Revised Vatican norms to cover priestly sex abuse and attempted women’s ordination

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican is preparing to update the 2001 norms that deal with priestly sex abuse of minors, in effect codifying practices that have been in place for several years.

At the same time, it will include the “attempted ordination of women” among the list of most serious crimes against Church law, or “delicta graviora,” sources said.

Sexual abuse of a minor by a priest was added to the classification of “delicta graviora” in 2001. At that time, the Vatican established norms to govern the handling of such cases.

The revisions of those norms have been in the pipeline for some time and were expected to be published in mid-July, Vatican sources said.

While the changes are not “earthshaking,” they will ultimately strengthen the Church’s efforts to identify and discipline priests who abuse minors, the sources said.

The revisions will be published with ample documentation, and will be accompanied by a glossary of Church law terms aimed at helping nonexperts understand the complex rules and procedures that the Vatican has in place for dealing with sex abuse allegations.

The revisions were expected to extend the Church law’s statute of limitations on accusations of sex abuse from 10 years after the alleged victim’s 18th birthday to 20 years. For several years, Vatican officials have been routinely granting exceptions to the 10-year statute of limitations.

The revisions also make it clear that use of child pornography would fall under the category of clerical sexual abuse of minors. In 2009, the Vatican determined that any instance of a priest downloading child pornography from the Internet would be a form of serious abuse that a bishop must report to the doctrinal congregation, which oversees cases of sexual abuse.

In addition, the revisions will make clear that abuse of mentally disabled adults will be considered equivalent to abuse of minors. In the law on the sexual abuse of minors, the term “minors” will include “persons who suffer from permanent mental disability,” sources said.

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Steering clear of digital dangers, priests use Internet to spread the Gospel

By Sean Gallagher

“Pope Benedict to priests: For God’s sake, blog!”

The New York Daily News ran this headline in its Jan. 23, 2010, issue above a Reuters article about what Pope Benedict XVI said in his message for the Vatican’s annual World Communications Day.

Other news outlets around the world ran the same story.

In his message, the pontiff made this call to priests around the world: “Priests are thus challenged to proclaim the Gospel by employing the latest generation of audiovisual resources [images, videos, animated features, blogs, Web sites] which, alongside traditional means, can open up broad new vistas for dialogue, evangelization and catechesis.”

A growing number of priests in the archdiocese are following the pope’s lead, and are effectively bringing people to Christ through the Internet and other emerging communications technologies.

At the same time, they recognize the limits and potential pitfalls of these media.

Meeting people where they are

One of the main reasons some of these priests are blogging, using social networking sites such as Facebook, and sending text messages on their cell phones is because it is the best way to keep in contact with youths and young adults.

“The primary audience that I try to reach with Facebook is youths and young adults,” said Father Eric Augenstein, the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. “They will not go to the Web site. Most of them do not check e-mail anymore. And so the only way that I can communicate something about an upcoming parish event to our youths and young adults is through Facebook. That’s the main reason that I joined.”

If that is true for a typical parish priest like Father Augenstein, it is even more so for Father Rick Nagel who, as the archdiocesan director of young adult and college campus ministry, ministers solely to young adults.

But while he is adept at using the emerging technologies to keep in touch with them, he sees what he is doing as having ancient roots.

“In the early Church, the disciples met people where they were at and journeyed with them,” said Father Nagel, who also serves as chaplain at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and provides sacramental assistance at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “Our young people are using technology so we’ve got to meet them there, and then journey with them to a deeper place of relationship. It’s to get them to Mass and active in the sacraments. It’s getting to know them personally.”

Although Father Nagel will meet youths and young adults in the digital world, he and priests like Father Augenstein don’t want to leave them there.

“We can’t love God and love our neighbors digitally,” Father Augenstein said. “Priests can use their presence in the digital world to invite people to Mass and Church-sponsored events. Even the content of their digital writing—whether homily texts or Facebook posts or blog entries—can emphasize the need for meeting God outside the computer.”

Father Nagel is very deliberate about using digital media as only a starting place for strengthening the faith of young adults.

“It’s an entry-level place for relationships for everybody,” he said. “But it must go beyond the virtual world.

If I get a text message, I try to take that to, ‘Why don’t you come in and see ‘

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Our young people are using technology so we’ve got to meet them there, and then journey with them to a deeper place of relationship. It’s to get them to Mass and active in the sacraments. It’s getting to know them personally.”

— Father Rick Nagel, archdiocesan director of young adult and college campus ministry

Pope Benedict XVI

“In his message, the pontiff made this call to priests around the world: “Priests are thus challenged to proclaim the Gospel by employing the latest generation of audiovisual resources [images, videos, animated features, blogs, Web sites] which, alongside traditional means, can open up broad new vistas for dialogue, evangelization and catechesis.”

— Pope Benedict XVI, 2010
me?” or “We’ll meet at a restaurant!” or “We’ll take a walk.” Then it develops. It’s amazing what comes out of that.”

Digital pitfalls
At the same time, Father Nagel recognizes some of the dangers of ministering online.

Users of Facebook connect to one another by becoming “friends” on the site. Father Nagel has more than 900 such friends, but is discerning when someone new asks to become his friend.

“I look to see if I know them or if they’re associated with someone that I know,” he said. “You’ve got to be a little cautious about things that are out there.”

He also said that staff members in the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education are in the process of drafting guidelines for those who minister to and with youths and young adults about how to use social networking sites appropriately, and how to pass on such principles to young people.

There is also the danger of dedicating time to ministering in the virtual world that could be used for ministering in the real world—face to face.

Father Nagel hasn’t used the popular micro-blogging site Twitter simply because he has found that the young adults he ministers to don’t use the site.

“The big thing that people use it for is [to tell people] where they are at or if they’re doing right now,” he said. “And I don’t see that as such a huge evangelical tool. And a lot of them that are on there, they’re trying to garner a lot more active on Facebook and text messaging. They’ll get on to see the blog.”

At the same time, Father Augenstein says posting the text of his weekend homilies on his blog, “Perpetual Priest,” takes about two minutes.

But that small amount of time broadens his ministry.

“I’ll talk to people regularly who might have been out of town on a weekend, who will go on [my blog] after Sunday and read the homilies that they were out of town, Father Augenstein said. “I also know a number of people in other parishes that I’ve served in who will go on [my blog] regularly and I even know of one man’s prayer group that gets that on there every week, and reads the homily and talks about it at their meeting.”

At 24, seminarian Michael Keucher, a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington, has grown up with the Internet being a constant presence in the prevailing culture, and sees ways of using blogs in a time-efficient manner.

“I think people just need to remember that there doesn’t have to be a very formal thing,” said Keucher, who has a blog titled “The Long Journey into Light.” “You could post little snippets. Sometimes my posts are two sentences long. It’s just something to give people and myself something to reflect upon that’s timely. It’s a good way to do that.”

Internet evangelization
While priests and future priests who blog, use Facebook and text message seek Internet evangelization that’s timely. It’s a good way to do that. It’s just something to post little snippets. Sometimes my posts are two sentences long. It’s just something to give people and myself something to reflect upon that’s timely. It’s a good way to do that.

“There’s a great deal of power in the Internet,” Keucher said. “And I think that, oftentimes, that power is used for evil. There’s certainly a bunch of trash out there.

“So it’s very important that it is used for good, too. It’s such an incredible tool that we have. It would be a shame to not utilize that tool. So the more priests and sister and, really, anybody that has a blog about the faith, the better.”

Father John Hollowell started blogging in earnest after hearing about the pope’s call to priests to use the Internet earlier this year.

On his blog, which is titled “On This Rock,” he posts videos of homilies that he delivers on weekends at St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, where he is a permanent minister.

“I see it as another means to evangelize,” said Father Hollowell, who is also chaplain of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.

“I consider myself, too, to be very much an apologist on behalf of the Church, to explain to it people who may have been in it, but don’t really know what to think about it, or have never really been told about what the Church really is and what the Church says about itself.”

Father Augenstein agrees, seeing his use of the Internet as a way to draw people to Christ.

“My main hope is that it would lead people to the Mass and to Church and to experience Christ personally, and not just through the Internet,” Father Augenstein said. “It’s not an end in itself. It is a means to connect people to the Church.”

Chicago priest is a pioneer of Internet net evangelization
Fathers Eric Augenstein, John Hollowell and Rick Nagel and seminarian Michael Keucher all use the Internet primarily to reach out to practicing Catholics in order to strengthen their faith.

Father Robert Barron, bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, is a pioneer in the use of the Internet to evangelize those who have no faith or have left the Christian faith behind.

He is a professor of faith and culture at the Augustine Institute at the University of Chicago, and is a founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Through Word on Fire, Father Barron has produced and posted on YouTube scores of six- to eight-minute videos in which he comments on various happenings in popular culture—movies, books, newsmakers, etc.—in light of the Catholic faith.

