Pope Benedict prays for victims of disaster in Japan, sends aid

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Saying that he, too, was horrified by images of the death and destruction caused by the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, Pope Benedict XVI asked people to join him in praying for the victims.

“May the bereaved and injured be comforted, and may the rescue workers be strengthened in their efforts to assist the courageous Japanese people,” the pope said in English on March 13 after reciting the Angelus prayer with visitors at St. Peter’s Square.

Government officials estimated that perhaps 10,000 people lost their lives after the earthquake on March 11 and the tsunami it triggered.

Speaking in Italian after the Angelus, the pope said, “The images of the tragic earthquake and the consequent tsunami in Japan have left us deeply horrified.

“I want to renew my spiritual closeness to that country’s dear people, who with dignity and courage are dealing with the consequences of the calamity. I pray for the victims and their families and for all who are suffering because of these terrible events. I encourage all those who, with laudable speed, are working to bring help. Let us remain united in prayer.”

The Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican’s charity promotion and coordinating office, announced on March 14 that the pope donated $100,000 to the relief efforts of the Japanese bishops’ conference.

“Obviously, material, concrete aid is necessary” to help the thousands who are suffering, Msgr. Anthony Figueiredo, a Cor Unum official, told Vatican Radio. “Also, the bishops are the first responsible for charity in the diocese and they know the needs of the people.

“The Church wants to be there not only in the short term, but especially in the long term, but ‘many of the secular agencies have gone and there’s no one to help,” he said.

Father Vincent Lampert, the pastor of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, poses on March 10 in his parish church. Since 2005, Father Lampert has also been the exorcist of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. In this ministry, he has ministered to people in central and southern Indiana and beyond.

In new volume of book, Pope Benedict XVI presents Jesus as reconciler and not political revolutionary

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his new volume on Jesus of Nazareth, Pope Benedict XVI presents the Passion and resurrection of Christ as history-changing events that answer humanity’s unceasing need to be reconciled with God.

The 384-page book, titled Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week—From the Entrance Into Jerusalem to the Resurrection, was officially released on March 10. The pope had worked for several years on the text, the second in his series exploring the main events of Jesus’ public ministry.

The Vatican said 1.2 million copies of the book had already been published in seven languages, and that an e-book version was also planned.

In a foreword, the pope said he did not set out to write another chronological “Life of Jesus,” but instead to present the figure and message of “the real Jesus” — not a political revolutionary and not a mere moralist, but the Son of God who inaugurated a new path of salvation based on the power of love.

Through his sacrifice on the cross and his institution of the Church, Jesus carried out a universal mission — leading the Church, the Vatican press office on March 10.
WYD organizers expect more than 1 million in Madrid

VAQUET CI TY (CNS)—With more than 1 million Catholic youths expected to converge on Madrid for World Youth Day in August, organizers are busy making final preparations, including the choice of new songs for the crowds to sing in addition to the much-criticized official hymn.

“The hymn is my nightmare,” Yago de la Cierva, the executive director of WYD 2011, told reporters at the Vatican on March 15. He was responding to a Spanish journalist, who asked how they could have chosen what she described as an awful song for the theme hymn.

De la Cierva said, “It’s very beautiful for the type of music it is, but maybe we made a mistake” in choosing the genre. Once it became clear that the song was not popular, especially in Spain, WYD launched an international contest for other song suggestions, he said.

“The hymn was written to help people pray before the Eucharist. Maybe that’s not what people wanted,” he said. “Obviously, the catechesis late at night. We Spaniards eat dinner at about 10 p.m., and we don’t go to bed before midnight,” he said. “Obviously, the catechesis in the morning will begin later than usual at World Youth Day in other cities. WYD 2011 also is attempting to reflect the Spanish reality in its budget. Because of the economic crisis in Spain, event organizers are committed to spending 20 percent less than was spent for the 2008 youth event in Sydney.

Organizers have announced a series of measures to reduce the gathering’s impact on the environment. They are encouraging pilgrims to walk, ride bikes or take public transportation to events, and will provide electricity-generating bicycles at selected events so participants can pedal to recharge their mobile phones, laptops and other electronic devices.

Report ‘puts cloud over’ Church efforts to prevent abuse, says official

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A recent grand jury report alleging past sexual abuse by clergy and other Church personnel in the Philadelphia Archdiocese “puts a cloud over everything” the Church is doing to prevent abuse, according to a Philadelphia priest.

“The cases concerned allegations ranging from sexual abuse of a minor to other incidents of what the archdiocese termed ‘boundary issues’—discussions or behavior by a cleric that the Church understands to be inappropriate,” said Teresa Kettelkamp, the executive director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection.

The cases were reviewed by the archdiocese’s archdiocesan review board members, who examined reported cases of abuse, found that some allegations lacked sufficient evidence to justify a priest’s permanent removal. In some instances when these priests were not removed from active duty, the report showed, further allegations of abuse were made against them.

Kettelkamp told Catholic News Service on March 11.

“For starters, she noted that every case should be investigated if it has any possibility of substantiating abuse. Kettelkamp said it should be if that is the case. "They should keep on doing what they do."

The grand jury also handed down five criminal indictments of abuse to the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth Protection.”

Among other initiatives, the archdiocese pledged a re-examination of the cases of 37 priests.

She does not attribute any failure in responding to claims of abuse to the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth Protection,” said Teresa Kettelkamp, the executive director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection.

“Every bishop wants to hear how this could happen,” said Teresa Kettelkamp, “that it’s not happening anymore.”

She is confident that answers will come to light as the archdiocese’s “zero tolerance” policy, which states that every case of abuse will be investigated and dealt with, is carried out.

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Prayer and sacraments help build culture of life, priest says

By Mary Ann Wyand

How do we build up the culture of life in the midst of so much evil in the world? “Prayer, preaching, teaching, fasting, almsgiving, witness and the sacraments are the life-changing weapons or means of non-violence that we have been given by God,” Father Thomas Aschenbrener told pro-life supporters during the archdiocesan Sanctity of Life dinner on March 3 in Indianapolis.

“They have been given to us to bring hope to a fallen world,” said Father Aschenbrener, the associate pastor of Holy Name Cathedral Parish in Chicago and the author of One in Christ, a marriage preparation program based on Church teachings and presented in many dioceses.

During his keynote speech on “The Transformative Power of God’s Life-giving Grace in Marriage, the Family and the World,” Father Aschenbrener noted that God has implanted the desire for happiness in every human heart. “If you want the power of God’s love,” he said, “all people will experience the transformative power of God’s grace that is ever-lasting and unconditionally loving.”

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, he noted, “We suffer on account of God’s patience, and yet we need God’s patience. … The world is redeemed by the patience of God. It is being destroyed by the impatience of man.”

The Holy Father’s words strike to the heart of what it truly means to be a people of hope and patience.

Father Aschenbrener said, “God always brings good out of evil, … light out of darkness [and] … hope out of despair. We are his instruments. We are his vessels of grace, and we need patience in order to see God’s Providence unfold before our lives.

“God’s transformative moments happen in life every day through repentance and conversion, he said, which lead to abundant life.

Father Aschenbrener said he prayed to God for guidance about how he could best help bring about the culture of life in his parish and in society.

“I thought if I could start with the evangelization of the young adults and engaged couples then we can have holy marriages,” he said, “and from holy marriages we will have holy families and holy vocations and, of course, the sanctity of society.”

With the support of Cardinal Francis E. Geoghegan of Chicago, Father Aschenbrener began evangelizing fallen-away and lukewarm Catholics as well as non-Catholics who marry Catholics “so they can experience a faith-deepening conversion and a awakening to the truth, the good and the greatness of marriage.”

Set within the context of marriage preparation, One in Christ teaches engaged couples to appreciate and honor the sanctity of human life.

When he started the program, Father Aschenbrener found that 90 percent of the couples who attend marriage preparation courses in the Church are not Mass regulars.

Many young adults have not been to confession since their first experience of the sacrament of reconciliation, he said, and many couples do not have a regular prayer life or know how to pray properly.

“Ninety percent of them are using some form of contraception, mostly the pill,” he said, “80 percent are engaging in premarital sex, 50 percent are cohabitating and many of them are pro-choice.

“The Lord obviously had plans for me,” Father Aschenbrener said, “[because] none of these practices are life-giving.”

One in Christ was created to lead people back to God, the priest said, to bring them hope, and to enable them to experience God’s life-giving and life transforming grace.

The three-day program provides sacred time for engaged couples to learn how to grow closer to God and each other, he said, discuss and reflect together, encourage and support one another, and pray and challenge one another.

In these ways, Father Aschenbrener said, engaged couples discover what it means to love and forgive, and they gain skills in communicating, problem-solving, raising a family and practicing the Catholic faith.

“This is what is going to transform society,” he said. “Many of these couples are extremely hungry for the Truth. … [Now] they’re excited to go to Mass together and pray together. This is the transformative power of God’s grace.”

The pro-life event also recognized four archdiocesan Catholic Church offices for their distinguished service to the cause of life.

Father Glenn O’Connor, the pastor of St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes in Indianapolis, received a Sanctity of Life Award for his assistance with Project Rachel, a post-abortion reconciliation ministry for women and men.

Other Sanctity of Life Award recipients are St. Mark the Evangelist parishioner Diane Komlanc of Indianapolis, St. Patrick parishioner Tom McBroom of Terre Haute and Father Glenn O’Connor, the pastor of St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes in Indianapolis, after the March 3 awards dinner.

For his pro-life service in Vigo County, and Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary parishioner Jerry Mattingly of Indianapolis for his volunteer work in the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life Ministry, which sponsored the event.

Former Saint Meinrad secretary honored by Pope Benedict with highest lay honor

By Sean Gallagher

In 1971, then-Benedictine Father Daniel M. Buechlein, at the time the new president-rector of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, hired Marilyn Braham to be his secretary.

One of her main duties was to organize the necessary paperwork related to ordinations and the conferral of ministries on seminarians.

“When (Father) Daniel asked me, I said ‘OK.’ ” Braham recently recalled. “Then he said, ‘OK. You’re going to do the ordination work. Try it for one year, and then we’ll be able to hire somebody else.’

In January, Braham retired after serving for 40 years as the executive secretary for four president-rectors of the Benedictine seminary in the Tell City Deanery.

“I comment to [Archbishop Buechlein] all the time now, ‘You know, that one year has stretched to an awful long year.’ ” Braham said with a laugh.

Shortly after retiring, Braham was honored by Pope Benedict XVI with the Pro Ecclesiae et Pontifice (For the Church and the Pope) award—which the highest honor that a lay Catholic can receive in the Church. She received it at a recent employee recognition banquet at Saint Meinrad.

