Families unite in faith during Easter Vigil liturgies

By Mary Ann Wyand

It’s never too late to answer God’s call to join the Catholic Church.

Three residents of the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis—Helen Marsh, Jackie Cooper and Rita Flowers—began the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process last October then came into the full Communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil on April 23 at the chapel in the home operated by the Little Sisters of the Poor. St. Augustine Home residents Rita Flowers, left, and Helen Marsh were also confirmed and received first holy Communion.

The women, who were baptized as members of Protestant congregations many years ago, have found new life in Christ as Catholics during their golden years while living with the Little Sisters and residents. Sister Judith Meredith, superior of the St. Augustine Home, hugged the women and welcomed them into the Church after the Mass.

“We’re thrilled, of course,” Sister Judith said during the reception. “We’re so happy to think that they’re now able to receive the sacraments, especially the blessed Eucharist. It was expressed by them that all the love they have experienced here at the home, and seeing the other residents so happy going to Mass and receiving holy Communion made them decide to share this spiritual joy.”

Formerly a licensed practical nurse, Mrs. Cooper explained. “God engineered the whole thing. What a blessing it is to be here.”

Marsh, who is 78, worked as a temporary nurses’ aide at the St. Augustine Home for a few days many years ago.

Helen Marsh, who is 78, worked as a temporary nurses’ aide at the St. Augustine Home for a few days many years ago.

She was raised as a Baptist, and is overjoyed to be living with the Little Sisters and sharing their Catholic faith.

“What a blessing it is to be here,” Marsh explained. “God engineered the whole thing. And you will find rest for your soul’ ” (Jer 6:16).

Dumars Zeher found comfort in these words of the prophet Jeremiah in her journey from her husband and their four daughters into the Catholic Church as members of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greenacre.

The path she has followed through her 52 years has led her around the world. The daughter of a father who worked in the U.S. diplomatic service, she was born in Bangladesh and later lived in South Africa, Germany and Greece.

Zeher met her husband, Andy, when they were Peace Corps volunteers in the 1980s in Liberia. They fell in love, and were married in 1985 in that West African nation.

They lived in Indianapolis in the 1990s.

Nuncio to Egypt says Christians have both hope, fear

ROME (CNS)—At least 12 people were killed and more than 100 were injured in attacks on Orthodox churches on May 7 in Imbaba, part of metropolitan Cairo.

Just hours before the attacks, Archbishop Michael L. Fitzgerald, apostolic nuncio to Egypt and former president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, spoke about the state of Christian-Muslim relations in Egypt.

He said that Egypt’s Christian minority looks toward the future with hope for greater freedoms for all citizens, but continues to have some fear that the revolution will be hijacked by Muslim fundamentalists.

Initial reports from Cairo indicated no Catholic churches were involved in the May 7 violence. However, from Rome, the missionary news agency AsiaNews reported that the 16-year-old nephew of a Catholic bishop was killed in retaliation for a Catholic church offering shelter to an Orthodox priest.

Christians protested in Cairo on May 9, two days after the violence began outside St. Mina Church in Imbaba, where several hundred Salafi Muslims gathered, claiming a Christian woman married to a Muslim man was being held there against her will.

A report from Arab West Report, a weekly digest of stories from the Egyptian press, indicated that the initial violence began in the late afternoon, and police did not arrive until 10 p.m. At least two or possibly three churches were burned.
St. Nicholas Parish in Sunman.

St. Pius Parish in Ripley County, to pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan and St. Nicholas Parish in Sunman and administrator Rev. Gregory D. Bramlage, O.S.B., Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis. These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Daniel M. Bechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis. "All the things that I learned in the Baptist faith—forgiveness of sin, Jesus in your heart and the divine life—is all the same that they taught me [during RCA classes], but it's so much deeper," she said. "What a deep well to draw from. For God to illuminate that into my heart, it wasn't hard to believe in the [real presence of Jesus in the] Eucharist. After you hear what it is, you have to believe." Resident Bitsy Landis recommended Catholic books, and Marsh read them eagerly. "She would say, 'Here's a good book. Here's another good book.' Marsh recalled. "So I read these good books and I thought, 'This is just great. This is the Church that I just was built with Peter as the rock. It isn't hard to understand after God gives you the grace to understand.'" Marsh was excited to receive "the real body and blood of Jesus Christ" for the first time during the Easter Vigil. "I'm absolutely delighted," she said. "This is just where God wants me. Now every day I can live the divine life of Christ… and to go to Mass in the chapel, the daily walk with God. "The Little Sisters are the kindest, sweetest, nicest people I have ever met in my whole life," Marsh said. "I have seen such love for God and for the residents in them. They pray for us. They feed us. They take care of us in every physical way. They are phenomenal. This home is the anteroom to heaven. It's heaven on earth. Jesus is here in the chapel in the Eucharist, and the Holy Spirit leads this place. We're truly one in Christ." Resident Mary Ann Phelan, who also volunteers as a member of the Little Sisters' [association] Jeanne Jugan, served as Marsh's sponsor. "I am thrilled for her because now she can receive the Eucharist, which I think to her is one of the greatest joys of her life," Phelan said during the reception. "It was a great honor to be her sponsor. To go on this journey with her has been beautiful, and has deepened our friendship immensely, spiritually and in other ways." New resident Rita Flowers, who is 82 and was raised as a member of the Church of Christ, moved to the St. Augustine Home last August from her longtime home in Downers Grove, III., where she regularly attended Mass at Holy Trinity Church not far from her apartment building. "I have met some of the most wonderful people here," she said. "I'm so thankful that I live here." When she learned that catechetical instruction would be offered at the St. Augustine Home by Msgr. John Duncan, St. Augustine Home chaplain, and Father Philip Bowers, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, she decided to join the full communion of the Church. "I had been going to the Catholic Church for a long time," Flowers said. "I would go to Mass, and I used to go to church by myself in the afternoon and light candles and say my prayers… I enjoy church. I used to watch the Mass on TV if I couldn’t go to church, and I always enjoyed it. After I moved here, I realized that I can go to Mass every day." One of her three daughters, Sister Judy Flowers, is a Daughter of Charity and registered nurse who ministers as the sister servant at the Seton Residence, the order’s home for retired sisters in Evansville, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese. "I felt total awe and surprise when she told us a few weeks ago that she was going to join the Church," Sister Judy recalled after the Easter Vigil. "I was thrilled. She frequently read the Bible to us when we were young. "I think she got interested in the Church when she spent about four months living with [the retired Daughters of Charity] in Evansville," Sister Judy said. "One of our sisters really took her under her wing… I think that made a big impression on her." Resident Barb Cooper, who lived in Westfield, Ind., and was a Methodist, felt called to learn about the Catholic faith after she moved to the home two years ago. "I'm so proud and so happy for the women," Cooper said after the Mass. "It made me cry to see them receive the Eucharist. It was so wonderful." Resident Jackie Cooper, who was 90 and was a Methodist, felt called to learn about the Catholic faith after she moved to the home two years ago. "I live in this home with the sisters and see the people go into the chapel, I felt like I wanted to be one of them," Cooper said after the Mass. "I am a religious person, and I was active at St. Luke United Methodist Church, but I felt like the Catholic religion is for me. "I just love being around the sisters," she said, "and the priests are wonderful. They're holy men of God." After receiving her first holy Communion, Cooper said she felt "overjoyed, fulfilled and blessed." Her sponsor, resident Catherine Bates, had tears in her eyes as she watched three of her friends join the full Communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil. "They're really devoted women," Bates said at the reception. "They were really good Christians even before joining the Church." ^