“I love the fact that they get out of the Catholic ghetto,” said Father Barron on a video on evangelization and new media posted on Word on Fire’s site. “They go out to a completely unchristian world.

And I know that because of the comments [about them] on YouTube.”

Admittedly, many of the comments that he receives are negative from viewers who criticize the Church, the priesthood or him directly.

But Father Barron likens this reception to the way in which St. Paul was received when he preached the Gospel in the Areopagus, a public square in ancient Athens, Greece.

“Everything is on display [there],” Father Barron said. “Everything philosophy, every idea is on display. And Paul announces Jesus Christ risen from the dead. And it says that most people laughed at him and walked away.”

“Welcome to YouTube, which is a virtual Areopagus. Nevertheless, some people listened. And there was the beginning, in many ways, of European Christianity in those few people who listened to Paul in the Areopagus.”

In the same way, Father Barron occasionally receives e-mails from those viewers of his YouTube videos who may have started off skeptical of the faith but, after watching him, began to change their minds.

“They’ll say, ‘It led me to other videos and it led me to a deeper reflection. And now I’m taking the faith seriously.’”

Research done at Word on Fire has found that the typical viewers of YouTube videos are unchristian young adult men in the mid-20s.

“The Church needs to reach out, especially to that generation,” Father Barron said. “How else would you engage a secular-minded, maybe anti-ecclesial 25-year-old male? How else would the Church do that? At least here’s a way where I oddly reached into his world and he responds maybe with anger. Fine. Fine. At least he responded.”

(To learn more about Word on Fire Catholic Ministries and to view the videos of Father Robert Barron, log on to www.wordonfire.org.)
Released Cubans arrive in Spain after Church-brokered deal

MADRID ( CNS—Seven men—former political prisoners released by the Cuban government, some accompanied by family members—arrived in Madrid on July 13, the first of 52 prisoners released in a deal partially brokered by the Catholic Church. The men flung fingers in a victory sign, and said in a joint statement they hoped their 45 fellow prisoners would be released soon.

Catholics can “take some holy pride that the bishops of Cuba were in this mediation,” Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview on July 8.

He called it a “significant turn of events” that Church leaders were able to engage with Cuban officials, and said it bodes well not for the Catholic Church in Cuba, but also for the “continued development of civil society.”

An announcement on the Web site of Cardinal Jaime Ortega Alamino of Havana on July 7 said the prisoner release would continue over the next four months. It said the process leading to the release began with a May 19 meeting of Cuban President Raúl Castro, Cardinal Ortega and Archbishop Dionisio Garcia Ibanez of Santiago, president of the Cuban bishops’ conference.

As part of the Church-brokered deal, more than a dozen prisoners were transferred to prisons closer to their homes.

Laura Pollan, leader of The Ladies in White, a group made up of family members of imprisoned dissidents, said news of the prisoners’ release “continued development of civil society.”

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said the announcement about the prisoner release brought “long-awaited good news from the Caribbean island.”

“These are significant signs that we hope indicate a steady progress toward a renewed climate of social and political life that we all desire for the Cuban nation,” Father Lombardi said in an editorial on Vatican Radio on July 10. He underlined the crucial role of Cuban Church leaders in the dialogue process, backed by the diplomatic arm of the Vatican.

“The Holy See has always manifested itself contrary to the embargo, sympathetic to the sufferings of the people, and ready to support any prospect of constructive dialogue,” Father Lombardi said.

The Vatican spokesman recalled Pope John Paul II’s historic visit to Cuba in 1998: “Let Cuba open itself up to the world and the world open itself to Cuba.”

“With patience, there has been significant progress in this direction. We all hope that the journey continues,” Father Lombardi said.

The United States State Department said on July 13 that it applauded the transfer of the prisoners to the Catholic Church, the government of Spain and others who worked for the prisoners’ release.

While the United States continues to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, it acknowledged the positive development that we will hope will represent a step toward increased respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba,” the statement said.

The prisoner release is reported to be the largest since 1998, when 10 former political prisoners were among about 300 inmates released after Pope John Paul visited Cuba.

The prisoners awaiting release were detained in 2003 during a government crackdown. Cuban officials rounded up 75 activists and journalists who were acting as mercenaries for the United States, and said they planned to overthrow the Cuban government.

Of this initial group, some have completed their sentences and others have been released for health reasons.

In June, Cuba released dissident Carlos Fernandez, and an ill prisoner, Ariel Sigler, who has been awaiting approval from the U.S. government to join family members in Florida.

In late February, one of the prisoners, Orlando Zapata Tamayo, died after he had been on a hunger strike protesting prison conditions. The day after his death, on Feb. 24, prisoner Guillermo Farinas began a hunger strike protesting Zapata’s death and calling attention to ill prisoners.

Farinas, who was reportedly near death, ended his 130-day hunger strike on July 8 after the government announced it was freeing some of the political prisoners.

In May, Catholic Church officials successfully negotiated with Cuban authorities to lift a ban on marches staged by The Ladies in White, a group of wives and other relatives of political prisoners.

Castro met June 20 with Archbishop Dominiqe Mamberti, the Vatican’s foreign minister, and the state-run news media said the meeting “showed the favorable development of relations between the state and the Catholic Church in Cuba.”

Archbishop Wenski, installed this June in Miami, visited Cuba last year with the Vatican’s foreign minister, the Rev. Paul Gallagher.

He noted that the work to release political prisoners was likewise consistent with the Church’s mission and “without self-interest.”

The architect said the prisoners’ release should please the United States because of the value it places on freedom of speech and conscience.

“Let us take such a step,” he added, “but to carry out its mission.”

VATICAN CITY ( CNS—Commissioning another statue for Vatican City might sound like overkill in a place where thousands of sculpted figures crowd the landscape.

But the Vatican is on a campaign to fill every niche. When Pope Benedict XVI stopped to bless a 16-foot-tall marble statue of St. Annibale di Francia on July 7, it was cause for celebration. Carved out of a single block of milky-white Carrara marble, it was placed in one of a series of recesses that run along the outside of St. Peter’s Basilica.

In 1999, after the objections of architectural purists, the Vatican began filling the basilia’s external niches, which were originally designed to be vacant. A section has since been filled with statues of the founders of religious orders, to commemorate a 10-year anniversary of St. Benedict of Sweden, who established the Brigittines, and St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, who founded Opus Dei.

First of all, you have to be a saint. Second, someone needs pay for the statue, which can cost more than $250,000. The size and design of the statue must be approved, and the sculptor must use the prized Carrara marble.

From their pedestals, the marble saints look out upon the Vatican’s modern guest house and its gas station. They have a backdoor view from St. Peter’s, and will be seen primarily by those who live and work in Vatican City.

The Vatican is home to far more stone figures than living residents—many times more, if you count the Vatican Museums’ approximately 20,000 statues.

Why add more? That question was asked as this one dedicated to St. Joseph in honor of the German pontiff’s namesake.

As Vatican figures go, this one was simple. The water cascades into two elliptical stone basins. Some of the other fountains in Vatican City are intricate and playful, dedicated to eagles, sea creatures, dolphins, dragons, frogs, mirrors, an old maid and a 15-foot model sailing ship.

This largely hidden part of Vatican City is not all flowers and fountains, though. On the skyline can be seen the governor’s mansion, an out-of-use train station, a heliport and a radio tower—all built in the last 20 years. Below ground are several subterranean parking lots constructed in recent decades.

One thing Pope Benedict doesn’t see on his afternoon walk is a statue of Galileo Galilei, the Italian astronomer condemned by the Church in the 17th century for maintaining that the Earth revolves around the sun.

Galileo was rehabilitated in 1992 by a Vatican commission.

Last year, a large statue of Galileo was to have been commissioned for placement near the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, which is located inside the Vatican Gardens.

The project was scrapped, however, with no official explanation. “What we heard is that now you have to be a saint to have your statue in the Vatican,” said one Vatican source. Instead, a much smaller, 24-inch-tall statue of Galileo, holding a book in one hand and a telescope in the other, was completed and today sits in the library of the Pontifical Council for Culture.
The Criterion  Friday, July 16, 2010

Editorial

Church and State in Cuba

O n July 7, the Cuban government and the Catholic Church in Cuba came to an agreement by which 52 political prisoners are to be freed. They are the remainder of an original 75 men who were arrested in March of 2003. The others had already been released.

This is the result of a meeting between Church officials led by Havana’s Cardinal Jaime Ortega and Cuban President Raul Castro. This is the latest in a series of meetings between the Cuban government and the Church are improving.

Earlier, in May, Castro and Cardinal Ortega came to an agreement whereby one prisoner, Ariel Siguer Amaya, was released from prison and 12 others were moved to prisons closer to their homes so family members can visit them more easily.

