surgery, many of the things I like to do, I can’t do now. In the summer, I like to jet-ski. In the winter, I like to snowboard. On a regular basis, I like to listen to a variety of music. I’ve had some fun with scuba diving, too. The priesthood has enabled me to participate in a lot of awesome activities.”

Favorite activity as a priest—“I love the Sunday Mass, daily Mass, any Mass. Celebrating the Eucharist is just like giving life to all of us. It makes me realize my calling is authentic.”

“Strength is nothing without consistency.” At Northwestern Mutual, we’ve received the best possible financial strength ratings for more than 20 years.
this saint prayed for her son’s conversion for many years. St. Monica’s son, Augustine, later became a saint and a Doctor of the Church.

West Deaneary, said during an April 1 interview that Debbie’s faithful witness and years of prayer for her husband are an inspirational example of what can happen when people place their trust in God.

“Debbie lived her faith, ... and prayed for him and loved him, and honored her commitment to God and to their marriage vows,” Father McCaslin said.

“When I first met my husband, he was very exciting to watch him grow,” Debbie recalled. “Before that, he was just inquiring, but then he saw that this was God’s plan for him. He realized that God was saying, ‘This is your time.’ It was very exciting to watch him grow during the RCIA process. ... He was really excited about what he learned.”

Ten years ago, St. Anthony parishioner Debbie Miller began a program called Healing Hidden Hurts as a way to help women who were not sure how to help others who were still in their own search and journey to find healing. Through our example of living our life of faith, the invitation [to others] is finally heard and received and can be answered. We can continue to do [as Catholic parishioners] by being a place where they feel welcomed and loved and wanted.

For priests, “it’s a wonderful opportunity for us to know that we’re helping to bring people into the fullness of the sacramental life of the Church,” Father McCaslin said.

As the clock neared midnight on Holy Saturday at St. Anthony Church, Wally couldn’t stop smiling as he talked about his baptism after the Easter Vigil Mass.

“I feel like a new person, a whole new human being,” he said. “I’m going to try real hard. I have a new life in Christ. This is a fresh start for me. It was emotional. It was great... Father [McCaslin] asked everybody to come back every Sunday and receive the Eucharist. That’s what it’s all about.”

Debbie Miller answers God’s call to offer post-abortion reconciliation

By Mary Ann Wyand

Healing Hidden Hurts began as a result of prayer. Ten years ago, St. Anthony parishioner Debbie Miller of Indianapolis felt called by God to begin this confidential post-abortion reconciliation ministry for women.

“I felt the Lord was calling me to this ministry,” Miller said, which was inspired by her participation in Elizabeth Vecchio’s Victims of Choice reconciliation program in Naperville, Ill., for women suffering from the trauma of abortion.

Symptoms of post-abortion syndrome include feelings of loss, sadness, shame, guilt, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, severe emotional pain, relationship problems, anger, nightmares, drug abuse and other self-destructive behavior that may result in repeat abortions.

“All you know is that something is wrong,” Miller said, “that you are not acting or reacting normally in situations, and you have no idea how to fix it.”

The 10-step process of Healing Hidden Hurts focuses on God’s love, mercy and forgiveness, she said, as well as time spent before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer. To educate people about her ministry, Miller shares her own abortion story, which dates back to 1977 and the early years of her 34-year marriage to Wallace “Wally” Miller.

It was a time when their financial situation was tenuous and they had two young children.

It was also just four years after abortion was legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court in its Roe vs. Wade decision on Jan. 22, 1973, a time when women didn’t know that abortion is physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually harmful.

Women are really hurt by abortion,” Miller said, “but a lot of times they don’t understand how they have been affected because the symptoms of post-abortion trauma are not always recognizable to them. When women come for help 15 or 20 years later, they don’t realize the impact that the abortion has made on their life, and how it is still affecting them.”

After they learn the symptoms of post-abortion syndrome, they are stunned. “I’ve also talked with women that have experienced infant loss from miscarriage or stillbirth,” she said, “who tell me that they identify with those symptoms.

Women always regret their abortion decision, Miller said, and it is a decision that they have to live with for the rest of their lives.

“They always regret that they don’t have that baby,” she said. “When they start the program, they are suffering and have a lot of pain. But we always have the hope that their child is with God and hopefully one day they will be reunited with their child.”

As part of the abortion reconciliation process, women name their babies.

“Naming is very important because it gives the child an identity and a dignity,” Miller said. “A lot of times, the woman will know instinctively that her child was a boy or girl and a name will come to her during prayer... That’s very comforting for her. She is encouraged during the program to build a relationship with her child by writing a letter or note. Thinking about what she wants to say to her child is very helpful. This relationship continues to give her strength through prayer.”

The 10-step process involves revisiting the events of a woman’s life leading up to her crisis pre-pregnancy and abortion experience, she said, as well as the assurance of God’s love, mercy and forgiveness so that she can forgive herself and find healing.

“This program meets the woman individually where she is in her faith life and in her place of pain,” Miller said. “Many women do not come forward until the pain is severe, and they feel forced to do something about it. Many times, the Lord will give her a nudge and then she knows it is right... The Lord wants her to deal with the past and get the path of healing. ... Her faith frees her from the guilt, grief and shame of her past.”

(For more information about Debbie Miller’s Healing Hidden Hurts post-abortion reconciliation ministry, log on to www.healinghiddenhurts.com)