St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan, and St. Mary Magdalene Parish in New Marion, to administrator of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan and St. Pius Parish in Ripley County, to pastor of St. Nicholas Parish in Sunman.

Rev. Shaun P. Whittington, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Mary Magdalene Parish in New Marion, to administrator of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan and St. Pius Parish in Ripley County while continuing as pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Mary Magdalene Parish in New Marion. These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Archbishop of Indianapolis. ¶

Official Appointments

Effective July 6, 2011


Rev. Shaun P. Whittington, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Mary Magdalene Parish in New Marion, to administrator of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan and St. Pius Parish in Ripley County while continuing as pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Mary Magdalene Parish in New Marion.

The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

"They're really devoted women," Bates said at the reception. "They were really good Christians even before joining the Church." ¶

Correction

In the May 6 issue of The Criterion, the frequency of WHOJ, a Catholic radio station in Terre Haute, was incorrectly identified. It is 91.9 FM. ¶

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The Criterion • PO Box 1410 • Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
Governor Daniels signs school choice legislation into law

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

“Real school choice has come to Indiana,” said Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) executive director, moments after watching Gov. Mitch Daniels sign the school choice bill into law during a May 5 bill signing ceremony at the governor’s office.

Tebbe, who has worked to promote school choice in Indiana for more than a decade, said, “For the first time in the history of Indiana, eligible parents will be able to use a voucher to send their children to a nonpublic school. And in many cases, that school of choice will be a Catholic school.”

Kari White of Indianapolis was delighted to learn that she will likely qualify for a voucher for her daughter, Natalie.

“As a single mom, even though I work, it’s a struggle each month to make ends meet,” she said.

White attended Central Catholic School and graduated from Roncalli High School, both in Indianapolis. She wants the same close-knit family environment for her daughter.

“It’s the morals they instill in the children that’s really important to me,” White said. “I also know my daughter will get more one-on-one attention at Central Catholic.”

Connie Zittnan, executive director of the archdiocesan Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, which is comprised of four center-city schools in Indianapolis, said, “This legislation is going to have a huge positive impact on our schools. We serve the underserved in our community. On average, 90 percent of our students qualify for free and reduced [price] lunch.

“The legislation will enable us to better serve our children, and open the door to new families,” Zittnan said. “We have about 50 to 75 open slots within our four schools, and we are working hard to fill those slots in the coming school year.”

Working Hoosiers whose children qualify for free or reduced price lunches would get 50 to 90 percent of what it costs the state to educate those students in a public school to attend a private one of their choice.

House Enrolled Act 1003 would only apply to children currently enrolled in a public school for at least two semesters or children already receiving a tax credit scholarship.

Daryl Hagan, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Evansville, said, “My reaction to Gov. Daniels signing HEA 1003 is one of gratitude. I am grateful that the elected officials in the state of Indiana care so deeply for the students and families that they wish to provide assistance to low- and middle-income families to help their children attend private schools.”

Mark Meyers, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, agreed.

“I am grateful that in we are in a much better position to help needy families now and mindful of the responsibility we have to be good stewards of public funds,” he said. “We hope and pray we will contribute greatly to revitalize our inner-city schools and communities.”

House Enrolled Act 1003 will take effect on July 1.

(Brigid Curtis Ayers is a correspondent for The Criterion. For more information on the Indiana Catholic Conference, log on to www.indianacc.org.)

He doesn’t go to bed hungry because he doesn’t have a bed.

Your used household items can become someone else’s now. You can donate them and provide other families with much-needed basic necessities such as appliances, furniture, household utensils and beds. We have a long list of families eagerly waiting to give your old household items a new home, where love and hope can thrive. To schedule pick-up of working condition household items go to andindy.org or call 317-687-1006. You can also make a monetary contribution or become a volunteer online.

Governor is expected to sign sweeping pro-life legislation into law this week

A spokesman for Gov. Mitch Daniels said that the governor expects to sign into law this week a bill passed by the Indiana General Assembly that would arguably make Indiana one of the most pro-life states in the nation.