In our June 25 issue, The Criterion reported on a meeting in Cuba between Raul Castro and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, the Vatican’s foreign minister. The meeting occurred on June 20. The archbishop traveled to Cuba to observe the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the state and the Catholic Church in Cuba.

According to Human Rights Watch, after the 52 prisoners are released, there will still be about 150 political prisoners in Cuba. There is controversy, though, over how many of them are political prisoners and how many are actual terrorists.

An article in the July 4 issue of the U.S. Catholic weekly newspaper Our Sunday Visitor reported that the Catholic Church has unexpectedly become a noticeable political voice in Cuba. In the article, Maria de Leon Ruz Scaperlanda says that the Church’s voice is gaining strength.

Scaperlanda reported that, during his meeting with Raul Castro, Cardinal Ortega also secured permission for las Damas de Blanco (Ladies in White) to resume their weekly peaceful protest marches on behalf of their imprisoned husbands and sons. These women previously had suffered harassment and abuse from government-organized mobs.

While in Cuba, the pastoral nature of Archbishop Mamberti’s visit included participation in a five-day conference that examined the Church’s social mission in Cuban society. He also was present for a special tribute to 19th-century Cuban hero Jose Marti, visited various schools and the Belen Convent in Old Havana, and met with Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodriguez.

During a joint news conference with Rodriguez, Archbishop Mamberti said, “The dialogue that is happening now makes us happy, and I hope that it will be strengthened through time.”

We join with the archbishop in his hope. We also think that it is past time for the United States to end that embargo. It is not doing any good, and its lifting would be beneficial to all.

---John F. Fink

OPINION

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/ Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Difficult pregnancies, precarious choices and the absolute value of innocent lives

Some medical conditions can be made worse by becoming pregnant. Pulmonary hypertension, for example, is often exacerbated by pregnancy. The additional blood volume of the pregnancy burdens the already weakened heart, and, in extreme cases, can result in heart failure and the death of both mother and child.

Although direct abortion is sometimes considered the only solution when faced with this life-threatening difficulty, such a choice can never be moral. In these circumstances, medical strategies which seek to care for both mother and child need to be pursued as they often provide satisfactory outcomes for both.

Recent advances in obstetrics and prenatal medicine, along with so-called “selective management”—close monitoring of a pregnancy with tailored interventions—have enabled an ever greater number of these high-risk pregnancies to be managed until at least the child reaches viability. Labor can then be induced or a C-section delivery can be scheduled. This ordinarily allows both mother and child to be saved.

An April 2010 research study showed impressive survival rates for pregnant mothers with pulmonary hypertension. This was achieved by combining multi-specialty collaboration with planned and managed delivery. The results, published in the Biological Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, indicated that all nine of the patients in the small study group survived along with their premature children.

Nevertheless, there are times when our best medical efforts to save both mother and child will fail, and we face the heart-wrenching situation where nature may have to take its course.

In these circumstances, some ask: Wouldn’t a direct abortion be permissible to save the mother—for example, a suction curettage procedure, a common form of abortion where the fetus is often disembodied and parts are evacuated from the mother’s body? An analogy can help us grasp the unacceptableity of direct abortion in a situation like this.

Let’s suppose that several firefighters enter a burning building to evacuate a child trapped on the third floor. The firefighters discover that part of the building has collapsed onto the only stairwell with the collapsed man—shifting his body to make a way for the children. The firefighters would be obligated to try everything else to save the child and the collapsed man—shifting his body this way or that; trying to rouse him from his unconsciousness, etc.—but they could never choose to directly kill him by cutting up his body, even for the very good reason of gaining access to the next floor and saving the trapped child.

They are willing to face—and towards an old adage sometimes cited by moralists: Better two deaths than one murder. Some might say “you can’t have it both ways” and not fit here, given that the term generally connotates a callous, wanton and premeditated act of killing instead of an urgent, emotional and difficult decision in the face of few or no alternatives. But even the strongest emotion and greatest difficulties surrounding such cases must be focused through the lens of a similar affirmation: Better two deaths than the direct taking of an innocent life.

Directly killing an innocent human being is not the answer. Affirming this must basic norm leads us away from the injustice of playing God with other people’s lives. What we are witnessing is the challenging of “life of the mother” cases allow us to begin acknowledging some of our own limitations, and the mystery of God’s greater Providence in the realization that we may not be able to “manage” or “correct” every difficult medical situation that we face.

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

This week, the Pastoral Letter on Young Adult and College Ministry continues with a reflection on the essential role of parishes in teaching the art of Christian living to young adults. I continue with a quotation from the Holy Father’s address to U.S. Catholic educators in April 2008.

“Educating new generations in the faith is a great and fundamentally important task that involves the entire Christian community,” one that has become “particularly difficult” today and, hence, is “even more important and urgent,” according to Pope Benedict XVI (“Address to U.S. Catholic educators,” April 17, 2008). The parish is a living family, which ensures this essential task of Catholic education. It is helpful to quote again the U.S. Catholic bishops who, in their pastoral plan “Communities of Salt and Light,” define the parish as a place “where the Church lives. Parishes are communities of faith, of action and of hope. They are where the Gospel is proclaimed and celebrated, where believers are formed and sent to renew the Earth. Parishes are the home of the Christian community; they are the heart of our Church. Parishes are Where God’s people meet Jesus in word and sacrament, and come in touch with the source of the Church’s life.”

This truth about our Church places an even greater emphasis on the important role of young adult and college ministry in our archdiocese.

In the community of faith, it is the parish family which takes a vital role in welcoming, engaging and evangelizing young believers and non-believers.

Parishes must then have an “open door policy” to welcome young adults of diverse backgrounds and assorted levels of formation.

Our parishes must have a vigilant eye and offer welcoming and hospitable lives of young adults who pass through their doors, including those who have fallen away from the Church and those who have never passed over the threshold of a Catholic Church in their entire lives. We must embrace an attitude that is grounded in the truth that every soul counts!

Furthermore, our local parishes must engage young adults in ministries of all dimensions, and ensure the inclusion of young adult leaders in ministries and decision-making structures of the parish. Most importantly, parishes should evaluate the state of their young adult outreach and evangelization. This can be done effectively by asking and listening; actively listening to the needs and desires of young adult hearts.

I, like many others, find that our young adults are gifted, service-oriented, giving sons and daughters of God, and they have so much to offer a parish family, the local community and the world. A lively and growing parish thrives with young adults who are willing to set roots, give their gifts, and become healthy and committed members of the parish and the church. We should intentionally set about embracing the young adults who are willing to set roots and become established in one parish family, learning from the gifts of those more mature in faith. Occasionally, the formation from a non-committal culture leads to a church hopping, non-committed young adult.

Our young people should be encouraged to be woven into the fabric of a local parish with all its joys, sorrows, challenges and successes. Here, young adults will grow more fully in relationship with Jesus Christ through his holy, Catholic Church.

We find our young adults in colleges and universities, and we need them in the work place and different professions. Parishes have a particularly important mission to the many young Church members who live in the workplace world.

It is also important to consider the role of our colleges and universities in teaching the art of Christian living. Their role is vital in our responsibility for ministry with and for young adults.

There are an estimated 110,000 students enrolled in colleges and universities within the Archdiocese of Indianapolis alone. Nearly 25 percent of these students are believed to be baptized Catholic. Many of our young adults are college students who are studying on 12 campuses throughout central and southern Indiana, including Butler University, DePauw University, Earlham College, Franklin College, Hanover College, Indiana State University, Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Marian University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and the University of Indianapolis. They are also our college men and women studying at technical schools, and on campuses across the country and close to home in neighboring dioceses, such as Purdue University, Ball State University, Wabash College and the University of Notre Dame.

According to Cardinal John Henry Newman, the university is a “seat of wisdom, a light of the world, an alma mater of the rising generation.”

College Catholic Centers serve as a tool on university campuses to bring knowledge and truth, through faith and reason, to all young people.

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein’s prayer list? You may email it to him at: Archbishop Buechlein’s Prayer List, Archdiocese of Indianapolis 1400 N. Meridian St. P.O. Box 1410 Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Archbishop Buechlein’s intention for vocations for July Men Religious: that the special gifts their communities bring to the Church may be more widely appreciated and encouraged.

Las parroquias deben dar la bienvenida y acoger a los jóvenes adultos

E stas semana proseguimos con la Carta pastoral sobre jóvenes adultos y el ministerio que se realiza en las parroquias. Una reflexión sobre el papel esencial que desempeñan las parroquias en la enseñanza del arte de la vida cristiana, uno de los más dificultosos, es fundamentalmente importante que involucre a toda la comunidad cristiana, “la cual se ha fundamentado de manera especial en los Estados Unidos de abril de 2008.