“There are so many people who are worthy of that,” Braham said. “I don’t know about myself. It’s like, ‘Are you deserving of this?’

Braham may have humbly had her doubts. But not Benedictine Father Denis Robinson, Saint Meinrad’s current president-rector, who is sure that she is deserving.

“It was wonderful to see what we have always known here acknowledged by the greatest man,” Father Denis said. “And that is that she has made such an incredible contribution to the priesthood, to the life of the Church—not only in this country, but around the world. To see that acknowledged universally is a great privilege.”

Archbishop Buechlein described Braham, who worked with him for 17 years, as “very faithful and a great assistant.”

Benedictine Archabbot Justin DuVall also praised Braham for her professionalism and said that, “even though she worked behind the scenes, she was deservng of the pontifical award.

“A lot of people who get that are public figures,” he said. “But that’s not the only way that the Church is served. The work she did in organizing the office—and in the Catholic Church, keeping records has always been a big deal—[was done] with an amazing skill.”

In her 40 years of work in the president-rector’s office, Braham met and worked with many important people in the Church, including many bishops.

But, for her, the seminarians were always the most important.

“You hope that you can inspire just one person,” Braham said with emotion. “I admire priests. Even now, it makes me so emotional. It’s just like you think. Did you help just one [to go on to ordination]?”

Archabbot Justin, who was one of those seminarians in Braham’s early years, recalled the jokess, some of which were about her famous bee hive hairdo, with which the seminarians would express their regard for Braham.

“They would kid her and tease her mercilessly,” he said. “The very things that made her so great were the things that we would kid her about. And she took it all so well. I think she knew that that was kind of an expression of affection on the part of the seminarians.”

Father Denis said Braham’s affection for the seminarians was part of her greater love for the Church.

“That was her whole focus—making sure that everything was done so well and that these men were ordained, and that they served the Church well.” he said. “It was her incredible love for the Church that gave her the tenacity to keep going.”
Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Pauolczyk

‘Drastic measures’ and cancer decisions

During the 1990s, scientists discovered two gene mutations in the BRCA family of genes which significantly increased a woman’s chances of developing breast and ovarian cancer. Consequently, as noted in a recent Los Angeles Times opinion article by Anna Gorman, “Many oncologists recommend, but women with the mutations consider having their ovaries, fallopian tubes and breasts removed prophylactically [as a precautionary measure] to reduce risk.”

Yet, controversy exists regarding this recommendation. Prophylactic surgery for this kind has been termed “mutilating” and “extreme,” and some question whether it is, in fact, justifiable, given that the organs appear to be healthy—no cancer is yet detectable—and there is a limited probability that the disease may one day appear.

Some medical professionals instead encourage frequent monitoring and screening of patients with the BRCA mutation so that if cancer appears, and as soon as it appears, aggressive surgery could then be pursued. On one side, those who stress that the integrity and order of the human body should be respected and not unduly violated—the “Principle of Integrity”—while on the other side are those who stress that an individual organ or a part of the human body may be sacrificed if that sacrifice can result in sustained health for the whole person—the “Principle of Totality.”

The solution to the dilemma of preventive surgery will lie somewhere in the middle, with emphasis being placed upon the weightier emphasis being placed upon the “Principle of Totality.” The decision to undergo preventive surgery will thus be ethically justifiable and reasonable in certain cases. For example, even a scientist who discovered the BRCA mutation, Mary-Claire King, Ph.D., has acknowledged the incredible change raised by her discovery. “It is a very difficult thing to recommend prophylactic oophorectomy [removal of the ovaries] when it is healthy women women are talking about. It is a radical thing to consider in a feminist age.”

When it comes to a bilateral mastectomy—removal of both breasts—the difficulty is only compounded. As another researcher observed, “In one sense the society at large may not see breast cancer as connected to femininity, sensuality, sexuality, adulthood and motherhood as the breast.”

In that situation, healthy organs—which women with multiple risk factors can never categorically prove that she will develop cancer in the future, may only hold the risk that she will develop cancer after assessing the informed consent. Insofar as she achieves that prudential certainty, the decision is made to perform preventative surgery.

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La Cuaresma es el momento para continuar fielmente en el camino a la conversión

E n la Liturgia de las Horas hay una lectura que capta mi atención. Es del Capítulo 6 del Libro de Jeremías. “Paran los caminos en mí y mirad, y preguntad por los senderos antiguos cual es el camino bueno, y andad por él; hallaréis descanso para vuestras almas” (Jer 6:16). Se encuentra en la oración de la tarde para el sábado de la segunda semana de la Cuaresma. Al oír con esta lectura hallo motiación para confiar en la sabiduría sagrada de la experiencia pasada. Para eso necesitamos la Iglesia y a través de la Iglesia encontramos fortaleza en Jesucristo y en su padrino misericordioso.

Hoy en día el continuo crecimiento de inicios caminos espirituales que temo que pueda confundir a algunas personas. Existe mucho interés en la sanación y en la salvación, lo cual ocupa una cierto lugar en nuestra interpretación católica, pero no de la forma “instantánea” que percibo que algunas personas procuran. Esfuerzo y paciencia para la ardua labor de la conversión.

La conversión y el compromiso con la vida de Cristo es el camino, el primer paso de cualquier objetivo. En el camino de la fe, nuestro Dios nos da la gracia para mirar hacia adelante. Debemos estar dispuestos a recibir la gracia misericordiosa de Dios, lo cual va tanto con la conversión como con el arrepentimiento e xige un compromiso de nuestra parte. Es decir, existe el deseo y la esperanza de poder ahorrar la ardua labor de la conversión.

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We know that holding a huge, oversized baggage cart with one hand may not be typical, and therefore, those results may vary. However, what will not vary is our commitment to getting you back to the life you love, and making you stronger every day.

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What was in the news on March 17, 1961? A controversial award and a priest arrested

By Brandon A. Evans

This week, we continue to examine what was going on in the Church and the world 50 years ago as seen through the pages of The Criterion, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Here are some of the items found in the March 17, 1961, issue of The Criterion.

**Catholic Publicity and name**: Bishop censures Trujillo regime

“A Catholic bishop of the Dominican Republic has denounced publicly and by name the regime of Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo for its persecution of the Church and the people. Bishop Thomas F. Reilly, C.S.S.R., head of the Church in the southwestern part of the country, spoke out at Sunday Mass in his cathedral at San Juan de la Maguana [on March 12] after the government expelled another of his priests. He said the expulsion of Belgian-born Father Roger Rosselle, C.I.C.M., on March 11 ‘marked the latest in a long series of violations of human rights and the rights of the Church.’

- Cardinal Ritter speaks out in school aid controversy
- Protestant, Jewish groups oppose private school aid
- Men of the archdiocese launch spiritual offensive
- Is labor seeking to usurp the rights of management?
- Howe awards 1961 medal to Kennedy

From an editorial: ‘Something out to create a medal for people who are at their middles. We’d like to present one to Notre Dame University for selecting President [John F.] Kennedy as this year’s Luskey medalist. A perfect choice. Just when it was beginning to outward to outsiders that Mr. Kennedy was about to be read out of Church because of his determined opposition to bishops and cardinals in the federal-aid-to-education controversy, suddenly the nation’s best known Catholic university honors him as the Catholic layman of the year. That ought to confuse the opposition. We have already expressed our disagreement with the president over his interpretation of the Constitution, but we supported at the same time his right to disagree with the Catholic hierarchy. We go to further and state that if the president is convinced that what the Catholic Bishops are seeking is forbidden by the Constitution, he is morally bound to withstand them.’

- Priest removed bodily in race demonstration

From an editorial: “The picture wasn’t pretty. A Catholic priest, in black suit with Roman collars still in place, carried a cardboard criminal into a paddy wagon by two policemen, pinning his arms, the other holding his legs, ignominiously. Behold the man of God. You saw it, too. The picture of Father Robert McFaul of Oklahoma City, who was arrested for joining Negro students in a sit-in? What did you think? We’ll admit it, honestly. Our first feelings were of resentment—not against the police but against the priest. Brought it on himself, most impudent; must be a ‘nigger’; he’s done far more harm than good for the cause of the Negro. … Then we remembered that another priest was condemned for imprudently driving the money changers and ‘adventurers out of a temple.’

World contest is goal of Reds’ Jesuit warns

(Read all of these stories from our March 17, 1961, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com)
How can you help the people of Japan?

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) will support Caritas Japan, the social service arm of the Catholic Church which responds to food and other assistance. They are assessing the situation in the area.

To donate by phone, call 800-736-3467 (from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time). To donate by mail, send a check or money order to Catholic Relief Services, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, MD 21212-7090. On the memo portion of the check, note that the donation is for the “Japan emergency.” People can also donate online by logging on to www.crs.org.

Large-scale destruction is seen in this March 14 photo of the town of Otsuchi, located on the northeastern shore of Japan where much of the fishing fleet of 15,000 were missing following the March 11 earthquake and tsunami.

A woman walks through the devastation in Rikuzentakata, Japan, on March 14. Government officials had estimated that 10,000 people in that city may have lost their lives in the March 11 earthquake and the tsunami it triggered.

We don’t even know what has happened to our parishes in the towns and villages along the coast. We have no way of contacting them. I can only hope that the people of my diocese can stand together and be strong enough to overcome this disaster.”

In a message on March 13 to members of the Orthodox Church, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople said the Japanese tragedy demonstrates the threat posed by nuclear plants and it calls for serious reflection.

With all due respect to the science and technology of nuclear energy, in the sake of the survival of the human race, we counter-proffer the safer forms of energy, the pope said.

The Orthodox patriarch, who is a leading proponent of a Christian environmental theology, said that Japan was granted the gifts of the sun, wind, water and ocean, all of which may safely and sufﬁciently provide the energy we need to persist in adopting such dangerous sources of energy?

The director of Caritas Japan told Fides, “This painful event may be an opportunity to spread the values of the Gospel, that is, the fraternity of all men and women, the building of common good, [and] the recognition that every person has the dignity of a child of God and is important in the eyes of God.

“If with our work and our witness, we can communicate that from this evil will come good,” the Caritas ofﬁcial, Father Daisuke Narui, told Fides. †

...continued from page 3

JAPAN

Bishop Marcello Daju Tanu of Saitama, one of the dioceses hit hardest by the disaster, told the Catholic missionary newspapers that the catastrophe is a reminder that “life is in the hands of God and that life is a gift from God.”

“Of particular concern to us is the situation of the nuclear power plant in Fukushima,” he said, “but we must take courage, with the help of the Holy Spirit,” he told Fides.