In the process, Indiana would become the first state in the nation to defund abortion providers like Planned Parenthood.

House Enrolled Act 1210 requires women to be given various pieces of information in both oral and written forms prior to receiving an abortion.

This information includes the fact that life begins at conception, and that there are options to abortion and support for women who carry the baby to birth.

Potential health risks related to abortion must also be explained, and women seeking an abortion will be informed that their unborn child may feel pain during the abortion.

The wide-ranging pro-life act also prohibits abortions in Indiana after 20 weeks of gestation. Previous state law had banned abortions only after unborn babies were viable, which is generally considered to be 24 weeks.

The act also will require doctors who perform abortions in the state to establish emergency room admitting privileges for the purpose of follow-up care should the post-abortive woman need it.

HEA 1210 also bans an Indiana health insurance exchange established under the federal health care act from including elective abortion coverage.

This new pro-life law also prohibits the state government from contracting with an organization that performs abortions. Abortion providers, including Planned Parenthood, will no longer receive state tax dollars to provide medical services because they provide abortions.

The provisions of HEA 1210 takes effect immediately upon it becoming law.
Blessed John Paul II

The date for this issue, May 13, is the 30th anniversary of the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II. It is also the feast of Our Lady of Fatima. Pope John Paul attributed his survival from that attack to Our Lady, and he made a pilgrimage to the shrine at Fatima, Portugal, 29 years ago today. Pope John Paul II was beatified on May 1. We thought it fitting to publish this editorial about his sanctity, which is why he was beatified, on this feast of Mary. Did anything demonstrate his holiness more than the fact that he forgave the man who shot him and met with him in prison? He had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin. After his election as pope, John Paul took the motto "Totus Tuus," which is Latin for "Totally Yours." It was an expression of his consecration to Mary, borrowed from the Marian consecrating prayer in the book True Devotion to Mary by St. Louis de Montfort. The full text of the prayer is, "I am all yours, and all that I have is yours." In all that has been written about Pope John Paul’s beatification, the emphasis has been on his accomplishments as pope, achievements that many people believe qualify him to be called John Paul the Great. Only two popes have had this honorific title—Leo I and Gregory I. However, we must remember that he was beatified primarily for his personal holiness, including his actions as pope certainly figured into that. Since we have already mentioned his devotion to Mary, and May is a month dedicated to her, we should note that Pope John Paul always prayed several rosaries each day, at least one during each of his walks in the Vatican Gardens after his lunch and short nap. He also commissioned the mosaic icon “Mother of the Church” at the top of the colonnade in St. Peter’s Square. He wrote his encyclical Redemptoris Mater (“Mother of the Redeemer”) about Mary, teaching us that she was the ideal disciple of Jesus as well as his mother because she accepted God’s will throughout her life. But he also included Mary in his other encyclicals, usually asking for her intercession in his conclusion. Besides his devotion to Mary, Pope John Paul was known as a man who prayed all the time. We can all recall the photos of him in absolute concentration on his prayers even in the most public of places. We know from Joseph Weigel, his biographer, that Pope John Paul rose every day at 5:30 a.m. and, after dressing, spent more than an hour in private prayer in his chapel, kneeling before a modern crucifix and an icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa. His prayers included hundreds of personal requests that his household nuns took from his correspondence, and typed on sheets they placed beside the top of his prie-dieu. At 7:30 a.m., he consecrated Mass with his secretary and invited priests before a small congregation that included his nuns and invited guests. Those guests were often invited to stay after Mass for breakfast with him. Weigel reported in his book Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II that “John Paul’s daily routine was punctuated with prayer, not simply when he was in the chapel for Mass or the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours [to which he attached great importance], but constantly—in between meetings, en route to audiences, in a car, in a helicopter, even on the roof. ‘Paul VI had installed a solarium atop the Apostolic Palace, to which John Paul II added a set of modern Stations of the Cross. He prayed the Stations every Friday morning during the year and every day during Lent. Each week, he received the sacrament of penance and made his confession to a Polish priest.” Pope John Paul did his writing each day from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., often in his chapel before the Blessed Sacrament. He had a lifelong practice of putting a brief prayer at the top of each page. He also frequently prayed before the Blessed Sacrament while lying prostrate on the floor. He made all his major decisions on his knees before the Blessed Sacrament. Pray for us, Blessed John Paul II.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pachołczyk

NFP and the ‘telos’ of sex

Married Catholics today often struggle to understand the moral difference between using natural family planning (NFP) as a contraceptive to avoid a pregnancy and using Natural Family Planning (NFP). NFP relies on sexual abstinence during fertile periods in a woman’s cycle, as assessed by various indicators like cervical mucus or changes in basal body temperature. To many, the Church’s prohibition of contraception seems to be at odds with its definitions of NFP because in both cases the couple’s intention is to avoid children. That intention, however, is not the problem as long as there is in the words of Pope Paul VI, “serious motives to space out births.”

Dietrich von Hildebrand put it this way: “The intention of avoiding conception does not imply irreversibly as long as one does not actively interfere in order to cut the link between the conjugal act and a possible conception.”

That link between the conjugal act and a possible conception is a key source of meaning for our human sexuality. Sex, by its very nature, involves the capacity and driving energy to produce offspring.

Anyone in a high school biology class already understands this. We are able to recognize the purpose—or “telos”—of many different processes in the world: the telos of fire is to generate heat and to consume combustibles; the telos of an acorn is to become an oak tree; the telos of human sexual maturity is to man woman together to procreate and raise children in the family unit.

In all May of Mary, we observe: “This is the meaning objectively rooted in the marital act itself and unifiably discernible in it. It is the meaning arbitrary imposed upon or given to the act.” Seeing the telos of a process can reveal authentic goods to us which can then guide the moral choices we make.