“La educación de las nuevas generaciones en el fi

esta de la fe en el cuerpo parroquial la que asume un papel vital en dable formación de los creyentes y no creyentes, para interac

Dentro de la comunidad de fe es la familia parroquial la que asume un papel vital en dar una formación de los creyentes y no creyentes, para interactuar con ellos y evangelizarlos.

En las parroquias la formación de la comunidad de fe debe tener una “política de puertas abiertas” para recibir a los jóvenes adultos de procedencia diversa y, con distintos niveles de formación.

Las parroquias deben estar atentas y ser una presencia bien recibida en las vidas de los jóvenes adultos que cruzan sus puertas, incluyendo para aquellos que se han extraviado del camino de la Iglesia y aquellos que han atravesado el umbral de una iglesia católica en toda su vida. ¿Debemos adoptar una actitud fundamental en la verdad de que cada alma cuenta?

Más aún, nuestras parroquias locales deben invitar a los jóvenes adultos a participar en ministerios de todas las dimensiones y garantizar la inclusión de jóvenes adultos líderes en los ministerios y en las estructuras dedicadas a la toma de decisiones de la parroquia.

Y lo que es más importante: las parroquias deben evaluar la situación de sus iniciativas de incorporación y evangelización, y cada vez más, para que se realicen de manera efectiva formulando preguntas y escuchando, escuchando atentamente las necesidades y deseos de los jóvenes adultos.

No, al igual que muchos otros, considero que nuestros jóvenes adultos son talentosos, están dedicados al servicio, son hijos e hijas generosos de Dios y tienen mucho que ofrecer a la familia católica, a la comunidad local y al mundo. Una parroquia viva y en crecimiento florece con la presencia de jóvenes adultos dispuestos a escucharlos, a compartir con ellos y hacerse parte de su historia, de su presente y de su futuro.

La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para julio

Hombres Religiosos: Que los dones esenciales que sus comunidades traen a la iglesia sean más apreciados y alentados por todas partes.

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a: Lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis 1400 N. Meridian St. P.O. Box 1410 Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Ver al ARZOBISPO, la página 11
Events Calendar

July 16

Ironwood Golf Club, 10955 Fall Road, Fishers, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette) Little Sisters of the Poor, “Swing Fire, Serve Self-Tournament,” Florida scramble, 10 a.m. register, $145 per player, $580 regular foursome. Information: 317-872-6420 or desmond@littlepister@littlesister@poor.org.

July 17-18
St. Susanna Parish, 1210 E. Main St., Plainfield. Parish festival, Fri. 6 p.m.-11 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-8 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m.-8 p.m. skirt, food, games, music. Information: 317-859-3333.

July 17
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 50th St., Indianapolis. Helpers of God’s Precious Infants, pro-life Mass, Msgr. Joseph F. Schuttler, vicar general, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-256-1569 or 800-382-9362, ext. 1569.

July 17

July 18
St. John the Baptist Parish, 25743 State Road 1, Dover. “Summer Festival,” Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., fried chicken, 11 a.m.-8 p.m., games, crafts. Information: 812-576-4002.

July 18

July 18
St. Mary Parish, Navilenton, 7500 Navilenton Road, Floyd’s Knobs. Parish picnic, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., chicken dinner, games, quilts, Information: 821-923-5419.

July 18
St. Michael Parish, 101 S. Michael Drive, Charlestown. Chamber music concert, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Information: 317-256-3200.

July 18
St. Meinrad Parish, St. Meinrad. Quilt show, 10 a.m.-11 a.m. Information: 317-831-4142.

July 21
Calvary Cemetery, Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Third St., Indianapolis. Monthly Mass, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439.

July 21
St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Drive, Sumn. Healing service, confession, eucharistic procession, praise and worship, laying on of hands, 6 p.m. Information: 812-623-8007.

July 22-24

July 24-25
St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville. Parish picnic, Fri. 5 p.m.-11 p.m, chicken dinner, entertainment. Information: 812-282-2290.

July 25
St. Martin Parish, 8044 Yorkridge Road, Indianapolis. Parish Festival, Sat. 4:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m., prime rib dinner. Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., fried chicken dinner, food, games, music. Information: 812-623-3408.

July 25
St. Augustine Parish, 1820 Lafayette St., Lebanon. “Like Father Like Son,” 1 p.m., chicken dinner, quilts, rides, games. Information: 812-843-5143.

July 25-31
Jackson County Fairgrounds, Seymour, St. Ambrose Parish and Our Lady of Providence Parish, Jackson County, Fair, food, rides, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Information: 812-522-5304.

July 28
Back Creek Winery, 11747 Indian Creek Road, South Indianapolis. Theology on Tap, summer seven-pack, “Seven Deadly Sins and Bux to Wine,” session five, anger and prudence, 6 p.m., wine tasting. must be 21-35 years of age. Information: www.indyvint.com.

Repeats and Programs

July 17
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Shop CNN-spired “Summer Sizzling Sale,” 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedict@benedictin.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Seven Steps to Wholeness,” Franciscan Sister Patty Campbell, presenter, 9-11:30 a.m., $20 per person. Information: 317-833-6437 or center@oldenburg.com.

July 18
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “A Thomas Merton Seminar—Bridges to Contemplative Living: Adjusting Your Life’s Vision,” Benedictine Sister Julie Sowers, presenter, four sessions on Wednesdays, Mass, 5:15 p.m., simple soup and bread supper, 6 p.m., session, 6:30-9:30 p.m., food, person to book and meals. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedict@benedictin.org.

August 4-25
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Woman: On The Journey of Discovery,” Benedictine Sister Pamela Kaye, presenter, program includes morning prayers and Mass, 8:45 a.m.-1 p.m., $25 includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedict@benedictin.org.

July 22
Our Lady of Patima Retreat House, 553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Cone Away and Rest Archille,” silent, non-guided reflection day, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., $22 per person includes breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-543-7681 or archille@archindy.org.

July 23-24
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “A Leadership Blast,” leadership conference for students entering sophomore year of high school, $50 per student includes room, meals and materials. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedict@benedictin.org.

July 26
Our Lady of Patima Retreat House, 553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Friends of Patima Monthly Mass and Social,” Mass, 9 a.m., breakfast following Mass, goodwill offerings accepted. Information: 317-545-7681 or pp@archindy.org.

July 28-30
St. Patricks Church and Archchoby, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “A Spiritual Retreat for the Poor,” 8 a.m.-3 p.m., $199 per person. Information: 317-839-3333.

VIPS

Ronald and Lois (Schockley) Kramer, members of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 9. The couple was married on July 9, 1960, at the former St. Francis de Sales Church in Indianapolis. They are the parents of four children: Karen Sahm, Michael, Richard, and Robert Kramer. They also have four grandchildren. ♦

Oldenburg Academy fundraiser

Gerry Faust, a former Notre Dame football coach, speaks on June 14 during a dinner following a golf fundraiser at the Hillcrest Country Club in Batesville. The 19th annual event benefited the Oldenburg Academy of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. Former Purdue University’s basketball coach Gene Keady as well as several other well-known coaches and athletes also participated in the celebrity pro-golf tournament. Faust discussed the importance of learning lessons from unrealized dreams and adversities in life. For more information about Oldenburg Academy, log to www.oldenburgacademy.org.

Evangelization director Peg McEvoy to be interviewed on Catholic radio

As an interview with Peg McEvoy, the associate director of evangelization and family catechesis for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, will be broadcast on Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 FM’s “Faith in Action” show on July 19-24. During the interview, McEvoy talks to program co-hosts Jim Gamley and M.J. Krauter about how people who have recently been received into the full communion of the Church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process can become more involved in the life of the Church. “Faith in Action” is broadcast on 89.1 FM on Mondays and Fridays, 4 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursdays, and 9 a.m. on Saturdays. Catholic Radio Indy can be heard throughout the archdiocese by logging on to www.catholicradioindy.org and clicking on the “listen now” button. Podcasts of previous shows are also available on the site. ♦
Charities, periodicals fight postal rate hikes that could sink some Catholic organizations

WASHINGTON (CNS)—It couldn’t come at a worse time.

That is the message coming from Catholic and other charitable organizations, magazine and newspaper publishers, and direct-mail marketers in response to the postal rate hikes proposed by the U.S. Postal Service for next year.

“If the rates increase 5 to 10 percent, some organizations have already gauged that their income would go down at least 10 percent,” said Franciscan Sister Georgette Lehmann, president and CEO of the National Catholic Development Conference.

Originally called the Catholic Fundraising Conference, the organization headquartered in Hempstead, N.Y., brings together about 300 Catholic dioceses, religious institutes, educational institutions, social services or health-related groups, shrines and pius societies for education, networking and advocacy on their common interests, including postal rates.