Residents in the Fukushima plant were hit by explosions, and Japanese ofﬁcials were working to avoid leakage of radiation. They overestimated the victims for hundreds of thousands of people.

Bishop Martin Tetsuo Hiraga of Sendai, the see’s vicar apostolic, who was prevented by the quake and tsunami, said many area residents, cut off without electricity and with some phone service just restored, were unaware of the

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Catholic Conference’s role is ‘to promote the public good’

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Why is the Church involved in public policy? The short answer is “to form and inform,” says Glenn Tebbe, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) executive director.

“The role of the ICC is two-fold,” Tebbe said. “Our role is to bring Church teachings to the public square where appropriate. Secondly, our role is to assist in forming the consciences of our faith community, to act as a liaison by informing people in the pew [about] what’s going on, and to help them take part in the political process. The overall goal of the Church in the public square is to promote the public good.”

In 2007, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement called “Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility,” outlining the Church’s and the faithful’s role in the political process.

“[The] Church’s obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith. It is a basic part of the mission we have received from Jesus Christ, who offers a vision of life revealed to us in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.”

“In terms of advocacy groups, I can’t tell you how important a role these groups play,” Broden said. “We are a part-time legislature. We all have jobs outside of the legislature. We need reliable, honest information on these issues that we face because we can’t experts in all these issues.”

Broden, who is an attorney, said there are certain areas of expertise that he brings to the state Senate because of his profession.

“Obviously, I would put the Catholic Conference undeniably in the category of providing exceptional information with respect to particular bills and issues that the legislators face. The Indiana Catholic Conference plays an indispensable role in educating lawmakers.”

—Sen. John Broden

Catholic leaders say repeal of death penalty advances ‘culture of life’

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (CNS)—The repeal of the death penalty “advances the culture of life,” Catholic leaders said March 9. “As we begin the Lenten season on this Friday, we reaffirm our commitment to one of the most important things I do in the case of the [Indiana] Catholic Conference, our role is to form and inform,” said Kathy Saile, the director of domestic justice and human development, for the Catholic conference said. At the same time, it added, society will continue to be protected and those who commit crimes will still be held accountable through alternatives to the death penalty, including life without parole.

Sen. John Broden, D-South Bend, said, “Advocacy groups as a whole do play a very important role, and serve as an important informational tool for lawmakers. They bring a certain expertise in an area. In the case of the [Indiana] Catholic Conference, they are able to bring to bear the well-thought-out, well-articulated positions of the Church.”

“In terms of advocacy groups, I can’t tell you how important a role these groups play,” Broden said. “We are a part-time legislature. We all have jobs outside of the legislate. We need reliable, honest information on these issues that we face because we can’t experts in all these issues.”

Broden, who is an attorney, said there are certain areas of expertise that he brings to the state Senate because of his profession.

“Obviously, I would put the Catholic Conference undeniably in the category of providing exceptional information with respect to particular bills and issues that the legislators face,” he said. “The process, however, is not always a pretty one. I am often reminded of the saying commonly attributed to Bismarck that, ‘Laws are like sausages—it’s better not to know how they are made.’”

Since 1967, the ICC has been the official representative for the Church in Indiana on both state and national issues. It consists of a board of directors, professional staff, diocesan coordinators and interested Catholics.”

“The role of the ICC is to begin building a culture of life in our country.”

—Kathy Saile

Obviously, I would put the Catholic Conference undeniably in the category of providing exceptional information with respect to particular bills and issues that the legislators face. The Indiana Catholic Conference plays an indispensable role in educating lawmakers.”

—Sen. John Broden

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

‘Praying with the Saints’
A weekend retreat for Lent

Fr. Jim Farrell
Director of Fatima Retreat House, St. Peter of Alcantara Parish

April 1-3, 2011

Fr. Jim will draw on the lives of saints to aid us in our understanding of prayer and how we might continue to grow in the love of God. The prayer lives of these holy men and women can serve as a guide to how we may grow in our own prayer life, especially during this very important time of our liturgical year. $150 per person/$280 per married couple

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5535 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 547-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

A weekend retreat for Lent
To the People of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Dear Friends in Christ:

I am pleased to present this special supplement to The Criterion, which gives an accounting of the archdiocese’s finances this past fiscal year. We have an obligation to be good stewards of our people’s resources. Please take a few minutes to read this report.

The past few years have been difficult for many people due to our country’s economic troubles. Despite these challenging circumstances the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have continued to generously share their time, talent and treasure to carry out God’s work throughout the archdiocese. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

I hope this annual archdiocesan accountability report reminds us that we have much to be grateful for in our archdiocese and at the same time challenges us to look for new opportunities to be even better stewards. In this report you will find an accounting of our stewardship of the human, physical and financial resources for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for the 2010 fiscal year.

Stewardship of God’s Gifts

Following Jesus Christ and our call to live a life of holiness is not easy, but with God’s help it is possible. Together we have a mission to proclaim the Gospel and to care for those in need. We are not passive beneficiaries of God’s gifts. We cooperate with God in our own redemption and in the redemption of others. Each of us has a role to play in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

One of the ways we cooperate with God in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is to be faithful stewards of all that God has given us. We are called to make our parishes true communities of faith and vibrant sources of service to the larger community.

We are blessed to have many people in our parishes in central and southern Indiana who share their time and talent and expertise in our many ministries, such as our outstanding Catholic Charities agencies. Their work is valued by many people in need.

Your financial contributions through parish Sunday and holy day collections and to the Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community annual appeal are needed to provide the resources to operate our many parish and archdiocesan ministries.

We have been working to provide even greater financial transparency by giving you more of a say in how your money is spent on ministry needs in the archdiocese. We simplified the Christ Our Hope appeal by focusing on Pope Benedict XVI’s observation in his first encyclical titled “God is Love” that “The Church’s deepest nature is expressed in her threefold responsibility of proclaiming the Word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and exercising the ministry of charity.”

We tied each of these three responsibilities to one of the three areas where our ministry needs are the greatest: supporting our Catholic schools and religious education programs; supporting our seminarians, deacons and retired priests; and caring for people most in need throughout the archdiocese, which we do primarily through Catholic Charities.

This past year, we invited you to decide which of the three areas—Catholic education, vocations or caring for the poor—that you wanted your financial contributions to the Christ Our Hope appeal to go for.

Although our Sunday and holy day collections have held steady through the recent economic downturn, contributions to the Christ Our Hope annual appeal are still running about $1 million below the historic highs of six or seven years ago. There are signs that giving to the annual appeal is beginning to pick up, but we will need to continue to grow the appeal in order to keep up with our increasing ministry needs.

One particular bright spot financially for the archdiocese in 2010 was the healthy growth of the assets of the Catholic Community Foundation, which oversees 381 endowments and 102 charitable gift annuities. The value of the Catholic Community Foundation’s total cash and investments increased 15.7 percent in 2010 to $144.2 million. I encourage everyone to consider making a planned gift to the archdiocese. You can receive more information about how to do this by contacting our Office of Stewardship and Development.

Vocations

We ordained five men to the priesthood in 2009—our largest ordination class since 2002 when we also ordained five men. We did not have any ordinations in 2010, but we look forward to the ordination of Dustin Boehm this year on June 4 at 10 a.m. at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Dustin is a son of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.

We continue to do well in encouraging our people to consider how God might be calling them to a life of service as a priest, deacon or religious. We currently have 13 seminarians at St. Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad, two seminarians at the Pontifical North America College in Rome and 10 seminarians enrolled at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

Our Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, which was established by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 2004 to prepare college seminarians for major seminary, continues to grow. In addition to our own seminarians for our archdiocese, seven other dioceses are now sending seminarians there as well. We have renovated the seminary to accommodate the growing enrollment and are studying expanding the building to meet the growing demand.

In addition to our seminarians, a second group of men who are studying to become permanent deacons are continuing their formation classes. We expect to ordain these 17 men on June 23, 2012, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. As permanent deacons, these men will be able to baptize, witness marriages and preside at funerals. At Mass, they will be able to proclaim the Gospel and preach, but will not serve as celebrant or consecrate the Eucharist. In the ministry of the Word, the deacons will teach the faith and provide pastoral guidance. The deacons’ primary ministry, however, will be focused on charity.

Pray that God will bless our archdiocese with more vocations and pray for all men and women who are discerning a call to the priesthood, permanent diaconate and religious life. More information about vocations can be found on the archdiocesan website at www.archindy.org.

Education honors and initiatives

Our Catholic schools in the archdiocese continue to be recognized for the outstanding job the y are doing educating our children. Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood was named a 2010 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. More than a third of our schools have now been recognized over the years as Blue Ribbon Schools. Our archdiocesan schools have been honored with that distinction more than any other diocese in the country.

This school year we became the first Catholic diocese in the country to operate public charter schools. Two of our six Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in Indianapolis—St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy—transitioned to charter schools. The former St. Andrew & St. Rita school is now Andrew Academy and the former St. Anthony school is now Padua Academy.

The cost of operating our center-city schools in Indianapolis has been a challenge and the charter school option provided us the best opportunity to continue to serve poor children in the center city. The decision to pursue this course was made after consulting with parents, educators, clergy, parish leaders and community leaders. Religious education has been removed from the curriculum, but faith formation classes are being offered after school.

Conclusion

In addition to some of the highlights I have covered from the past year, this report also includes a letter from the archdiocese’s chief financial officer, Jeffrey D. Stumpf, which gives more detailed information about our financial operating results as well as information about our annual stewardship appeal and other stewardship efforts. You will also find a financial statement inside and other charts that highlight the archdiocese’s financial position.

We have much to be thankful for. Let us wisely use our ministry resources to serve those most in need and may we all continue to work for the common good of the archdiocese and our society.

Thank you for your support and God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
Summary of Financial Status

This summary of the financial status of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis reflects activities of the chancery of the archdiocese and certain affiliated agencies with direct accountability to the Most Reverend Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis. The information presented has been derived from the audited financial statements and does not include the activities of parishes, missions and schools of the archdiocese. All significant transactions among entities detailed in this summary have been eliminated. The complete audited financial statements are available for public inspection at www.archindy.org/finance/archdiocese.html.