Any time a married couple engage in sexual activity that has been intentionally rendered infertile by contraception, they are powerfully acting against the telos of the marital act itself. That intention, however, is not the kind of act than intercourse during a period of verbal abstinence—on alternating days so as to avoid speaking inauthentically to each other through contraceptive sex. Contraceptive intercourse is always a radically different kind of act than intercourse during a known fertile period.

FATHER TADEUSZ PAHOŁCZYK, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

Letters to the Editor

Problem-solving techniques needed to address broken immigration system

I find Glena Tebbe’s column in the April 22 issue of The Criterion about immigration law particularly offensive as a Catholic and an American. Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, assesses blame to the United States concerning the “illegal immigration” issue currently confronting our nation. On average, 400,000 to 600,000 immigrants enter the U.S. on an annual basis. Tebbe is misrepresenting immigration reform for amnesty for illegal immigrants. If Tebbe and the Catholic Church—的愿望“to address a solution to the broken federal immigration system,” a simple application of common-sense reasoning should be implemented—discover the root cause of the problem. Focus on the despotic and corrupt countries that brutalize, subjugate and suppress all human rights to its citizens, forcing them to flee to the U.S.A.

Tony Allen
Indianapolis
Encontrando al Buen Pastor, la luz paschal de la esperanza en la oscuridad

También me enviaron algunas hostias que decía: ‘medicina para dolores de estómago’. "His people would say to me, ‘Vamos a hacer un pacto: si no estás en este mundo real puedes encontrar al Buen Pastor, la luz paschal de la esperanza en la oscuridad. —

La intención de vocaciones del Arzobispo Buechlein para mayo Seminarios: que ellos sean fieles a la oración y estudien, y continúen en su deseo de servir God and the Church as priests.

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

Los reflejos al cuarto Domingo de Pascua como el Domingo del Buen Pastor. El Evangelio representa a Jesús como la imagen del pastor de ovejas. Resulta alegorizador pensar sobre la cuestión del Cercano Oriente. Los pastores en el Cercano Oriente viven modestamente. Viajan con poco equipo, cargando un bolso hecho de pieles de animales en las que llevan comida, algo de pan, frutas secas, algunas acenitas y queso. Y, según recordamos en la historia de David y Goliat, los pastores llevan una honda, tanto para protección como para cazar, y es útil para trazar de vuelta a las ovejas descarradas. Los pastores también llevan un cáliz, el bálsamo de los pastores. Con él pueden atrapar y hilar a las ovejas que están empezando a desaparecer. Del mismo modo, pueden apoyarse en el calvario mientras caminan por terrenos escabrosos.

En muchos países se crían ovejas para fuego y comidas, y contienen en un muro de ovejas llamado "la casa de ovejas". "Pela la próxima vez, sostenía con firmeza en la mano derecha, con un paquete de cigarrillos de desechos. "Fue una verdadera medicina para el alma y para el cuerpo. Cada vez que celebraba la misa tenía la oportunidad de extender mis manos y clavarse a la cruz con Jesús para beber con él de calzado amarillo. "Todos los días, al recitar las palabras de la consagración, confirmaba con todo mi corazón y con toda mi alma un nuevo pacto, un pacto eterno entre Jesús y yo por medio de su sangre mezclada con la mía. "Esas fueron las misas más hermosas de mi vida." (Van Thuan, Testimonio de esperanza, Pauline Books, 2000, p. 131)." In the dark of night, the cardinal would distribute Communion to the Catholics who were with him, and he made a tabernacle out of a discarded cigarette pack. "He said, ‘The Eucharist became for me and other Christians in Vietnam a hidden and encouraging presence in the midst of all our difficulties’ (Ibid., p. 132).”

In this way, the darkness of the prison became a paschal light. … The prison was transformed into a school of catechists. "Maybe being in prison can make one appreciate more easily the love of the Good Shepherd and the Eucharist that embodies his love. There are other ways of being in prison—the slavery of sin, the darkness of illness or of fear, deep sadness at the loss of a loved one or the heartbeat of betrayal by someone we love. In this real world, we can find the Good Shepherd, the paschal light of hope in the darkness."

The Criterion  Friday, May 13, 2011

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

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Finding the Good Shepherd, the paschal light of hope, in darkness

(Edward’s note: While Archbishop Buechlein continues to recover from a stroke, we offer some reprints of his various columns for your enrichment. The following column is from the April 27, 2007, issue of The Criterion.)

We refer to the fourth Sunday of Easter as Good Shepherd Sunday. The Gospel features Jesus’ imagery of shepherding. It is instructive to think about shepherding in the Near East. The imagery Jesus used is helpful not only for us priests, the imagery easily translates for parenting and Christian leadership of any kind.

To this day, shepherds in the Near East live simply. They travel light, towing a bag made of animal skins in which they carry food—some bread, dried fruit, olives and cheese. And, as we remember from the story about David and Goliat, a shepherd carries a sling—for protection and for hunting, and it is useful for calling back stray sheep. A shepherd also carries a staff, the shepherd’s crook. With it, he can catch and pull back sheep that are beginning to stray. He can also lean on the staff as he makes his way through rough terrain.

In the same way, any sheep are raised in order to be slaughtered for food. In the Near East, for the most part, sheep are raised for wool. For the making of clothing and other materials of wool. And so, most of the sheep are with a shepherd for many years. Thus, they get to know the shepherd well and the shepherd knows his sheep. The shepherd knows the sheep’s voice. Because of the danger of the terrain, a shepherd walks out front and leads the sheep on their way to new pasture. Often, when necessary to ford a stream or some other treacherous spot, the sheep are reluctant to follow in the shepherd’s wake. He will carry a baby lamb across on his shoulders and thus the mother sheep and others follow.

These details about shepherding in the Near East help to fill in our reflection about the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. (They also suggest features that might apply for parenting.)