The postal service announced a wide-ranging set of proposed price increases on July 6, averaging about 5 percent, to cover part of a projected $7 billion loss in 2011. The increases—which cover first-class and advertising mail, periodicals, packages and other services—would be effective within 90 days in order to take effect on Jan. 2, 2012.

Under the plan, first-class mail would increase from 44 to 46 cents for the first ounce and first-class postcards would go from 28 to 30 cents. Periodicals would increase about 8 percent as planned, “that’s $25,000 I don’t have,” he added.

But Sister Georgette said the situation is even more dire for charities that rely on direct mailings for most of their donations.

“The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 (PAEA) limits such waivers to “extraordinary or exceptional” circumstances, which the alliance said would include another anthrax attack or a major natural disaster, but not an economic recession or bad business practices.

“Increasing rates won’t put the Postal Service back on track—it will just drive more customers away, making their situation even worse,” he added. “Increasing rates won’t put the Postal Service back on track—it will just drive more customers away, making their situation even worse.”

—Tony Conway, executive director of the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers

Citing a new study by the Boston College Center on Wealth and Philanthropy that said U.S. charitable giving was down about 5 percent in 2009, representing a total decrease of $11.2 billion, she said “things are just beginning to turn around.”

But charities that provide social services, in particular, “are caught in a big Catch-22,” Sister Georgette said, because state and federal funding has dried up while the recession has brought in more people seeking assistance.

In the case of Carroll Publishing, if the mail rates for periodicals go up 8 percent as planned, “that’s $25,000 I don’t have,” he added.

Carroll Publishing already has been wrestling with ways to “reduce the extent we rely on print” and, like other dioceses around the country, has been “looking for better ways to use a strained resource pool,” said Jan Link, Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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The National Catholic Development Conference—which includes such heavy hitters as Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services, but also many small charities—joined with scores of other mail-dependent organizations in a protest of the rate hikes organized by the Affordable Mail Alliance.

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Anderson-Trich
Mindy Marie Anderson and Thomas Edward Trich will be married on Aug. 20 at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Jeffersonville. The bride is the daughter of RITA Campbell. The groom is the son of Peggy Trich.

Chaney-Miller
Jessica White Chaney and William Charles Miller were married on July 10 at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington. The bride is the daughter of William and Susan Chaney. The groom is the son of Paul and Charlene Miller.

Collins-Peppler
Kelly Michele Collins and Nicholas David Peppler were married on July 4 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of John and Michele Collins. The groom is the son of David and Carolyn Peppler.

Clements-Ziegler
Kimberly Ann Clements and Michael Dustin Ziegler will be married on Oct. 16 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Daniel and Kathy Clements. The groom is the son of Geoff and Marianne Ziegler.

Cobb-Miles
Jennifer K. Cobb and Scan Christopher Miles will be married on July 31 at Most Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove. The bride is the daughter of Patrick and Kathy Cobb. The groom is the son of Christopher and Madonna Miles.

Fount-Carrico
Sarah Marie Fount and Michael Ray Carrico will be married on Aug. 21 at St. Martin of Tours Church in Louisville, Ky. The bride is the daughter of Tim and Judy Fount. The groom is the son of Joseph and Rita Carrico.

Frick-O’Malley
Courtney Anne Frick and Casey Scott O’Malley will be married on Oct. 9 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Michael and Kathleen Frick. The groom is the son of David and Cindy O’Malley.

Goyanes-Fornuto
Barbra Claudette Goyanes and Brian Martin Fornuto will be married on Aug. 28 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Gilbert Goyanes and Liliana Argueta. The groom is the son of Anthony and Tracie Fornuto.

Haler-Funk
Abigail Kathleen Haler and Christopher Patrick Funk will be married on July 17 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Larry and Theresa Haler. The groom is the son of Jim and Trish Funk.

Byrnes-Vivoda
Mary Catherine Byrnes and John James Vivoda were married on June 26 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of John and Leslie Byrnes. The groom is the son of John Vivoda and Gina Magann.

Byrne-Manfield
Dusty Marie Brahlek and Jack Winn Mansfield Jr. will be married on Aug. 7 at St. Monica Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Phil and Baba Brahlek. The groom is the son of Dr. Jack Mansfield Sr. and Gayle Mansfield.

Collins-Manfield
Gayle Mansfield. The groom is the son of Dr. Jack Mansfield Sr. and Gayle Mansfield.

Gonzalez-Lewis
Christine Marieta Gonzalez and Joseph Daniel Lewis will be married on Sept. 18 at St. Agnes Church in Nashville. The bride is the daughter of Albert and Mary Gonzalez. The groom is the son of Thomas and Pamela Lewis.

Henderson-Bay
Jessica Lynn Henderson and William Louis Bay will be married on Aug. 28 at Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Mike and Kathy Henderson. The groom is the son of William and Alicia Bay.
Husser-Head
Kathleen Marie Husser and Kirk Robert Head will be married on Aug. 14 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Terrence and Kathy Husser. The groom is the son of Robert and Sue Head.

Kisaka-Brosmer
Caroline Ann Kisaka and Joshua Charles Brosmer will be married on Sept. 11 at St. Martin of Tours Church in Martinsville. The bride is the daughter of Richard and Patricia Kisaka. The groom is the son of Charles and Lorrie Brosmer.

Konz-Mechan
Elizabeth Marie Konz and David Brian Mechan were married on May 8 at Good Shepherd Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Joseph Konz II and Carol Konz. The groom is the son of Christopher and Bonnie Mechan.

Lathrop-Harping
Christina Marie Lathrop and Benno Joseph Harping will be married on Aug. 21 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of James and Patricia Lathrop. The groom is the son of Frank and Karen Harping.

Moore-Clark
Tracy Renee Moore and Michael Thomas Clark will be married on July 17 at St. Mary Church in Lanesville. The bride is the daughter of William and Ann Moore. The groom is the son of Charles and Rosemary Clark.

Schneider-Leventhal
Ashley Lauren Schneider and Jeremy Chad Leventhal will be married on Oct. 9 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of James Schneider and Tina Schneider. The groom is the son of Michael Leventhal and Constance Leventhal.

Price-Spack
Theresa Michelle Price and Justin Philip Spack will be married on Oct. 9 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Steven and Beverly Price. The groom is the son of Robert and Patricia Spack.

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Puckett-Davis
Kimberly Nicole Puckett and Matthew Reagan Davis will be married on Jan. 1, 2011, at SS. Francis and Clare Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of Ron and Karen Puckett. The groom is the son of Timothy Davis and Sylvia Davis.

Putzer-Brizendine
Rebecka Suzanne Putzer and Ryan Matthew Brizendine will be married on Aug. 21 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Ron and Shirley Putzer. The groom is the son of Dan and Judy Brizendine.

Schneider-Price
Teresa Michelle Schneider and Justin Philip Spack will be married on Sept. 11 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Steven and Beverly Price. The groom is the son of Robert and Patricia Spack.

Thielking-Mazzur
Kate Thielking and Todd Mazzur will be married on Sept. 4 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg. The bride is the daughter of Mitch and Margaret Thielking. The groom is the son of Michael and Julia Mazzur.

Tucker-Esslinger
Bridget Elizabeth Tucker and Gregory John Esslinger will be married on Aug. 7 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Harold and Patricia Tucker. The groom is the son of Gerald and Dianne Esslinger.

Utneage-Pfeffenberger
Christine Marie Utneage and Nicholas Lee Pfeffenberger will be married on July 24 at Immaculate Conception Chapel in Dayton, Ohio. The bride is the daughter of Rick and Cindy Utneage. The groom is the son of Dennis and Sue Pfeffenberger.

Ivers-Hanley
Emily Amanda Ivers and Martin Joseph Hanley were married on July 3 at St. Christopher Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of William and Elizabeth Ivers. The groom is the son of Dennis and Lisa Hanley.

Kollow-Head
Kathleen Marie Kollow and Kirk Robert Head were married on Aug. 14 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Terrence and Kathy Husser. The groom is the son of Robert and Sue Head.

Rowe-Bedwell
Elizabeth Marie Rowe and Daniel William Bedwell will be married on Oct. 23 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of John and Diane Rowe. The groom is the son of John Bedwell and Barbara Balzerick.

Schneider-Price
Teresa Michelle Schneider and Justin Philip Spack will be married on Sept. 11 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Steven and Beverly Price. The groom is the son of Robert and Patricia Spack.

Wilson-Stamp
Meghan Louise Wilson and John Louis Stamp II will be married on Sept. 5 at Christ the King Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Wilson. The groom is the son of Kimberly Stamp and the late John Stamp.†

Pre Cana Conference and Tobit Weekend prepare engaged couples for marriage

Two marriage preparation programs offered in the archdiocese— Pre Cana Conference and Tobit Weekend—help prepare engaged couples for the sacrament of marriage as well as the challenges of married life.