Chancery and Certain Entities of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Combined Statements of Financial Position as of June 30, 2010 and 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$32,039,580</td>
<td>$34,324,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>135,842,608</td>
<td>128,498,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables: Contributions, net</td>
<td>22,636,339</td>
<td>33,138,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and other archdiocesan entities, net</td>
<td>5,561,793</td>
<td>4,734,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued interest income</td>
<td>262,481</td>
<td>269,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, net</td>
<td>2,932,158</td>
<td>2,264,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total receivables, net</td>
<td>65,045,818</td>
<td>67,645,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>928,034</td>
<td>994,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>119,420,237</td>
<td>129,498,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities: Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$5,508,929</td>
<td>$6,646,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets</td>
<td>$258,153,978</td>
<td>$252,636,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities: Capital campaign funds donated</td>
<td>16,720,940</td>
<td>23,154,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>138,733,741</td>
<td>140,571,443</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities: Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$5,508,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital campaign due to parishes</td>
<td>16,720,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond payable, net</td>
<td>47,531,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves for self-insurance</td>
<td>1,112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other liabilities</td>
<td>6,659,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit and loan fund payable</td>
<td>43,897,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>119,420,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>138,733,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>$258,153,978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combined Statements of Activities for the years ended June 30, 2010 and 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and wages</td>
<td>12,467,945</td>
<td>12,799,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee benefits and taxes</td>
<td>4,059,957</td>
<td>4,216,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care costs</td>
<td>12,254,236</td>
<td>9,185,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement plan contributions</td>
<td>3,063,813</td>
<td>3,270,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of equipment and supplies sold</td>
<td>1,706,550</td>
<td>2,007,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and supplies</td>
<td>1,885,325</td>
<td>2,159,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property insurance</td>
<td>2,367,500</td>
<td>2,511,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>1,187,549</td>
<td>1,058,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs and maintenance</td>
<td>980,605</td>
<td>947,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy costs</td>
<td>1,321,467</td>
<td>1,303,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3,332,757</td>
<td>3,726,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad debts</td>
<td>2,835,897</td>
<td>3,963,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional services</td>
<td>5,008,682</td>
<td>5,058,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific assistance</td>
<td>1,101,051</td>
<td>1,066,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>4,942,702</td>
<td>4,869,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital campaign funds donated to parishes and others</td>
<td>1,916,955</td>
<td>4,358,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,178,884</td>
<td>2,525,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>62,601,875</td>
<td>64,998,379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPPORT AND REVENUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>$9,917,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service fees</td>
<td>22,382,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital campaigns and contributions</td>
<td>5,919,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Our Hope Appeal</td>
<td>4,445,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of goods and services</td>
<td>4,491,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program service fees and other</td>
<td>5,249,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other public support</td>
<td>4,700,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest income and investment return</td>
<td>23,755,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total support and revenues</td>
<td>80,762,173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NET ASSETS: Beginning of year | $252,636,861 | $258,153,978 |

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donated</td>
<td>144,221,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>$138,733,741</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Catholic Community Foundation is a separate, not-for-profit corporation established by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to professionally invest and administer numerous individual endowment funds for the benefit of parishes, schools, agencies, and other institutions affiliated with the archdiocese. As of June 30, 2010, the Catholic Community Foundation comprised 381 separate endowment accounts and 102 charitable gift annuities worth $144.2 million.

Cash and Investments in Million of Dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Allocations as of June 30, 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash and Investments</strong> = <strong>$144,221,642</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Real Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Equity Securities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Cap Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Cap Equity Securities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Cap Equity Securities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Criterion Friday, March 18, 2011

Page 12
This past year has been a busy year in the administration of the archdiocese. Two major initiatives started a year ago have come to fruition—the archdiocese has become the first Catholic diocese in the country to operate public charter schools and the archdiocese has successfully made the transition to incorporate each of our 151 parishes as separate civil legal corporations.

The charter schools initiative will help stabilize the finances of the archdiocese’s effort to educate inner city children and help many families break the cycle of poverty. While this initiative requires a secular approach to operating the schools, the hosting parishes have had significant success attracting school students to their after school faith formation programs.

The incorporation of our parishes, high schools and many agencies will help make our organizational structure more understandable to those more familiar with secular organizations. This initiative helps define relationships, lines of authority, areas of responsibility, and ownership of real and personal property.

This accountability report provides more detailed information about many of the administrative operations of the archdiocese.

Chancery Fiscal Year 2010 Operating Results

The chancery offices and agencies of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis were budgeted to break even for 2009-2010 and actually ended the fiscal year $1.5 million or 4 percent ahead of budget. This represents the sixth consecutive year of break-even operations or better for the archdiocese. However, much of the recent budget success is due in large part ($1 million for FY 2010) to the lower interest rate environment which reduces our interest expense. As interest rates begin to rise, much of that benefit will diminish.

Parish and Archdiocesan Stewardship

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010, parish stewardship, through Sunday and holy day collections, remained virtually consistent with parish stewardship from the previous year. The steady stewardship results during a time when many families are facing significant hardships is a strong testament to the commitment of our parish families. Despite a small decrease in parish stewardship over the past two years, we do have a recent history of 1-2 percent annual increases in parish Sunday and holy day collections.

Parish Sunday and Holy Day Collections (2001 through 2010)

The FY 2010 annual parish and archdiocesan community appeal Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community experienced an increase in recorded pledges. It received pledges of $4.3 million. This compares to pledges of $4.1 million for the FY 2009 annual appeal however, it is still lower than historic high levels by approximately $1 million.

Christ Our Hope/United Catholic Appeal (2004 through 2011)

Parish Services: Insurance and Benefit Plans

The archdiocese operates several insurance plans, employee and priest benefit plans, and other services on behalf of parishes, schools, agencies and employees. Two of the most significant plans are the lay employee health insurance plan and the property and liability insurance plan. Both have experienced positive results after significant changes several years ago.

Lay Employee Health Insurance Plan

For the past three-plus years, we’ve been operating a high deductible health insurance plan, complete with Health Savings Accounts (HSA), with very favorable claim results and thus have generated a surplus in this plan. A surplus in a plan of this nature is very important because a small change in enrollment or claim activity can dramatically change the dynamics of the plan and thus reduce an existing surplus or cause volatility in premium levels. Using the accumulated surplus in the plan, we established an endowment fund in September 2007 that is designed to help maintain the affordability of our lay employee benefits. Increasing health care costs continue to challenge parish, school and agency budgets. At the same time, they create financial challenges for individual employees. Our goal is to minimize large increases in healthcare premiums charged to parishes, schools, and agencies and attempt to keep premium increases for our employees well below national averages.

As the initial funding levels we established for this endowment have been met by the accumulated surplus, we identified two ways to pass this plan savings along directly to the employees of the archdiocese and also to the parishes, schools and agencies that the y serve. In January 2010, all participating employees received a one-time additional contribution to their Health Savings Account ($500 for single coverage and $1,000 for family coverage). Also in January 2010, all parishes, schools, and agencies received a “premium holiday” and did not pay any premiums for employee health insurance that month. This had the effect of reducing parish annual health insurance costs by about 8 percent for 2010. Going forward, the accumulated surplus will allow us to minimize premium levels charged for lay health insurance while re-directing dollars to other employee benefit needs.

FY 2010 Healthcare Expenses

Property and Liability Insurance Plan

The property insurance plan also experienced positive results for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The recent results have funded a property insurance reserve fund in the Catholic Community Foundation that is now approximately $5.4 million. This reserve fund helps to protect parishes, schools and agencies against catastrophic losses and will help to mitigate annual insurance cost increases. The reserve fund has allowed us to maintain our self-insurance level at $1 million for the 2010-2011 fiscal year which translates into maintaining lower premiums paid by our parishes, schools, and agencies for property and liability insurance.

FY 2010 Property and Liability Expenses
In fiscal year 2010, approximately $78,000 was spent to provide counseling for victims of employees of the archdiocese. Approximately $87,000 was spent for these purposes in the archdiocese.

The St. Francis Xavier Home Mission Endowment Fund was established to provide grants to needy parishes in the archdiocese. With the assistance of an allocation committee who made grant recommendations to Archbishop Buechlein, in FY 2010 we were able to award grants totaling $178,000 on a number of parishes, schools and agencies.

In fiscal year 2010, approximately $78,000 was spent to provide counseling for victims of sexual misconduct perpetrated or alleged to have been perpetrated by priests or lay employees of the archdiocese. Approximately $57,000 was spent for these purposes in fiscal year 2009. Further, $199,000 that was paid to settle one lawsuit through mediation whereby the award covered future counseling costs for the alleged victim. Additionally, approximately $178,000 was spent for legal fees to defend the archdiocese from sexual misconduct lawsuits in 2010. In 2009, $147,000 was spent in legal defense costs.

The growth and expansion endowment fund was established to provide grants to parishes, schools and agencies in the archdiocese that are growing or expanding their ministries, consistent with the overall strategic plan of the archdiocese. In December 2010 and just the third year of this grant making process, we were able to award grants totaling $169,000 to 10 different archdiocesan entities. In December 2009, we awarded grants to six entities totaling $150,000.

The Catholic Community Foundation’s total cash and investments were $144.2 million at June 30, 2010, an increase of 15.7 percent from the previous fiscal year. The increase in asset values were driven by the overall investment returns which were a positive 16.2 percent for the 2010 fiscal year. The Foundation investments have returned a very respectable 6.8 percent (annualized) since the inception of the current in vestment structure in January 1995 despite facing one of the worst 10-year periods in history of the U.S. equity markets. Parishes, schools and agencies of the archdiocese added 13 new endowments during the year, bringing the total number of endowments held in the foundation to 381. The endowments distributed almost $6.4 million this past year, compared to $6.5 million the previous year; to support parish, school and agency ministries, demonstrating the ability of endowments to provide long-term funding for ministries.

For the 2010-2011 fiscal year we anticipate a break-even operating budget on approximately $36 million of total operating expenses. We anticipate the most significant challenges to include:

- Re-establishing and increasing the historical stewardship levels for the Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community annual appeal.
- Health care and employee benefit and retirement costs that are increasing much faster than Sunday collections.
- Construction and facilities costs that continue to increase.
- School operating costs that are increasing faster than our ability to increase tuition.
- Growing parish stewardship to meet operating needs and eliminating parish operating deficits.

On the other hand, we have several positive opportunities:

- The re-definition and re-focus of the annual appeal – Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community which will bring the focus of the annual parish and archdiocesan appeal into the local communities of the Church.
- The operation of two of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies as public charter schools to address the financial operations of Indianapolis center-city Catholic schools and continue the important ministry of providing quality education to those living in the center-city neighborhoods of Indianapolis
- A history of strong investment returns and restoration of the growth in investments.
- The maturation of an alternative health care plan to better control escalating costs and a funded employee benefits reserve endowment to protect against future large premium increases.

By capitalizing on these opportunities, we should be able to face the challenges ahead of us and continue the stable operating trends that we’ve experienced over the past several years.
Archdiocesan parishes schedule Lenten penance services

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of penance services that have been reported to The Criterion.