Our closest contact with the Good Shepherd is in the Eucharist and holy Communion. A favorite story exemplifies the treasure that is ours at every Mass.

A few years ago, a holy man of courageous faith died in cancer in Rome. Cardinal Francois Xavier Van Thuan had been imprisoned in North Vietnam for 13 years, nine years in solitary confinement. After his release and exile from Vietnam, the cardinal had been asked often, “Were you able to celebrate Holy Mass (in prison)?” He said: “When I was arrested, I had to leave immediately with empty hands. The next day, I was permitted to write to my people in order to ask for the most necessary things like clothes, toiletpaste and the like. I wrote: Please send me a little tea as medicine for my stomach ache.” His people understood. “They sent me a small bottle of wine for Mass with a label that read, ‘medicine for stomach aches.’ They also sent some hosts, which they hid in a flashlight. “The police asked me, ‘You have stomach aches?’ “Yes,” “Here’s some medicine for you.” “I will never be able to express my great joy! Every day, with three drops of wine and a drop of water in the palm of my hand, I would celebrate Mass. This was my altar, and this was my cathedral!”

“It was true medicine for soul and body. Each time I celebrated Mass hidden, I had the opportunity to extend my hands and nail myself to the cross with Jesus, to drink with him the bitter chalice.” “Each day in reciting the words of consecration, I confirmed with all my heart and soul a new pact, an eternal pact between Jesus and me through his blood mixed with mine. Those were the most beautiful Masses of my life!” (Van Thuan, Testimony of Hope, Pauline Books, 2000, p. 131).

In the dark of night, the cardinal would distribute Communion to the Catholics who were with him, and he made a tabernacle out of a discarded cigarette pack. "He said, ‘The Eucharist became for me and other Christians in Vietnam a hidden and encouraging presence in the midst of all our difficulties’ (Ibid., p. 132).”

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein’s prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein’s Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

¿Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

List of the archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

List of the archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa, Language Training Center, Indianapolis.
Events Calendar

May 13-15
St. Joseph Parish, 125 E. Broadway Ave., St. Heleneville.
“Spring Festival,” games, rides, refreshments, Fri., 5-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m., Sun. noon-10 p.m., pork chop dinner on Fri., chicken barbecue dinner on Sat., spaghetti and meatballs dinner on Sun. Information: 317-398-2827.

May 14
St. Jude Parish, 5323 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Archdiocesan Office of Worship, “Revised Roman Missal” workshop, parish liturgical leaders and pastoral musicians. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., no charge, workshop optional. Lunch $10 per person. 317-236-1483, 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or troyer@archindy.org.

May 15
St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 3605 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors, meeting. 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-744-2077.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. Seventh annual "Women's Conference, “Women of Life.” Debbie Asby, presenter, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $45 per person, bring a friend, two people $80, breakfast and lunch included. Registration: 812-933-6417 or center@oldsburguniv.edu.

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis. “Carmelite fourth day reunion, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., $20 per person includes meals. Information: 812-923-9344 or carmello@insaithbth.com.

May 16
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Schiller Lane, New Albany. Cathedrals Returning Home program, session four, 7:30-9 p.m. Information: 812-949-7685 or 502-336-3158.

May 17

St. Vincent Carmel Hospital, 13500 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Entrance 3, Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). "Spring Festival," noon-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m., Fri., 5-11 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m. Information: 317-784-1763.

May 19

May 22
St. Paul Parish, 9784 N. Deerborn Road, Greenwood. Ladies Sodality, hot breakfast bar buffet, 7:30 a.m.-noon, free will donation. Information: 812-623-2349.

Retreats and Programs

May 13
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 59th St., Indianapolis. “ Feast Day of Our Lady of Fatima,” celebration and procession to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, noon-11 p.m., St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Information: 317-889-3551.

May 14

May 15
Holy Cross Parish, Kelley Gym, 125 S. Oisriel St., Indianapolis. Free community health fair, “A Healthy Me is a Healthier Community.”

May 17
Saint Meinrad. "Retreat on the Dignity of Women." Information: 812-825-6462 or marianus@hhbumt.net.

May 19
Marian University present “Come Explore Nursing!” 4-7 p.m. Information: www.comeexploernurse.com.

May 20
Our Lady of Grace Cemetery, Columbus, 3100 N. 4th St., Indianapolis. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 9788 N. 71st St., Indianapolis. "Mayfest," games, rides, buffet dinners, music, Thurs. 5-11 p.m. Information: 317-784-1763.

May 22

VIPS

May 16
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Schiller Lane, New Albany. Cathedrals Returning Home program, session four, 7:30-9 p.m. Information: 812-949-7685 or 502-336-3158.

May 19
St. Roch Parish, 5323 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. "Mayfest," games, rides, buffet dinners, music, Thurs. 5-11 p.m. Information: 317-784-1763.

Holy Rosary Parish to host speaker on end-of-life issues

Rita Marker, executive director of the Patients Rights Council and one of the nation’s foremost experts about end-of-life issues, will speak on this topic at 7 p.m. on May 17 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis.

As an advocate for the sanctity and dignity of life, and as an opponent of euthanasia and assisted suicide, Marker has spoken before legislative committees, at universities and on television networks around the world over the past 30 years. In her presentation, “Bringing Christian Joy to the Dying,” Marker will address advance directives, also known as living wills, as well as discussing giving food and fluids to the dying and people in persistent vegetative states, and talk about end-of-life counseling in the federal health care reform law passed in 2010.

For more information on this event, call 317-572-7225.