A Pre Cana Conference program is scheduled on Oct. 17 at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis. The program is presented by the archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries with a priest and trained volunteer couples. It begins at 1:45 p.m. and concludes at 6 p.m. Registration is required. A $150 non-refundable deposit is required for the program registration. To register, log on to www.archindy.org/fatima.†

A Tobit Weekend is scheduled at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House on Sept. 17-19. The registration fee of $280 includes the program presented by trained facilitators, meals and overnight accommodations. Registration is required. A $150 non-refundable deposit is required for the program registration. To register, log on to www.archindy.org/fatima.†

Registration is required. A $40 fee per couple helps pay for the Perspectives on Marriage workbook, other materials and refreshments. The registration fee is non-refundable. To register, log on to www.archindy.org/fatima.†
Priest leads group in cycling journey to raise poverty awareness

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Father Matthew Ruhl is cycling across America with a team of 11 to bring awareness to the issue of poverty and help combat it.

The Cycling for Change team is riding 5,052 miles from Cape Flattery, Wash., to Key West, Fla., to promote Catholic Charities USA’s Campaign to Reduce Poverty, a plan to cut poverty in half by 2020.

Father Ruhl has been riding for five years, and he and his parish cycling team, flying Fish, have done charity rides before, although those have covered only 130 to 170 miles each. For the cross-country trek, the priest was using the first three months of a sabbatical. The Cycling for Change team has a support team of four, and will be joined along the way by additional cyclists who will ride for shorter segments of the trip. Each cyclist was sponsored for the ride.

“It is truly inspirational to be riding,” Father Ruhl said. “All of us are amazed at the beauty of the Earth we are seeing and view it as a symbol of God’s generosity. In response, we should be generous in return.”

The Cycling for Change team is a group of lawyers, doctors, social workers, photographers and retired, all of whom are dedicated to addressing the issue of poverty.

“People talk about the poor as a depressed people,” Father Ruhl said, “but the ones we have met are not depressed at all. In fact, we have seen a great deal of hope and realized that they are not naturally despondent.”

Catholic Charities and the local parishes in the towns where the team stops organize events for them to attend. Father Ruhl gives a talk and, afterward, he and the team engage the communities in conversation about local solutions for ending poverty. Father Ruhl also addresses individuals in his presentations, and urges them to make their own commitment to combat this issue.

The group also has been engaged in various service opportunities on their trek so far. In Denver, the cyclists planned to serve a pancake breakfast for 400 people. In Kansas City, in mid-July, they were scheduled to help at a social service fair.

“Everyone we have met has been very supportive of us and our cause,” Father Ruhl said. “People generally agree with the premise that fighting poverty needs to be a greater priority.”

Father Ruhl said the average 65 miles per day. The volunteer team is a group of lawyers, doctors, social workers, photographers and retired, all of whom are dedicated to addressing the issue of poverty.

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“People talk about the poor as a depressed people,” Father Ruhl said, “but the ones we have met are not depressed at all. In fact, we have seen a great deal of hope and realized that they are not naturally despondent.”

Catholic Charities and the local parishes in the towns where the team stops organize events for them to attend. Father Ruhl gives a talk and, afterward, he and the team engage the communities in conversation about local solutions for ending poverty. Father Ruhl also addresses individuals in his presentations, and urges them to make their own commitment to combat this issue.

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Archbishop Kurtz criticizes rulings against Defense of Marriage Act

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage on July 12 criticized a federal judge’s ruling in two Massachusetts cases that a key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional.

To claim that defining marriage as between one man and one woman is constitutional, predetermined or even hinged is a great disservice, not only to truth but the good of the nation,” Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., said in a statement on July 12.

“Marriage exists prior to the state and is not to be defined by the state,” he explained. “The role of the state, instead, is to respect and reinforce marriage.”

The archbishop’s comments came four days after U.S. District Judge Joseph T. Rufo ruled that the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutionional because it prevents the state from exercising its right to define marriage.

In the rulings, which only affect the law as it applies to Massachusetts, Rufo said the federal law has also violated the Equal Protection Clause; the plaintiffs argued that the federal law discriminates against spouses.

Archbishop Kurtz argued that “Rufo’s July 8 decision empowers the state to prevent same-sex marriage, replacing the definition that is customarily and constitutionally recognized by the states.”

“Only a man and a woman are capable of entering into the unique, life-giving bond of marriage, with all of its specific responsibilities. Protecting marriage as only the union of one man and one woman is not merely a legitimate, but a vital government interest,” he said.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of General Counsel described Rufo’s rulings as “mistakes” because of the unique meaning of marriage, and said nothing in the Constitution forbids Congress from defining marriage—“as that term is used in federal statutes, regulations and rulings—as the union of one man and one woman.”

The fabric of U.S. society depends on the definition of marriage as remaining unchanged, Archbishop Kurtz said. “Getting support to the exclusive and permanent union of husband and wife,” he added.

“The state has a duty to employ the civil law to reinforce—and, indeed, to privilege uniquely—this vital institutional of society. The reasons to support marriage by law are countless, not least to protect the unique place of husbands and wives, the indispensable role of fathers and mothers, and the rights of children, who are often the most vulnerable among us,” he said.
More about aging with dignity and relevance

My previous “Faithful Lines” column introduced Get to Know Me, a book written by a nurse, Virginia Garberding, and a pastor, Cecil Murphey, published under the broad Christian Word, a division of The Wine Press Group. How do you communicate effectively with an elderly loved one and hold his or her hand in his last life-years? My perspective follows.

The book contains more information than I can summarize here, so I am discussing the same subject this week. Helping families know what to do when elderly loved ones struggle is one of my later-life goals. My Muster-Vogler families struggled mightily because we didn’t know what to do when caring for our dear mothers.

On the upper right corner of the book’s cover is the words “aging with dignity and relevance.” On the back cover, the question asked is: “Does life inside a nursing home seem strange or reminiscent?”

How I wish I had known years ago what is in this book for it is truly an insider’s guide to everyday life in a nursing home.

Garberding’s experience, both as a professional and a personal caregiver, equipped her with an unprecedented growth of wealth and prosperity through ever increasing levels of material production and consumption. The “Green View’s” perspective, however, this prosperity has come with high hidden costs, and we feel the pain.

Recently, we were deeply moved by Flows—For Love of Water, a 2008 film by Felicia Barrera that I highly recommend. It tells stories of the growing global water crisis. The film opens with a quotation from W.H. Auden: “Thousands have lived without love, one without water.”

The human body is 70 percent water. Human blood is 90 percent water. Water flows through the rivers of our veins to nourish and cleanse. It exalts in our breath and evaporates from our skin to cool. It flows through us and gives us life.

Likewise, the Earth is 70 percent water. Water is the life-giving source that is necessary for rivers to flow to the oceans where the rain falls, and rivers flow into the cycle. The Earth is alive because of water. Water is God’s gift. It is part of the Earth itself. It is not just part of a human existence that we feel the pain. In 1997, the World Bank forced the government of Bolivia to privatize the municipal water system in the city of Cochabamba under the threat of being cut off from water development loans. Suez, a large multinational, witnessed unprecedented growth of wealth and prosperity through ever increasing levels of material production and consumption.

In the Green View’s perspective, however, this prosperity has come with high hidden costs, and it is part of the Earth itself. It is not just part of a human existence that we feel the pain. The water crisis is complicated and, as it worsens, we will need to confront the deeper issues of why we value water pollution and how do we stop it? Who owns water or is it part of the commons? How should issues of water pollution be resolved? Can we profit from denying water those people who cannot pay? Can we conduct business with the capacity to do for one child what we cannot do for another? Further questions of who is responsible for water pollution and how do we stop it? Who owns water or is it part of the commons? How should issues of water pollution be resolved? Can we profit from denying water those people who cannot pay? Can we conduct business with an eye toward profitability? Is it right to deny water? As we are seeing, water is not just a commodity. It is a gift of the Earth.

As noted in my previous column, Garberding is not only a registered nurse, but also certified in restorative nursing. She works at The Wealshe in Lincolnshire, Ill., a pioneer facility for the care of patients with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

Co-author Murphey, a former pastor and hospital chaplain, has written more than 18 books, including the popular Heaven, My Children: Spiritual Help for Caregivers and Aging In An Attitude: He and his wife, Shirley, cared for an elderly relative for more than seven years.

(Shirley Vogler, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)

Faithful Lines
Shirley Vogler Meister

Jesus’ parables: Lost sheep and good shepherd

Matthew (Mt 18:10-14) and Luke (Lk 15:1-7) tell us about the lost sheep, but they do so to make different points.