Due to space constraints, penance services scheduled later during Lent may be omitted from the list in this week’s newspaper. However, the entire schedule is posted on TheCriterionOnline.com.

Batesville Deanery
March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Maurice, Napoleon, and Immaculate Conception, Millhouse, at Immaculate Conception, Millhouse
March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Mary Magdalen, New Marion, and St. John the Baptist, Osgood, at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
March 28, 4:30-5 p.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Castle
March 31, 4:30-5 p.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
April 1, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Aurora
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
April 6, 6:30 p.m. for St. John, Dover, and St. Joseph, St. Leon, at St. Joseph, St. Leon
April 6, 7 p.m. for St. Paul, New Alscuse, and St. Martin, Yorkville, at St. Martin, Yorkville
April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony, Morris
April 11, 7 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicata of the Cross, Bright
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, Enochsburg
April 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg

Bloomington Deanery
April 22, 7 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
March 23, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Bedford
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
April 8, 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, St. Charles Borromeo,
Bloomington, and St. John the Apostle, Bloomington; at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington
April 14, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville

Carmelville Deanery
April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. John, Carmel, Connorsville
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Bridge, Liberty
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
April 14, 7 p.m. at St. Andrew, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery
March 23, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit
March 28, 7 p.m. for Holy Cross and St. Philip Neri at St. Philip Neri
April 4, 7 p.m. for St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), St. Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes at Our Lady of Lourdes
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas, Fortville
April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield

Indianapolis North Deanery
April 3, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Lawrence
April 5, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Lawrence

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 23, 7 p.m. at Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove
April 4, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
April 7, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus
April 10, 3 p.m. at Good Shepherd
April 11, 7 p.m. at St. Rach
April 12, 7 p.m. at St. Ann
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
April 18, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Monica
March 29, 7 p.m. for Holy Trinity and St. Anthony at St. Anthony
March 29, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
March 31, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels
April 4, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher
April 7, 7 p.m. at Malachy, Brownsburg
April 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
April 14, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel

New Albany Deanery
March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Sellersburg
March 29, 7 p.m. for Augustine, Jeffersonville, and Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
March 29, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
March 31, 7 p.m. at St. John, Corydon
March 31, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
April 3, 4 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyd County
April 7, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
April 10, 3 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany
April 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
April 17, 1 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery
March 29, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace, Madison
March 30, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour

We need to reassure the faithful that the point of the sacrament is not to be chastised or punished, but to experience the healing, love and forgiveness of Jesus. We need to be inviting and encouraging.

Father Rick Hilgarter, executive director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat of Divine Worship

Father Tomasz Ludwicki hears a confession during a local pilgrimage in Munster, Ind., in this 2010 file photo. Catholics who return to confession might be surprised at the changes that have occurred in the sacrament in recent years, one priest-hellogian said.

CNS photo/Karen Callaway, Catholic New World

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS)—Msgr. Kevin Irwin said that his confessions are “one of the most humbling experiences of my priesthood.”

The dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington recently reflected on the current state of the sacrament of penance.

For years, surveys have shown infrequent—if any—use of the sacrament by Catholics. One recent survey found that 45 percent of Catholics do not confess at all. Mass weekly never go to confession.

Msgr. Irwin told Catholic News Service that there are several reasons for that, including “fear of what the priest might say and shame at what one has done or failed to do.”

Father Rick Hilgarter, the executive director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat of Divine Worship, said some Catholics stay away because of “fear or embarrassment about a particular sin.”

He said, “I wish I could get there that there is no reason to be afraid. For others, there might be a false sense that confession is not really necessary, either because they don’t think they have sinned or they don’t need forgiveness,” he said. “[But] each of us has sin in our lives. It is part of what it is to be human.”

Both priests see many reasons why people should take advantage of confession. For one thing, Msgr. Irwin pointed out, it provides the opportunity “to assess where one is, to explain one’s life and their severity can be assessed more adequately. When priests ask penitents what they might recommend as a penance, then the penitent is asked to do fits their particular need.”

As a result, the penance assigned by the confessor becomes “an antidote to what one confessed. Confession is the most important part of the sacrament.”

In preparation for confession, Msgr. Irwin suggested that Catholics “read and reflect on Chapter 12 of Paul’s Letter to the Romans.”

Father Hilgarter pointed out that there are lots of resources, including a new iPhone app, that can be helpful to guide the faithful through this process of reflection and examination. In general, he said it is good not to reflect on the Ten Commandments, but also to look at significant relationships—with God, with others and with self—in order to identify what actions or inactions have been hurtful or sinful.

Confessors, he continued, should “listen attentively and respond as Jesus would, which might include some advice or encouragement.”

Similarly, Msgr. Irwin urges priests to “act as a divine physician, diagnosing what is really wrong, guiding the penitent to see it and praying with the penitent over it.”

He said, provides a way for Catholics who have been away from the sacrament of penance to experience it again.

“Communal celebrations of the sacrament seem to have taken hold as features of Lent and Advent,” he noted. “These are often occasions for people who have not come for a long period to jump-start a return.”

In addition, such communal events help people “see that penance involves the community and is not just about themselves before God,” he said.

Msgr. Irwin believes that Catholics who return to confession might be surprised at the changes that have occurred in the sacrament following the Second Vatican Council, such as the option of facing the confessor in the open, the reading of Scriptures and “a declaration of thanks for God’s mercy.”

His experience with penitents, Msgr. Irwin said, “is one of the most humbling experiences of my priesthood. When you hear of the burdens people bear, you are simply amazed, sometimes astonished, but always heartened that you can help to unburden them.”

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Cross Builds Innovative Earthquake, Hurricane Resistant Housing For Haiti’s Poor

Aid efforts in Haiti have entered a new phase — shifting from emergency relief (food and medicine distributions) to major rebuilding and recovery projects focused on creating greater safety and stability for earthquake victims struggling to move on with their lives.

One Catholic organization, Cross International Catholic Outreach, is taking a novel approach with its rebuilding efforts, including the use of cutting-edge technology to build earthquake-resistant homes for traumatized survivors. The Florida-based charity is building hundreds of these unique homes using technology designed by an American non-profit founder and businessman, Donald A. Stevens.

Created as a housing solution for victims of the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka, the cost-effective and flexible Shelter2Home technology allows even an inexperienced labor force to construct a strong shelter in a matter of hours, without the use of heavy equipment or sophisticated tools. Once the first stage of these homes has been erected, it can easily be converted into a permanent, stucco covered home for greater safety and permanence.

“The houses have a galvanized steel frame that maintains its stability in severe weather conditions, including earthquakes, explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “Once the frame is up, we wrap it in a resilient metalized foil cloth. At that point, it has a tent-like appearance, but it is waterproof, sturdy and can provide privacy and shelter. The covering reflects nearly all the sun’s rays (temperatures are far cooler than normal inside the home) and provides protection against fires, termites, mold, and mildew.”

While the home is in its first phase, it can also be moved — an important benefit since land use is complicated by the slow recovery of the Haitian government. It can sometimes take months to iron out disputes over property use and ownership.

When the home owners are ready, the final phase of construction is organized. This involves covering the outside of the house with a proprietary stucco-like material that — once dried and painted — looks like one of the many cement homes common to Haiti. A single-family home can be built for just $5,000 to $10,000.

“The same technology is being used to build schools, clinics, dormitories, and other buildings up to four stories tall,” Cavnar said. “Our donors are learning about these plans now, and we expect many will still want to help Haiti by sponsoring a home or school. If you want to do something profound to help, this is certainly the most tangible and impacting thing you could do.”

To maximize the impact of its housing efforts, Cross International Catholic Outreach has helped set up a factory in Haiti where the components of these homes can be built and stored for quick delivery.

“This strategy is also helping Haitian families by creating jobs within the country,” Cavnar said. “Unemployment was extremely high before the earthquake — now, things are even worse. This factory includes job training. Once a man has learned how to construct a home, he has a valuable skill. Tens of thousands of homes were destroyed and need to be rebuilt. A trained worker has the best opportunity to land those jobs.”

To make a tax-deductible contribution in support of Cross International Catholic Outreach and its projects overseas, use either the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or send your donation to: Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00742, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.

Everywhere you turn in Port-au-Prince, you see the rubble and ruin of destroyed homes and lives.

Cross Recognized, Endorsed by Nearly 50 U.S. Catholic Bishops

As Cross International Catholic Outreach (CICO) continues its range of relief work to help the poor overseas, its efforts are being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S.

“We’ve received an impressive number of endorsements and letters of support from American Bishops and Archbishops — nearly 50 Catholic leaders at last count,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “They’re impressed by the fact that we’ve done outreaches in more than 40 countries and that we undertake a variety of projects, everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor.”

Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis sent one of the more recent letters of encouragement, writing: “It is my hope that this ministry will continue to flourish and reach as many people as possible. I will inform the priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis of the important work that Cross International Catholic Outreach does and elicit their financial and technical support for the service you provide to the less fortunate around the world.”

Bishop Kevin Vann of Fort Worth was just as enthusiastic about Cross Catholic and its mission. “I also know that many of the Bishops in Texas think very highly and endorse the work and mission of Cross International Catholic Outreach — as well as do other Bishops whom I know from my days of graduate studies in Rome. Please know of my prayers and support for this vital work...”

In Archbishop Gregory Aymond’s case, the endorsement came with a personal note of thanks for the role Cross Catholic played in helping families hit hard by Hurricane Katrina.

“I am happy to acknowledge that Cross International Catholic Outreach was of tremendous help to the Archdiocese of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina,” he said.

Bishop Thomas Rodi of Biloxi had similar praise.

“Your quick response to the needs of the people in south Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina will always be remembered and greatly appreciated,” he said. “Thank you for all the good you do, and may God bless you and your ministry.”

In addition to praising the work CICO accomplishes, many of the Bishops and Archbishops are also impressed by the unique collaborative relationship Cross has with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum in Rome. This allows the charity to participate in the mercy ministries of the Holy Father himself. In his praise of CICO, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati underscored this unique connection.

“Cross International Catholic Outreach’s close collaboration with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum is a source of encouragement,” the Archbishop said. “The Holy See has unique knowledge of local situations throughout the world through its papal representatives in nearly two hundred countries and through its communications with Bishops and others who care for the poor and needy in every corner of the world.”

CICO president, Jim Cavnar, explained the significance of this connection.