Brain Game Champions

Members of the Brain Game team from Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis pose on April 13 outside the studios of WTHR Channel 13 in Indianapolis, which has broadcast the academic team competition for nearly 40 years. Cardinal Ritter students won this year’s competition. Students from 32 high schools participated in the contest. Team members are, from left in the front row, Clare Harshay, Joey Kuruz and David Hennon; from left in the middle row, Brian Malone, Jason Graf, Rigo Hernandez and Kara O’Connor; and from left in the back row, Byron Cenety, Daniel Sweeney and Joseph Sweeney. Clare, Daniel, Joey and Joseph were the starters for the team. The other students were alternate members.

Pro-life display

Volunteers young and old help erect a pro-life display of 4,000 crosses on May 7 in front of St. Malachy Church, 9633 E. County Road 700 N., in Brownsburg. The project was organized by St. Malachy Knights of Columbus Council #12540 and the St. Malachi Parish Pro-Life committee. The number of crosses in the display represents the number of unborn children who on average die each day in abortions. The crosses will be on display at the Indianapolis West Deeney parish until May 18.

Courage chapter is active in the archdiocese

Courage is an international Catholic apostolate that gives spiritual support for people with same-sex attraction who desire to lead a chaste life in accord with authentic Catholic teaching. A chapter of Courage is active in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Confidentiality and anonymity are assured.

For more information, call 317-439-8089 or send an e-mail to IndyCourage@yahoo.com.

Rita Marker

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All Saints Church in Camellburg, Ind., is the Evansville Diocese. They are the parents of four children: Debbie Meyers, Kathy Sewell, Sharon Vukalns and Doug Petroff. They have eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.
What was in the news on May 12, 1961? The Second Vatican Council and is there a 'lady-like' way to chew gum?

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 May 12, 1961, issue of The Criterion:

- Chancery announces 54 clergy appointments
- New center is planned for Special Education
- Council official rails against new "cow-like" fashion
- Lithuanian Reds arrest two priests in new crackdown
- Pope thanks U.S. for offer to aid the Vatican Radio
- Tell City to play host to national convention
- Council seen giving the laity more active role
- "NEW YORK—The Second Vatican Council will witness the Council official hails the primate of Lithuania's new center being planned"
- Council official hails "Council seen giving the laity more active role"
- "Tell City to play host to national convention"
- "Council seen giving the laity more active role"
- "NEW YORK—The Second Vatican Council will witness the Council official hails the primate of Lithuania's new center being planned"
- "Council official hails the primate of Lithuania's new center being planned"
- "Council sees the laity being more active role"
The 543 candidates listed were baptized in other Christian traditions and—within the past year—were baptized, confirmed and received their sacraments during the Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 23. The names listed here were provided by religious education leaders in local parishes.

Most people are listed in the parishes where they received their religious formation and the initiation of their sacraments.

We welcome the new Catholics who have become full participants in the Church since last Easter. Most of the people listed below were received in the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Sacraments of Confirmation during the Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 23. The 543 candidates listed are people who have never been baptized and—within the year prior to their baptism—were received in the fullness of the Church’s sacramental life. Most people are listed in the parishes where they received their religious formation and the initiation of their sacraments.
NEW ALBANY—“People have such big hearts,” said David Hock, who spoke at the grand opening of the Cardinal Ritter Neighborhood Resource Center in New Albany on April 29. Hock, president of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, thanked “a long list” of supporters who donated funds, labor and materials—both to restore the birthplace of Indiana’s first native cardinal, Joseph Elmer Ritter—and to construct a new community center behind the home.

The center, which accommodates about 100 people and has a kitchenette, is connected to the original home by a small, unfinished brick addition which will eventually become a museum about Cardinal Ritter. Cardinal Ritter was born July 20, 1892, at 1218 E. Oak St. in New Albany, where the front of the home was a bakery operated by his grandparents and parents. He was ordained a priest in 1917, was appointed an auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Indianapolis in 1933, and became the bishop of Indianapolis less than a year later. He was installed as the first archbishop of Indianapolis in 1944, and was appointed archbishop of St. Louis in 1946. He was named a cardinal in 1961.

He is noted for his participation in the Second Vatican Council and for the racial integration of Catholic schools in Indianapolis in 1938—16 years before the U.S. Supreme Court made such a policy the law of the land.

Two agency tenants, Home of the Innocents and the Housing Partnership Inc., have outreach offices in the restored home. The foundation board hopes additional nonprofit organizations will house their offices there.

The front of the home was restored in 2007 with a $220,000 grant from the Horseshoe Foundation of Floyd County. Renovation of the rear section was begun shortly afterward, but funds were lacking to finish the interior or install siding.

Completion of the center was made possible by a $190,000 grant from the city of New Albany, part of a $6.7 million award to the city from the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The Ritter Neighborhood Resource Center was the only public project funded out of 30 grants. The others were all residential restorations.

“The Ritter House is an anchor for this neighborhood,” she said, “and it was important to help fix it.”

Conventional Franciscan Father Troy Overton, who formerly taught at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, recalled the first time that he came to the neglected birthplace of the prelate in 1998.

“Father Troy said that few people knew much about Cardinal Ritter so he set out to create, with his students, a video about the New Albany native,” Bishop Etienne said.

“Father Troy said he realized that this was a scary place,” he said. “I wasn’t sure the floor would hold us up.”

Bishop Paul D. Etienne of Chryseme, Wyo., a Tell City native and former pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, was the guest of honor at the event. He was an early board member of the Ritter Foundation. He said he loved that Cardinal Ritter experienced growing up in the house enabled him to give his life in service to others.

“That’s the way God works in our lives,” Bishop Etienne said, “and so many of you have given to make this project come to life. But your generosity and prayers continue to be needed to sustain this work of justice.”

A motto of Cardinal Ritter is an apt summary of the community efforts that have brought life back to his childhood home: “Work hard. Pray hard. Don’t worry.”