There are a lot of sheep in the Holy Land during the three months that I studied at the border of Bethlehem and Nazareth in 1997. I saw many sheep being cared for by shepherds. One morning, on my daily walk, I turned a corner and found about 100 sheep headed toward me. I started to scream, and the shepherd, he feeds his flock; in his arms, he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care” (Is 40:11).

And, of course, there is Psalm 23: “The Lord is my shepherd.”

Jesus was asked in his parable, “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the 99 in the hills and go to search for the one that is lost?” (Mt 18:12).

That is Matthew’s version. Luke has the shepherd leaving the sheep in the desert. Once he has been found, the lost sheep, “he rejoices more over it than over the 99 that did not stray” (Mt 18:13).

My version is this: He returned the sheep to the parable of the prodigal so that both they illustrate Jesus’ concern for the lost and God’s love for the repentant sinner. The shepherd in this parable is undoubtedly a good shepherd, but the idea of God as the good shepherd comes from John’s Gospel (Jn 10:1-18), where Jesus compares himself first to the gate of a shepherd and then to the good shepherd. Technically, this isn’t a parable. It’s an allegory, but the idea is similar. Interestingly, when the shepherd is tended during the night, shepherds built enclosures that were closed on one side. The shepherd then enters the enclosure, acting at the gate. Jesus said that he was the gate, and that whoever entered through him would be saved.

Next, Jesus said that, just as a good shepherd lays down his life to protect his sheep from wolves, he was going to lay down his life for his followers. And he said that he also had sheep that did not belong to the flock. “They have been Christians who are at odds with the Church of John’s community. These, too, Jesus said, he must lead, “and there will be one flock” (Jn 10:16).

The message for us is that we must make every effort to bring back to the Church those who have left it. That will cause great joy in heaven. ☩

Catholic Charities Indianapolis Refugee Resettlement program helps refugees from around the globe, people who have fled their homelands because of war, persecution, civil conflict or a major natural disaster. No matter what the country of origin, refugees face incredible cultural challenges throughout the resettlement process. Many of the minor inconveniences that we take for granted can create huge obstacles for the refugee. Walking with “refugee families” for a year, I have seen the resettlement canless their anxiety and foster newfound confidence in adapting to a new home.

In the U.S. bishops’ pastoral letter Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity and Diversity in the Church, the bishops explained that refugees and immigrants experience the Church’s welcome most personally at the parish level. It is a part of a broader effort by the American bishops to proclaim God’s care for all his children.

Many refugee families were challenged to live their faith in their new homeland. Parishioners, through their evangelization efforts, can provide them with a renewed faith community.

Parishes who actively integrate refugees into their catechetical and sacramental programs find that they are eager to witness their faith in their new homeland. (David Bethusam is the agency director of Catholic Charities Indianapolis. E-mail him at dbethusam@archindy.org.)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, July 18, 2010

- Genesis 18:1-10a
- Colossians 1:24-28

The Book of Genesis unfortunately bears the burden of being remembered, and usually discussed, only in terms of its creation narratives. While the creation of all things and beings in existence by Almighty God is a major revelation, Genesis has much more to offer than just about how long it took God to create the world from nothingness. This weekend’s first reading is an example of the power of Genesis in its revelation of a circumstance far removed from the story of creation.

It is the story of Abraham. For the ancient Hebrews, Abraham, who actually lived, according to biblical scholars, and was not a mythical or imaginary figure, was a great model of faith. He is no less worthy as a model for Christians. In this weekend’s reading, God comes into the presence of Abraham. Three men stand before Abraham, and Abraham receives them hospitably. Abraham offers them food and drinks as well as suet from his sheep. He tells Sarah, his wife, to prepare the best of foods for them.

Then one of the men tells Abraham that within the year Sarah will give birth to a child. In the ancient Hebrew culture, nothing was more important than the arrival of a new life. A child continued the life of the parents. For its second reading, the Church gives us a passage from St. Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians.

This epistle was written when Paul was imprisoned, yet he still called Abraham a “father of faith.” He was not a mythical or imaginary figure, lived, according to biblical scholars, and was confined to death. He expresses his faith in the Lord as the source of life.

This weekend’s story simply shows that Martha was human, and was confined by human concerns and limitations. These three readings teach us that humans have complicated problems.

Sarah was unable to conceive when she was young. In another reading, she rushed to Moses to voice the need for God to act.” In another reading, she rushed to her husband to voice the need for God to act. In another reading, she rushed to Moses to voice the need for God to act. In another reading, she rushed to her husband to voice the need for God to act. In another reading, she rushed to Moses to voice the need for God to act. In another reading, she rushed to her husband to voice the need for God to act.

Reflection

Often, Martha is seen as too preoccupied with herself, forgetting the important things, opposite Mary, who was a true disciple.

Actually, Martha was a woman of great faith. In another reading, she rushed to Jesus after the death of Lazarus to express her faith in the Lord as the source of life.

My Journey to God

Be still
My soul.
There is no place to go
Just yet.
Wait.
I will let stillness sit
Alongside me,
Allow it
To quiet
My mind,
To silence
My hands and feet.
And when I feel peace
Brush softly across my face,
I will rise,
Walk into the day,
Complete
And
Filled
With God.

By Cathy Lamperski Dearing

Whisper—A Morning Prayer

(“Lamperski Dearing” is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. A great blue heron is reflected on quiet water amid marsh grasses at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. The image is included in a book of nature photographs by Tom Lorsung.)

Go Ask Your Father/Travis Hoffman

Lay apostolates should seek the Church’s approval for affiliation

Q How can I find out whether a particular lay apostolate has received Vatican approval or whether the group is along the journey to Vatican approval?

A First, ask the leaders of the group if their apostolate has received any official approval by the Church. Usually, a group seeks Vatican approval from the local bishop and then, if their apostolate is to expand beyond the boundaries of the diocese, they seek the approval of the Holy See. Alternatively, you could investigate the group online and see what their Web site says about Church recognition.

You could also see whether the group is listed in your local diocesan directory or in The Official Catholic Directory, a directory that is commonly known as the “Kennedy Directory,” which is the national directory listing Catholic diocesan, religious orders, and all Catholic groups and organizations.

Some groups are private associations of the faithful. Other organizations are public associations of the faithful. And still other groups are not quite sure where they fit into the structure of the Church.

But all groups in the Church, whether they are a lay apostolate or an associate of clerics, should seek to serve the Church by being faithful to the Magisterium, united to the local bishop and under the protection of the Blessed Mother. If the lay group has those characteristics, you are in good company.

If you still have doubts about the lay apostolate, ask your local bishop or ask the leader of the organization to show you an official document of approval. It’s possible that whatever which, at the very least, should have the bishop’s embossed seal on it.

Q I am 17 years old and starting to play the organ for a Catholic playing the organ for a Protestant service. How can I find out whether a particular lay apostolate has received Vatican approval or whether the group is along the journey to Vatican approval?

A Yes you are not out of touch. Nothing has changed in a thousand years. You are not out of touch. Nothing has changed in a thousand years. You are not out of touch. Nothing has changed in a thousand years. You are not out of touch. Nothing has changed in a thousand years.

So I’m happy you came to the right place for the correct answer. The Catholic Church does not approve of any kind of artificial birth control—the pill, condom, IUD, vasectomy or tubal ligation—because it only makes the situation worse. If a married couple needs to avoid pregnancy for serious reasons, the couple has recourse to Natural Family Planning, a method approved by the Church which strengthens the marital bond because it relies so heavily on spousal communication and respect for the sanctity of life.