“Our collaboration with Cor Unum allows us to fund outreaches in virtually any area of the world, and we have used that method in special cases — to help the victims of natural disasters, for example,” he said. “It only represents a small part of our overall ministry, but it can be a very important benefit in those special cases.”
Catholics Playing Vital Role In Haiti Reconstruction

Port-au-Prince resident Caline Brevil was on her way to the tap-tap station to pick up a friend when the violent earthquake struck Haiti in January. Her mind raced to her family, who were back at their home. She had to get back to them. As Caline — nine months pregnant — pushed through the demolished streets of the city, she had to step over the bodies of men, women and children blocking the way. At first, she said “Excuse me” as she stumbled through, but she soon realized all the people lying prone in the streets were dead.

When her own home finally came into view, all she could see of her house was the roof. It had collapsed, becoming the floor of the building. The damage was so severe in her neighborhood that there was no one alive to ask about the fate of her husband and 5-year-old twin daughters.

She never did find them.

In the first month following that fateful day, Caline slept in a tent outside of Port-au-Prince. There, she gave birth to a daughter, Ronese, the child she had been carrying when the earthquake struck. To protect her new baby, Caline carried the baby that she had been carrying when the earthquake hit. He carries the children and they run away. They come to the fork in the road, and Caline goes on one way and her husband and children go another, never to be seen again.


Nearly everyone in Haiti carries similar emotional and economic burdens today. Old lives are completely gone, and most people have lost at least one close family member.

“More than 200,000 men, women, and children were killed when the earthquake struck. Though the initial tremor lasted only 35 seconds, it was enough to reduce entire neighborhoods to fields of rubble, and forever change lives of hundreds of thousands of Haitians,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach, one of the prominent ministries involved in recovery efforts in Haiti today.

The January earthquake was the worst disaster the country has seen in 200 years. Not only did Haiti lose national landmarks such as the Presidential Palace and the Catholic Cathedral, but more than one million people were left without homes after the quake. Those traumatized survivors fled to the countryside in search of food, water, and shelter.

According to Cavnar, emergency aid from Cross Catholic and other agencies initially focused on helping survivors living in tents and temporary shelters.

Since the anniversary of the earthquake, much of the aid efforts have shifted to long-term recovery. Though it will be years before Haiti’s capital city is restored, individual people — victims like Caline — have hope of living vastly improved lives, thanks to continued support from generous American Catholics.

“We are focusing on improving the lives of individuals. If you get caught up in broad statistics and the issues of governments, you miss the point. Caline is a living, breathing person who needs help, and there are hundreds of others like her who are facing similar problems that we can help solve. That should be our focus now,” Cavnar said. “Our donors have this perspective too. They are staying involved in our Haiti outreach, and their continued support is making a huge difference in the lives of the earthquake survivors.”

Cavnar pointed to Anise Verdieu’s story as an example.

Verdieu was thrilled to have been selected to receive a new home,” Cavnar said. “She had felt like a lost soul — one among tens of thousands in need, with no hope of recovering from this disaster. Now, thanks to the American Catholics who are contributing to our Haiti housing outreach, she has new hope.”

Cross Catholic is also working with Pwoje Espwa, an orphanage for more than 750 children in southern Haiti. There, it is building specially-designed temporary shelters for displaced orphans who lost their parents in the earthquake.

“In addition to providing high-quality homes for orphans and refugee families, this project is also creating jobs for local workers, which will benefit Haiti’s economy,” said Berthingy Piard, Espwa’s assistant director for the housing project.

“How we build employs 10 to 12 people, allowing them to earn enough money to feed their families and send their kids to school.”

In addition to constructing homes, Cross Catholic is undertaking other rebuilding projects to help the people of Haiti recover. This includes rebuilding schools that were demolished.

“Our ultimate goal is to bring complete and lasting rehabilitation to Haiti. The process has required lots of patience, creativity and ingenuity — and we could not do any of it without help from our Catholic supporters in the U.S.,” said Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach.

For earthquake survivor Caline Brevil, the 23-year-old who lost her husband, twin daughters, and home in the disaster, this support from America is a literal answer to prayer.

“My sole source of hope through this horrible time of loss has been God,” she said. “He is continuing to answer my prayers through the generosity of others.”

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross International Catholic Outreach and its work with Catholic ministries overseas, use either the enclosed postage-paid brochure or send donations to: Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC0742, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.

Your gift is needed for Cross International Catholic Outreach to bring Christ’s mercy to the poorest of the poor. Use the enclosed postage-paid brochure to mail your gift or send it to Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC0742, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.

How to Help:
Bengal Bouts shapes Cathedral graduate’s commitment to the poor in Bangladesh

By John Shaughnessy

It was one of those times that define a life. For Bobby Powers, it was a moment when four years of hard work and dedication led to six minutes that he will remember forever.

It was also a moment when he was surrounded by so many people who love him—his family and friends who couldn’t be there.

On the night of March 4, the 22-year-old Powers stepped into the boxing ring inside the Purcell Pavilion at the University of Notre Dame in front of nearly 4,000 fans. The crowd included his parents, his brother, aunt and uncle, along with many friends and alumni from his days as a student-athlete at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

Powers was one of the participants in the Bengal Bouts, the annual tradition of sport and humanitarianism at Notre Dame in which students train and learn to box while also raising money for the poor.

The first moment was from his championship bout in 2010—a slugfest with a skilled boxer he lost, a fight that Powers still calls “my most proud moment in boxing.”

“I pushed myself harder during that fight than I ever had,” he recalled. “There were moments when I thought I could have gone down, but I kept going. It was a moment that made me feel like I could achieve anything.”

What made it even more special was the story that would be Powers’ most lasting memory from his involvement with the Bengal Bouts program.

It’s part of the way that his life has been nourished. “Strong bodies fight that weak bodies may be nourished.”

It’s also part of the way he has tried to change the lives of others.

Bengal Bouts has helped shape who I am,” Powers said. “It’s really defined my experience at Notre Dame. I’m really proud of that.”

It was cool to go out with the championship. Powers said. “I felt I had worked even harder in my senior year. It was great to go out that way.”

His thoughts soon returned to the visits he made to Bangladesh—and the people there.

“The trips gave me a better perspective on the world, and how fortunate and lucky I am,” he said. “We take things for granted, like going to school and where our next meal is coming from. They don’t always know that.”

It’s part of the way that his life has been changed by a program that has the motto, “Strong bodies fight that weak bodies may be nourished.”

It’s also part of the way he has tried to change the lives of others.

Bengal Bouts has helped shape who I am,” Powers said. “It’s really defined my experience at Notre Dame. I’m really proud of that.”

Despite troubles, Church is gift of God, Pope Benedict XVI tells parish priests in Rome

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Even if the Church is beset by problems, it is still a gift of God, Pope Benedict XVI told several hundred pastors of Rome parishes.

Too often, “perhaps because of a fear of triumphalism, priests and other Catholics do not rejoice in the Church,” said the pope during what was described as an informal meeting with the Rome pastors.

“Certainly, there always are difficult, negative aspects” of the Church’s life on Earth, but “it is a beautiful gift that we can live in the Church,” and receive the salvation that Jesus has won for humankind, the pope said.

The fact that the Church is not only a gift of God and divine, but also very human” means that there always will be problems and a need for penance, he said.

“The Church is always threatened. There is always a danger, the opposition of the devil,” who does not want “truth to always appear spiritual and wouldn’t be our choice.”

As priests, “sometimes we have to do things that don’t immediately appear spiritual and wouldn’t be our choice.”

From the pope to the lowest assistant pastor, we all have to “do all things in Christ,” he said.

Pope Benedict said that every priest says and does—whether or not he is formally ministering to someone at the moment—reflects on his priesthood because the idea of someone being a “part-time priest” is impossible.

Priesthood is not an occupation that a man chooses as a career, he said. “Only God can make a priest, and if there’s a choice involved, it’s God’s.”

Priests must preach the truth, the whole truth, taught by the Church, and not “an ala carte Christianity according to his own tastes. He mustn’t preach a Gospel according to his own ideas and theological preferences. He must not hesitate to proclaim God’s whole truth, even the truth that is uncomfortable, even on themes that personally I don’t like very much,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict said that, like St. Paul, today’s priests must go forward with the Gospel knowing that sometimes they may face physical danger because of what they preach.

“St. Paul says that pure biological survival is not my priority. My primary concern must be to carry out my service and to be with Christ,” the pope said.

“Being with Christ is true life,” he said, and while “we certainly must care for our health and work at a reasonable pace, we also must recognize that the ultimate value is to be in communion with Christ.”

Pope Benedict told the priests it is natural that young priests are full of enthusiasm and that a priest’s physical energy wanes as he ages, but “it’s important that even in old age, as even as the years pass, we do not lose our zeal and the joy of being called by the Lord.”
Faith Alive!

Baptism gives us new life in Christ’s mystical body

By David Gibson

As you travel along the road that takes you from Ash Wednesday to Easter, you will notice many signs pointing to baptism.

Baptism sets a tone for Lent. Historically, Christendom viewed Easter as the year’s principal time for baptisms. Today, baptisms are celebrated in most Catholic parishes during the Easter Vigil on the great holyday’s eve.

Those present for the vigil are invited to renew their own baptismal promises. In this way, they reaffirm their identity with Christ, whose death and resurrection gives meaning to all the small and large deaths and the resurrection that mark their own lives.

Last Easter when Pope Benedict XVI baptized people from various nations during the Easter Vigil at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, he cautioned against minimizing the sacrament’s purpose.

Baptism, he said, should not be understood as a “mere cleansing.” Neither is baptism “a somewhat complicated initiation into a new association.”

Instead, the pope described baptism as “death and resurrection, rebirth to new life.”

There is so much to say about baptism and Lent. Rediscoversing our own baptism means rediscoversing both who we are and what we are meant to do.

Lent prompts consideration of these same points:

• Our identity as members of Christ’s body.
• The kinds of action that express that identity.
• Our identity as members of Christ’s body.
• Our identity as members of Christ’s body.

Baptism is something like a gate that opens in two directions. As the gate opens inward, the meaning of our life and all it can be is glimpsed.

Remember, baptism powerfully joins people to Christ’s mystical body. St. Paul urged the ancient Christians to view themselves as “baptized into Christ Jesus” (Rom 6:3).

The identity of baptized people is forged through this unity with Christ. That does not mean, though, that this unity restricts them from fully becoming who they are as unique individuals.

With Christ frees and energizes the baptized to become who God has uniquely called them to be.

Lent, then, is an opportunity to rediscover our chosen identity—to explore it and come more completely to terms with it. This is a never-ending exploration. After all, we will never exhaust the possibility of coming to adulthood in the virtue of hope, or will love’s horizons cease expanding before us with each step that we take.

People talk a lot these days about self-image, which has to do with how we view ourselves and want others to view us. This is what a baptized person’s identity with Christ’s body is about, too. Baptized people ask themselves who they intend to be, what their lives center upon and how they want to be viewed by themselves, by others and by God.