By Patricia Happel Cornwell

Mary Dye and Joanie Traylor (candidates); Kaitlyn Martin and Kameron Wilkerson (candidates); Rylan Ruth, Bliss DeFrance, Kaitlyn McMillan and Nyjah McCrory (candidates); Bethany Heeter and Mattie Heeter (candidates); Nancy Hinchcliff, Bethany Heeter and Chance Atkinson (candidates); Emily Luckey, Sabrina Boulware and Lyla Heeter (candidates); Megan Jones, Jaden Jones and Katelyn Heeter (candidates); fraction, 8th grade

Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter Council of the Knights of Columbus members David Phillips, Ralph Nordhoff and Bill Koch.

Bishop Paul D. Etienne of Chryseme, Wyo., left, speaks at the grand opening of the Ritter Neighborhood Resource Center. To the right, he is the former pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Seated, from left, are Conventional Franciscan Father Troy Overton, board president David Hock, and Cardinal Ritter Council of the Knights of Columbus members David Phillips, Ralph Nordhoff and Bill Koch.
FaithAlive!

Use your freedom to control how you express anger

By Mitch Finley

Anger may be the emotion we are most uncomfortable with—in ourselves and in others. Our first inclination when we are with someone who is angry may be to caution him or her to calm down. Our first response when we ourselves feel anger, however, may be to demand that we perceive the cause of our anger.

Clayton Barbeau is a veteran therapist and author in San Jose, Calif. He is also the father of eight adult children so he knows a lot about anger. Barbeau was in the first grade when he learned that there are different kinds of anger. When a teacher described anger as one of the seven deadly sins, he recalled raising his hand and asking, "But wasn’t Jesus angry when he chased the money-changers from the temple?" He hadn’t anticipated her response. "I have never forgotten the transformation in her face, the horror, the fear, the anger when she screamed at me, ‘That’s not anger. That was righteous indignation!’" he said. Many years later, when Barbeau was serving in the U.S. Army on combat duty in Korea, he heard the sound of enemy mortars opening in front of his bunker and dove for cover. "The enemy was breaking the Geneva Convention and using [poison] gas filled my mind," he said. "I was not afraid. I was outraged that I should be killed in this way, and I expressed my outrage by shouting my anger in the strongest possible obscenities..." It might even be called ‘righteous indignation’ at their having broken the rules.

But Barbeau was mistaken. The mortar rounds were designed to drop to the ground by being a parachute open from it and propaganda leaflets float out from the canister. The combat incident taught him two important lessons: "The first was that my raging anger couldn’t change anything," he said, "and the second was that fear is always about what hasn’t happened.

As a mental health professional, Barbeau has learned that anger, like any emotion, is an energy in motion and it is like any emotion, something over which we have control. "We are not our feelings. We have feelings, and they flow continuously, and sometimes certain feelings come strongly to the fore, and often one feeling is masking another."

In therapy, Barbeau often helps clients to realize how the "center of awareness that is the 'self' is in control" of feelings. One should never surrender one’s freedom to another. Barbeau cautioned, "The other person’s behavior may stimulate various feelings, but it is the other person’s behavior. How I choose to respond is totally under my control. Indeed, it is my choice of responses that is creating 'myself.'"

Barbeau recommends a book, Feeling Good, by David Burns, who says that shifting one’s thoughts from hot to cool, "How dare he talk to me like that?" to "That’s not his rules," one cannot be really upset to talk that way.

Such a shift means that our response is not a defense, but a way of seeking understanding: "I wasn’t aware that it was that important to me, and I’m sorry to have upset you." Barbeau recalled a client who he wanted to encourage to realize the kind of freedom that she possessed when it came to making choices.

Without warning, he asked her, "What would I do if you got up from your chair and spat on me, and shouted that I was a terrible therapist, and you spat on me again, saying you were going to tell the world what a rotten therapist I was, and you don’t know why you wasted your time and money to come here? What would I do?"

Startled, the woman replied, "Well, you’d say you were sorry I felt that way.” Then Barbeau asked, "What else could I do?"

She was stumped.

So Barbeau suggested various scenarios. "My list ended with, ‘I could kill you.’" he said, pointing out that he could choose his response, and that response could range from tears to murder.

"How we handle those who aggress against us is always a choice. How we want to create ourselves, we who want to be," he reiterated.

He said that an alternative approach that he has used when confronted by people who are threatening or confrontational people is to say, "I will take your remarks under consideration. If the other person insists on an immediate response and is looking for an angry exchange, he holds his ground by saying, ‘No, this is important, and I will get back to you on it.’ In short, he gives himself a “time out,” which permits him to take some time, perhaps even days, before responding.

Or, Barbeau said, before replying, he can also ask, “Am I hearing you correctly, that you are angry about...?”

(Mitch Finley is the author of more than 30 books on Catholic themes, including a new revised edition of The Joy of Being Catholic. To learn more, log on to www.mitchandkathyfinley.com †)

When wronged by someone, the temptation may be to respond in anger. Anger also may stir when we witness clear injustices will alert society to the need to act against them. But it usually is pointed out in virtually the same breath that anger alone defines a conflict for a wife or husband, they may lose sight of the love and respect they have for each other and begin to consider themselves opponents in a winnable contest.

While something positive could follow upon anger, its outcomes often are not very noble at all. In his book Finding Happiness, published by Lauralburg Press, British Benedictine Abbot Christopher Jamison expresses grave reservations about anger, even anger out of a “zeal for justice.”

"Getting angry about a problem rarely improves the situation," he wrote. "What is needed is a zealous determination to overcome it. Anger’s endurance is among its problems. But I believe anger should be short-lived. Anger needs to quickly surrender ground to hope since a spirit of hopelessness allows anger’s hold on us to strengthen. Nothing that stifles hope is a small matter in the Christian vision, which views hope as a great virtue. Neither is it a small matter in the Gospel if anger makes enemies of us or leads to hatred.