(To submit a question to Father Francis Hoffman, send an e-mail to him at father@religionradio.com)


PATTERSON, Robert L., 48, SS. Francis and Clare, Greenwood. Husband of Jill (Walt) Patterson. Father of Ashleigh, Lauren and Sarah Patterson. Son of William and Mary Patterson. Brother of Agnesses Pavly, Kathy Kuschak, Mary Jo Mcgowan, Susan Shank, Bill Patterson and Mike. Grandfather of three. †


SCHNEIDER, Charles P., 74, Mary Queen of Peace, Danville. June 25. Husband of Judith Currier. Son of Susan Riddle and Gary Schneider. Brother of Margaret Hittle, Karen and Carl Schneider. Grandfather of six. †


TUNN, Francis E., 90, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, July 7. Husband of Virginia (Ambroster) Toner. Father of Mary by Bridgman, Jeannie Colato and David. Great-grandfather of eight. Step-grandfather of two. †


VOERMANN, Lawrence, 96, Holy Family, Richmond. July 5. Mother of Janet, James and John. Grandfather of three. †


WASHINGTON (CNS)—A priest in Hollywood, Calif., has found his calling—working in the media. Holy Cross Father David Guffey has served as the director of film and television at Family Theater Productions since 2008. “I see my work as a way to reach and open up dialogue,” Father Guffey told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview. “Of course, I did what the Holy Father asked priest to do—the work of the Church through the media.” In his message for this year’s celebration of World Communications Day, Pope Benedict XVI urged priests around the world to use web sites, videos, and other media outlets as tools of pastoral ministry. Father Guffey’s interest in media began in high school when he started experimenting with photography. At the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, where he majored in American studies, he switched gears and began writing for the campus newspaper and working in radio. After following the call to the priesthood, Father Guffey continued his interaction with the press and studied public relations. “I was working with the Andie House in Phoenix and we needed to buy a new building,” Father Guffey said. “[but] we didn’t have the money.” To help raise funds for this ministry to the poor, Father Guffey turned to the press and continued to develop a relationship with media representatives. After media assignments from 1996 to 2004, Franciscan Sister Edith Soergel became a teacher and principal Father Guffey returned to work for the Sisters of St. Francis, in Oldenburg. She was 82. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 1 at the motherhouse chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery. Sister Edith was born on July 14, 1927, in New Albany. She entered the Franciscan Order in 1948. She taught for 63 years at the former St. Bernadette School in New Albany. She also served as principal. Sister Soergel lived for 21 years in the Dominican Republic before returning to the United States in 1990. She retired to the motherhouse in Oldenburg in 1996. Surviving are three sisters, Doris Hancock of New Albany, Mary Soergel of Indianapolis and Theresa Hulman of Theresa of New Albany, and three brothers, Edwin Serig of Indianapolis, Joseph Soergel of Louisville and Robert Soergel of Irving, Texas. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †

Franciscan Sister Edith Soergel, formerly Sister Mary Edwin, died on June 27 at St. Clare Hall, the nun’s facility for the Sisters of St. Francis, in Oldenburg. She was 82. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 1 at the motherhouse chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery. Sister Edith was born on July 14, 1927, in New Albany. She entered the Franciscan Community on Sept. 9, 1944, and professed her final vows on Aug. 12, 1950. During 44 years in Catholic education, Sister Edith ministered as a teacher and principal at grade parish schools from 1946 until 1999. In Indianapolis, Sister Edith served at Little Flower School, St. Gabriel School, the former Holy Trinity School and the former St. Bernadette School. She also ministered at St. Mary School in New Albany, the former St. Anthony School in Indianapolis, the former Catholic Central School in New Albany and the former St. Mary School in Lanesville. She also taught at Catholic schools in Cincinnati. From 1990-98, Sister Edith served in parish ministry, ministered in family home care, served on a council for aging and was a member of a benevolence committee. She retired to the motherhouse in Oldenburg in 1996. Surviving are three sisters, Doris Hancock of New Albany, Mary Soergel of Indianapolis and Theresa Hulman of Theresa of New Albany, and three brothers, Edwin Serig of Indianapolis, Joseph Soergel of Louisville and Robert Soergel of Irving, Texas. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †
Unusual focus enhances summer experience for homeless children

BY JOHN SHAGUEHSSEY

Their days have been filled with the joys of summer that every child should experience.

The children at Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis have splashed in the pool and run through sprinklers in the park, shouting and squealing in delight. These children, whose families have fended on skates, dipped brushes in paint and dribbled across a basketball court.

There have even been special classes in cooking and rocket-making as Holy Family Shelter—an initiative of Catholic Charities Indianapolis—has tapped into the summer camp that’s being run by the nearby Christamore House, a multiservice facility that also tries to improve the quality of life in an economically struggling part of the city.

Then there is the other, unusual focus of the summer months for the children who have found a temporary home in the shelter that serves homeless families, married couples, expectant mothers and single parents with children—summer lessons in math, with an emphasis on the fun of learning the subject.

The children are enjoying the lessons, according to Emily Abele, the director of community and youth services at the shelter.

“We were a little bit afraid that we were taking these kids out of camp to bring them back for tutoring,” Abele says. “But after the first day, it was the exact opposite of what we expected. They definitely look forward to it.”

Able credits that enthusiasm to the fun, energetic instruction that the young tutors from the Indianapolis Algebra Project, a community-based effort that seeks to improve math literacy among young people who range in age from 4 to 17—an age group that is represented at the shelter.

At 20, Lillian Sanders is one of those energetic instructors who give math lessons at the shelter for about 90 minutes every day. She is a senior at Marian University in Indianapolis. “We play math games with them, and try not to make it boring. It’s fun to see how differently kids learn, especially at a young age. This helps keep the kids current on their math. When they go back to school, they will have a leg up on what they need to know.”

That goal is especially important to children who come from homeless situations.

“Studies show that even a time a homeless child or a transient child transfers schools, they lose an average of six months of education,” Abele says. “If we can provide extra educational enrichment, hopefully that fills the gaps that come from being so transient. The Indianapolis Algebra Project is a huge part of that effort.”

If the children can be reached at younger ages, it helps all the more, Able notes.

“In particular, third grade is extremely important,” Abele says. “That’s the year when they begin to read. If they miss that part, it hurts their learning in the fourths, fifth and sixth grades. And that increases the possibility of them dropping out of school.”

Challenging children from homeless situations is part of the approach at Holy Family Shelter, according to Bill Buckel, the archdiocese’s director for crisis relief and shelter services for Catholic Charities Indianapolis.

“This is a group that absolutely needs to have the bar raised,” Buckel says. They have the ability to meet high expectations. We have to emphasize the education of homeless children, especially in math and science. We have to make that opportunity available to them.

The smiles of the children being taught by Sanders and the other tutors have convinced Buckel that education and fun can go hand-in-hand during the summer.

“They’re enjoying it,” he says. “They’re grateful to toward something that some people might think is beyond them. They’re responding wonderfully.”

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The dried lemon-looking fruit locally as “amara” has long-term, dangerous side effects, but for some residents of Niger it is all they have to eat.

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Anglicans expect exodus after Church of England OKs women bishops

LONDON (CNS)—The largest Anglo-Catholic group in the Church of England is expecting an exodus of thousands of Anglicans to Catholicism after a decision to ordain women as bishops without sufficient concessions to traditionalists.

Stephen Parkinson, director of Forward in Faith—a group that has about 10,000 members, including more than 1,000 clergy—told Catholic News Service in a July 13 telephone interview that a large number of Anglo-Catholics are considering conversion to the Catholic faith.

His comments came after the General Synod, the national assembly of the Church of England, voted at a meeting in York to approve the creation of women bishops by 2014 without meeting the demands of objectors.

A July 12 statement from Forward in Faith advised members against hasty action, saying now was “not the time for precipitate action.” “This draft measure does nothing for us at all,” said Parkinson. “We explained very carefully why we could not accept women bishops theologically.

“We explained what would enable us to stay in the Church of England, but the General Synod has decided to let us go by giving us a provision that does not meet our needs,” he said. “They are saying either put up or shut up and accept the provisions of objectors.

Parkinson said developments were unlikely within the next six months, however, adding that until women bishops are ordained, Anglican traditionalists had a “couple of years” to think about what to do.

In the Forward in Faith statement the proposals must be considered by provincial synods in September, and the outcomes could be debated a month later when Forward in Faith holds its annual meeting.

The decision by the General Synod came after nearly 12 hours of debate on a compromise proposed by Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury and Archbishop John Sentamu of York was narrowly defeated.

The diocesan synods have now been asked to scrutinize a scheme where women bishops would have the authority to make alternative arrangements for objects through a statutory code of practice. The Anglo-Catholic group of the synod had wanted an episcopal synod to be debated a month later when Forward in Faith holds its annual meeting.

The resolution is supported by a majority of the diocesan synods, it will be returned to the General Synod for ratification in 2012. Archbishop Williams told the General Synod that its vote illustrated that the Church of England was “committed by a majority to the desirability of seeing women as bishops for the health and flourishing of the work of God’s kingdom, of this Church and this nation.

“We are also profoundly committed by a majority in the synod to a maximum generosity that can be consistently and coherently exercised toward the consciences of minorities, and we have not yet cracked how to do that,” he said during the July 12 debate.

The Church of England first voted to ordain women as priests in 1992, a move that led to about 500 clergy defecting to the Catholic Church.

Head of Mexican bishops pledges support for President Calderon’s dialogue appeal

MEXICO CITY (CNS)—The head of the Mexican bishops’ conference has pledged support for a national dialogue on security matters advocated by President Felipe Calderon. Archbishop Carlos Aguiar Retes, who has been on a pastoral letter released earlier this month, said: “We are also profoundly committed by a majority in the synod to a maximum generosity that can be consistently and coherently exercised toward the consciences of minorities, and we have not yet cracked how to do that,” he said during the July 12 debate.

The Church of England first voted to ordain women as priests in 1992, a move that led to about 500 clergy defecting to the Catholic Church.

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