So, as a gate, baptism swings inward to reveal our identity centered in Christ. People who take seriously the signs pointing to baptism during Lent are likely to take time to explore who and what shapes their life, and how they want to develop as persons.

As a gate, however, baptism also opens outward to the world and the people around us. It is a newly w ored world where ordinary people encounter great, sometimes overwhelming, challenges.

The countless opportunities for baptized people to serve others by doing the work of Christ’s mystical body in the world undoubtedly represent the dimension of Christ’s freedom that most of us know best.

If St. Paul pointed out that baptism frees our identity as members of Christ’s body, he also made clear that all of the body’s members are needed and should use their gifts to do the body’s work. The parts of the body, though many, are one. St. Paul said: “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I do not need you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I do not need you’” (1 Cor 12:20-21).

What is the work of Christ’s mystical body? The Gospels show Christ as a caregiver, particularly concerned about the sick and others who suffer. I assume that extending needed care to others and supporting people who suffer are vital parts of his body’s work today.

Father John Ryan pours holy water on the forehead of Waylon Chastant during his baptism at St. Anthony Church in Lafitte, La.

Unity with Christ frees and energizes the baptized to become who God has uniquely called them to be.

Lenten customs help renew our baptismal commitments

By Mitch Finley

Lent is rich in customs. Some come from particular ethnic cultures, while many are popular regardless of ethnic or cultural context.

Abstinence from certain foods, efforts to overcome a self-destructive habit, almsgiving, praying the Stations of the Cross, the time-honored practice of “giving up” —whether sweets, watching television, listening to the radio or music as a distraction while driving—and participating in the Mass daily, we can embrace any of these Lenten disciplines as a way to renew our baptismal commitment that is fundamental to our Christian life.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church declares that the sacrament of baptism is “the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other sacraments” (#1213). If we reflect on various Lenten disciplines, then we should be able to identify how each one may serve as a way to renew one’s understanding and experience of the sacrament of baptism.

Regardless of the specific Lenten custom, all of them can be distilled to one discipline, and that is self-denial. The point is to deny oneself the experience of something that is good, but which we may not always use in good or healthy ways.

We don’t, for example, abstain from meat on the Fridays of Lent because there is something bad about meat. If I attend Mass each day during Lent, it isn’t because what I would be doing otherwise is not good. Rather, the purpose of such disciplines is to empty oneself of a bit of the experience of created goods in order to make more room for the divine grace of one’s baptism.

The human heart carries an emptiness that only God, our loving Father, and other people can fill. However, especially in a materialistic culture, we are constantly urged to fill this emptiness with stuff when only God can satisfy it.

Since only God and neighbor can satisfy this empty place, it behooves us to make use of Lenten disciplines to try to open ourselves more to the grace of baptism that, in turn, opens us more to God.

We fast and abstain during Lent to get more in touch with the hunger that we have for God, and with our baptismal character as members of the body of Christ.

We can give up smoking or television or aimless Internet surfing.

We can give more time than usual to volunteer work. But we must do it to revalorize our deepest nature as members of the mystical body of Christ through the sacrament of baptism.

(Mitch Finley is the author of many books on Catholic themes. His website is www.mitchandkathrynfinley.com.)

With ashes on his own forehead, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein imposes ashes on a woman who attended an Ash Wednesday Mass on March 9 at SS. Peter and Paul Basilica in Rome, as a reminder of our mortality.
Wisdom of the saints: St. Cyril of Jerusalem

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, whose feast is celebrated on March 18, was driven into exile three times while he was bishop of Jerusalem, but triumphed eventually and was later made a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII. He is to be thanked for the turbulent fourth century when the Church was trying to answer the question, “Who was Jesus Christ?”

The Church thought it had answered that question definitively in the Council of Nicaea in 325. However, Arius, who taught that God the Father was created by the Father and was thus not equal to him, got the upper hand and the Ariant bishop of Caesarea forced Cyril into exile the first time in 357.

But Cyril was not to be defeated. He lived a second time in exile, and the Ariant Emperor Valens the third time in 367. In all, Cyril was in exile for 35 years that he was the bishop of Jerusalem.

Catholic Evangelization Outreach

I have had the pleasure and privilege to direct the Rite of Christian Initiation at my parish for several years. In listening to the favorite ways of communicating to our catechumenate candidates is by beginning a sentence with “I wish that.” And “I wish about being Catholic is...” I wish that more Catholics would share our faith from this perspective. There is a lot to like and to be grateful for as Catholics. One of the many things I like about being Catholic is our tradition and treasure of prayer.

Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross. This is a simple prayer that witnesses our belief in the Trinity. We make a profession of faith in the Holy Trinity. It reminds us of our baptism. I like the way we begin and conclude prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

I like how Catholics pray the holy Scriptures. The Lectio Divina, a form of prayer with an organized and descriptive “portrait” of God. I like how we encourage study and reflection as we pray—and how we continue to pray with the Scriptures, and I appreciate our models for praying the Scriptures, such as lectio divina. I like how Catholics pray the holy Mass.

I like singing those wonderful Scripture prayers, the psalms, at Mass. I like how we receive the word of God, and express it in poetry and music through a variety of vocal styles and instruments. I like how music moves our heart and soul to feel the friendship and love of God.

I like the way that Catholics pray as a community, as we pray with our brothers and sisters in the commuion of saints and angels. I like that we have prayers passed down to us from the saints, our prayer calendar, and St. Patrick. I like that we pray for the living and the dead.

I like Catholic intercessory prayer. I like how we Mary, the Mother of God, to intercede for us in prayer. I like how we appreciate her as our Mother. I like the many ways that prayer with Mary leads us closer to her Son.

I like our treasure of traditional prayers. The “Our Father,” “Hail Mary” and “Glory Be” help us pray when our own words fail us. In our prayer services, morning prayers and night prayers provide a rhythm for prayer. I appreciate how Catholics are welcomed to pray with us from the heart. I like how heart prayer allows us to put our personal stamp on praying. The Church uses signs and symbols to express prayer. Water, light, oil and incense help us experience God through the rituals, our actions, and objects, along with the spoken word, are powerful ways of making God more visible for us.

There is a lot to like and be grateful for as a Catholic. I believe we are called not only to share our faith, but also share it with joy and enthusiasm. When I share what I like about being Catholic, it is not only to share my faith, but to share it with joy and enthusiasm.

When I share what I like about being Catholic, it is not only to share my faith, but to share it with joy and enthusiasm. It is about drawing attention to God, who is doing great things for me.

God is doing great things for you and for me. There is no better way for us to discover and embrace this faith through Catholic prayer. God bless you all.

(From Your faith is the pastoral address to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, and is a member of the Archdiocesan Institution Committee)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 20, 2011

• Genesis 12:1-9a
• 1 Timothy 1:1-10
• Matthew 17:1-9

The Book of Genesis is the source of this weekend’s first reading. As its name implies, Genesis reveals the divine origin of life, and also reveals the divine plan in the forming of the Hebrew race.

Genesis is a splendidly vivid revelation of God’s goodness and power, and indeed of the dignity of humanity. It is a great pity that this marvellous book has been so often tortured and misconstrued by well-meaning but uninformed readers over the years. In their earnest attempt to preserve the divine character of this book, they lose much of its impact.

This weekend’s reading is about Abraham. Considered by scholars to have been an actual person, Abraham is regarded as the father of the Jewish people.

The reading makes several points. God is active in human affairs, and humans can communicate with God. Abraham has a very strong faith.

St. Matthew’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the story of the Transfiguration, replete with symbols of God and images of God that were familiar to Jews because these symbols and images appear throughout the Old Testament.

Bright light, mountaintops and pure white symbols of God. Surrounding Jesus were Moses and Elijah, the great heroes of the religious tradition.

This scene utterly contrasts with that of Calvary. Instead of shimmering clothes, Jesus on the cross has been stripped of his garments. Instead of glowing clouds and brilliant light, gloom and darkness surround him on the cross.

Reflection

Lent is little more than one week in progress, and already the Church is encouraging us and reinforcing our faith as Jesus strengthened the faith of the Apostles, who stood trembling and in dismay before the divine sight manifested on the mountain.

The message is clear. Jesus is God, and is active and present among us. However, we must personally believe in order to be saved. And in this belief, we must commit our very lives to Christ.

Abraham is a critical part of this weekend’s scriptural lesson.

Nowhere in these readings is there any account of the Crucifixion. Nowhere is Calvary mentioned in these Scripture passages. Nevertheless, the event of the Lord’s death on the cross is essential to understanding fully this weekend’s message.

Calvary represents the world. It was for a moment, seemingly, the triumph of earthly power and human sin over goodness. At least, surely this is how it was interpreted by the enemies of Jesus. Of course, Jesus reversed all this sin by rising in glory.

Every human being can be tricked into assuming that earthly things or earthly satisfaction will bring them to triumph. They will not. Sin brings death. All around sin is gloom and darkness.

But we must have faith to see beyond the gloom to the light of Jesus as seen at the Transfiguration. Abraham is our model, our father in faith, our witness of absolute faith.†

Daily Readings

Monday, March 21

Daniel 9:4-19
Psalm 79:8-9, 11, 13
Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday, March 22

Isaiah 4:10, 16-20
Psalm 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21-23
Matthew 23:1-12

Wednesday, March 23

Toribio de Mogrovejo, bishop
Jeremiah 18:18-20
Psalm 31:5-6, 8-9, 14-16
Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday, March 24

Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 16:19-31

Friday, March 25

The Annunciation of the Lord
Isaiah 7:10-14, 8:10
Psalm 42
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

Question Corner

Fr. John Dietzen

Q

Angels are portrayed in Scripture as God’s messengers and helpers. How do we read of different types of angels—principalities, powers, virtues, dominations, thrones, cherubim and seraphim? Where did these types originate? Or how was it determined that there are all these various kinds of angels? Is there an order of rank among the different types? (Ohio)

A

Angels (from the Greek word angelos, “which means ‘messenger’”) are generally portrayed in Scripture as well as in Jewish and Christian tradition as heavenly beings who bring announcements from God to human beings or in God’s name.

As the Jewish awareness of God’s transcendence and holiness developed in the Old Testament, angels appear more and more often as intermediaries between God and humans.

By New Testament times, they became more evident, and are mentioned often in the Gospels and other Christian writings after Jesus.

In fact, the voice of the Father is heard rarely in the New Testament, while angels exercise significant roles in decisive events, such as the Annunciation and the Resurrection.

The theory that there are nine “choirs” of angels was raised by various theologians in the fourth century. Five were spiritual forces mentioned by St. Paul—authorities (virtues), dominions, thrones, powers and principalities (see Eph 2:20 and Col 1:16).

Others named in the Bible are angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim. They number allegedly at least in the tens of thousands.

The real story of angels, however, is not that easy to explain. It is not clear, first of all, that St. Paul believed or intended to teach that these groups of angels were anything like the classes or choirs as we might view them.

In both of the passages cited above, St. Paul is insisting on one important point. No spiritual power, whatever name you give it or how exalted it may be, can remotely compare to the dignity and majesty of the risen Jesus, through whom and for whom all creation exists.

Angels, cherubs and seraphs exercise a variety of functions on Earth and in the heavenly assemblies of God.

The former, for example, guard the gates of Eden after Adam and Eve’s fall (Gen 3:24) and provide a throne for the Lord (Is 37:16).

Archangels are sometimes called princes of the angels because of their particularly prominent roles in Scripture. The word itself occurs only twice in the Bible. St. Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess 1) tells us that an archangel will announce the coming of Christ, and the letter of St. Jude (verse 9) quotes a passage from the apocryphal “Annunciation of Moses,” calling Michael an archangel.

Many angelic names have arisen in popular belief and devotion through the centuries, especially the Archangel Uriel, who is mentioned in several early noncanonical Christian writings.

Only Michael, Raphael and Gabriel are named in Scripture, however, and are the only names of angels allowed for use in Catholic liturgy.

Q

Why does the Lord say (in 1 Cor 6:10) that no drunkard (taking other wrongdoers) shall inherit the kingdom of heaven?

I’ve always viewed alcoholism as a disease, and one that slanders the other wrongdoers mentioned in this passage cannot claim.

Every time I see someone I care about who has overindulged in alcohol, I become fearful for that person. (Virginia)

A

People of the ancient world had no concept of alcoholism as a disease. Even to this day, despite much scientific evidence to the contrary, some religious groups and some people still insist that addiction to alcohol is totally a personal choice that one can undo with sufficient deterrence.

Certainly, one’s choices about drinking, particularly in excess that may lead to addiction, can be significantly subverted. Perhaps it needs to be said that the other morally wrong actions that Paul mentions may also gradually become addictive expressions of one’s self-centeredness, and an unhealthy need for control over other people, which is why they can be so seductive in relationships with others.†

My Journey to God

This Lent

This Lent I’ll create a space for stillness
This Lent Prayer becomes conversation
This Lent When at table, I’ll not overfill
This Lent I’ll repent and forgive
This Lent Small acts of kindness matter
This Lent I’ll walk through every Gospel story
This Lent I’ll come to know Jesus better because

By Cathy Lamperski Dearing

(Cathy Lamperski Dearing is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. A woman sings during Mass on Ash Wednesday at a chapel adjacent to the destroyed Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on March 9. Much misery remains for the people living in Port-au-Prince more than a year after the 7.0-magnitude earthquake on Jan. 12, 2010, devastated a large region in Haiti.)
Millions come to the Vatican, but not only a few special days.

The pope, naturally, as well as 73 cardinals who live within the walls or in Rome, 306 members of the papal diplomatic corps, 49 priests and religious brothers, one nun, 86 Swiss Guards, 25 priests of the Roman Curia, most of whom are Vatican employees, along with their spouses and children, attend the papal audience.

Of those with Vatican passports, only 223 residents call the Vatican home, while 349 people live in Rome or elsewhere.

Most will lose their privileged status when they leave the Vatican post or residence.

Another 221 people live on Vatican territory, but are not Vatican citizens. They are mostly clergy, male and female religious, and male and female lay workers, according to the statistics.

The small numbers contrast with the massive traffic of people who pass through the Vatican every day, 2.2 million people attended papal audiences, liturgies, audiences or the Sunday recitation of the Angelus.

The Vatican press office said that during the last year, 5.3 million tourists visited St. Peter’s Basilica, 4.6 million visitors toured the Vatican Museums, and 2.2 million people attended papal audiences, liturgies, audiences or the Sunday recitation of the Angelus.

Who are the citizens of the Vatican?

The Vatican is a sovereign state, but shares many things with surrounding Rome, including its traffic.

The governor's office said that during the last year, 2.2 million cars passed through the walls of Vatican City during 2010.  

Providence Sister Ann Xavier Hau served as a teacher, principal and in parish ministry

Providence Sister Ann Xavier Hau died on March 1 at Mother Theodore Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 4 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Bernice Margaret Hau was born on Nov. 12, 1920, in Chicago. She entered the congregation of the Providence Sisters on Jan. 5, 1949, and her final vows were on Aug. 15, 1947.

Sister Ann Xavier earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and master’s degree in education at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

During 72 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered for 50 years at Catholic grade schools in Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, California and Florida.

In addition to teaching, Sister Ann Xavier served as a principal for 12 years. She retired from teaching in 1992 then served in parish ministry for six years.

Sister Ann Xavier ministered at the former Holy Trinity School in Muncie, Ind., from 1986-92. She served as a principal for 12 years. She retired from teaching in 1992 then served in parish ministry for six years.

Special Survivors Memorial Gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Marys, IN 47876.
Although many in the broader society and even within the Church question the need for exorcists, others—including many non-Catholics—seek out their ministry frequently. 

“I get over half a dozen calls a week,” Father Lampert said. “It does consume a lot of my time and attention. I get calls from all over the United States.”

The high number of inquiries from Father Lampert and other exorcists receive—and the fact that there are only about two dozen exorcists in the United States—led Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki of Springfield, Ill., to organize a conference on exorcists in Baltimore last fall. Bishop Paprocki called the conference as the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance since the Code of Canon Law requires that priests receive explicit instruction from their bishop before performing an exorcism.

About 60 priests, including Father Lampert, and 50 bishops attended. “I think people are realizing that the devil is real, and the response to him and his Father Lampert, and 50 bishops attended.

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The Criterion Friday, March 18, 2011 | Page 23

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The Criterion Friday, March 18, 2011 | Page 23
God calls people of faith to help him with his work of salvation, Jonathan Tremaine Thomas reminded pro-life supporters during the 40 Days for Life prayer rally on March 6 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged Chapel in Indianapolis.

Saying lives and saving souls are our Christian duty, Thomas emphasized in his keynote address for the spring pro-life campaign, which mobilizes people to pray and fast for an end to abortion during Lent.

A Protestant leader with the National Black Pro-Life Coalition, Thomas has spoken at several respect life events since he moved to Indianapolis.

"A person is a person no matter how small," he said, quoting from Horton Hears a Who, a popular children’s book written by Dr. Seuss.

"Heaven hears a Who," Thomas said, each time a defenseless unborn baby is killed in an abortion.

"Maybe you can see on the forefront of the pro-life battle for the last 40 years," he said. "Maybe you have been at the [abortion] clinics doing [pro-life] sidewalk counseling. Maybe you have been every Saturday praying the rosary. Maybe you have never missed a pro-life rally, and yet you haven’t seen the victory that you so desire.

Never doubt that God hears our pro-life prayers, Thomas said. "God is both lamb and lion, [and] the judgments of the lamb are true and righteous. ... This is a spiritual battle."

More than 50 million lives have been destroyed by the travesty of legal abortion, he said, and the blood shed by innocent unborn babies has been sown into our nation’s womb.

When heaven responds to the cries of the unborn, there has to be people who can hear them, too, " Thomas said. "When heaven hears a Who, Hoosiers [must] hear heaven. ... We’re on the winning side."

After the prayer rally, Our Lady of Mount Carmel parishioner Melanie Rosswurm of Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, who is a 40 Days for Life volunteer coordinator, said she is glad to see Catholics and Protestants praying together to end abortion.

"I think it’s wonderful that we’re all coming together [in prayer] to protect and defend life," Rosswurm said. "It’s a basic fundamental that life is truly precious. If we could all see that, some day abortion won’t exist." 

There are four basic kinds of extraordinary activities of the devil

By Sean Gallagher

Father Vincent Lampert said there are four basic kinds of extraordinary activities of the devil.

The ordinary way that the devil works in people’s lives, said Father Lampert, the exorcist of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, is simply through the temptation to sin that people experience every day.

The extraordinary kinds as described by Father Lampert:

- Infestation—Where the devil or another evil spirit are attacking them.

- Possession—The most extreme form of extraordinary activity of the devil in which he or some other evil spirit or spirits have a degree of control over a person’s body.

Father Lampert said possession is rare because “it’s a complete rejection of God.”

The priest said that possessions cannot occur against our will, and that a person has a choice to invite the devil into his or her life.

Father Lampert explained how this can happen.

“Sometimes people get involved in occult practices, maybe out of a sense of curiosity or entertainment. Then they build up a reliance on that. And the reliance on that leads to dependence. And then the dependence can lead to a more solidified relationship.”

—Father Vincent Lampert

Some time ago I was asked by a person if I could help him to expel a devil. The person had been going to various religious people, but none of them were able to help him. I told him that I could help him, but he had to come to me and then I would help him. He came to me and I helped him.

Sometimes people get involved in occult practices, maybe out of a sense of curiosity or entertainment. Then they build up a reliance on that. And the reliance on that leads to dependence. And then the dependence can lead to a more solidified relationship.

And, ultimately, the question is, ‘Is this a relationship that I want to deal with the devil, or am I dealing with the presence of the Evil One, and not an illness?’”

National statistics indicate that heart disease is the primary cause of death for African-Americans, he said, but abortion is actually the No. 1 killer of African-Americans.

“One out of every two black women will get an abortion,” Thomas said. “The African-American race is the only race that is decreasing at an increasing rate. “I used to be very upset about the fact that our culture will not acknowledge the reality that abortion is the No. 1 killer of African-Americans,” he said. “But then I felt like the Holy Spirit whispered in my ear and said: ‘Heart disease is the No. 1 killer.’”

“Heart disease is the No. 1 killer not only of African-Americans, but of our entire nation,” Thomas said. “It takes God to make us good. Our hearts are sick. That is why a mother can allow her son or daughter to be ripped up [by abortion] in her womb. We have a heart disease in this culture. ... We live in a culture that calls what is evil ‘good’ and what is good ‘evil.’ Our world is living in that dying heart of disease.”

Pro-life supporters must “advance beyond the front door of abortion clinics, and pray for the rich and the hearts and the minds of families all over this nation,” he said. “We have to be a [pro-life] voice for the culture ... God will respond if we humble ourselves in prayer and participate with him in changing history. I believe heaven is looking for Hoosiers, and I believe that I’m standing in front of some Hoosiers who can hear heaven. ... We’re on the winning side.”

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