And it is a mandate for Christians to serve their world as reconcilers. Yet, we live in a time when healing, reconciliation and forgiveness are counter-cultural, and revenge is easier and more popular than forgiveness, Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of New Orleans, in a 2007 speech.

"Archbishop Aymond’s point seems crucial. After all, how many times will the pathway beyond anger and into new hope be paved by reconciling, forgiving and healing efforts?"

(David Gibson was an editor for CNS for 37 years.) †

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If taken too far, anger can create polarization in relationships

By David Gibson

There are so many reasons why we become angry. Anger visits us regularly.

Anger is a natural human reaction to all kinds of events unfolding within and around us. Nonetheless, there are important questions to ask about anger. Sometimes people grow angry when they feel misunderstood or unappreciated. At other times, anger is the fallout of being left to clean up someone else’s mess. Disagreements of an everyday variety also give rise to angry states of mind.

At the same time, a given day’s bad mood, accompanied by moments of personal weakness, can create openings for anger. And there are occasions when we are angry with ourselves, disappointed over our handling of a situation.

When wronged by someone, the temptation may be to respond in anger. Anger also may stir when we witness clear injustices will alert society to the need to act against them. But it usually is pointed out in virtually the same breath that anger alone defines a conflict for a wife or husband, they may lose sight of the love and respect they have for each other and begin to consider themselves opponents in a winnable contest.

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From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Wisdom of the saints: St. Bernardine of Siena

When a pope compares a man to St. Paul, you know that he was important. He lived at the end of the 14th century and was one of the greatest of the Franciscans. He considered the greatest preacher of his day as he walked all over Italy. He was a Franciscan and eventually became general of his order.

He was known especially for his love of the name of Jesus. He created a symbol using the first three letters of Jesus’ name in Greek—IHS—in Gothic letters on a blazoning sun. The symbol eventually appeared in churches, homes and some public buildings. In his sermons, Bernardine said, “The name of Jesus is the glory of preachers because the shining splendor of that name causes his word to be preached throughout the world.”

He said the “immense, sudden and dazzling light of faith” came into the world when Jesus confessed “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him” (Matt 17:5). That light, he said, is the Apostle Paul and Jesus in the Holy Spirit. In that light, he said, the Apostle Paul can say to us, “Once you were darkness, but now you are light. Walk as children of light” (Eph 5:8).

Jesus’ name must be proclaimed, Bernardine continued, but “it must not be preached by someone with sullied mind or unclean lips, but stored up and preserved within the heart.” In that sermon, Bernardine also spoke about St. Paul the way that Paul could not “let anyone spoil his work for him.”

Paul was God’s chosen vessel, he said. “If this chosen vessel there were to be a drink more pleasing than earth ever offered, to all mankind for a price they could pay, so that they would be drawn to taste of it.”

When Paul’s voice was raised to preach the Gospel to the nations, Bernardine said, it was like a clap of thunder in the sky. His preaching was a blazing fire carrying all before it. It was the fire of faith rising in full glory. Infidelity was consumed by it, false beliefs fell away, and the truth appeared like a great candle carrying the whole world with its brilliant flame. St. Paul bore the name of Jesus at all times and wherever he went, Bernardine said, but especially when he was bearing witness to his faith.

His message, wherever he journeyed, Bernardine said, “The night is passing away, the day is at hand” (1 Cor 11:31). Bernardine was obviously following in Paul’s footsteps as he continued to preach the name of Jesus and him crucified. We, too, must always honor that light, he said, the Apostle Paul can say to us, “God called us into his marvelous light. In God called us into his marvelous light. In life.”

Bernardine continued, but “it must not be preached by someone with sullied mind or unclean lips, but stored up and preserved within the heart.”

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“Heavenly life is a test. The reward is heaven. The stakes are high.”

Fr. John Catoir

Spirituallity for Today/ Fr. John Catoir

Be proud to be a Catholic and speak up for the faith.

In the world of the secular media, there is a constant effort to put down the Catholic Church. Secularists do not care for the values that Jesus Christ preached, namely, the sacred character of the human person at every stage of life, and the sacred character of marriage and the family.

Secularism insists that there is no God, no moral values, no moral absolutes. Every violation of God’s will can be rationalized, explained away and ignored. St. Paul has been described as an ancient ruffian by Pope Benedict XVI as “relativism,” which is a fancy word for “everything goes.”

Jesus said that he came to do the will of the Father and, to that end, he surrendered his life to his Father. The Father and the Son journeyed, Bernardine said, “The night is passing away, the day is at hand” (1 Cor 11:31). Bernardine was obviously following in Paul’s footsteps as he continued to preach the name of Jesus and him crucified. We, too, must always honor that light, he said, the Apostle Paul can say to us, “God called us into his marvelous light. In life.”

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Fr. John Catoir writes for Catholic News Service.

Perspectives

Pro-life: Miss America shows wisdom at age 18

When Miss America is a lot of pressure for 18-year-old Teresa Scanlan.

Teresa Scanlan, then, when her mom was 18, she faced a lot of pressure, too. She was pregnant and she and her boyfriend, Jerod, had called unexpectedly. It was his 31st birthday, his wife was expecting their first child, and it seemed like a good time to reach out.

Teresa was working in her basement office when her mom, Janie, came down to tell her the news. Janie later married and had six children, whom she had never told about Jerod, assuming she would never hear from him and that it would be easier on them that way.

Teresa was stunned. “It was strange for me to even imagine that,” she told me. “I thought, ‘There’s no way this has to be some kind of joke, some kind of mistake.’”

The news offered Teresa insight on her mother’s life. “If you’re the bishop of a Catholic Church, pregnant and 18 in W ichita, Kan., and the pregnancy was kept a secret, even to relatives. With herd bering and desiring, Janie decided to place her baby for adoption with the Catholic Adoption Agency. She wanted him to have a stable, loving family, and every opportunity for success.

When Jerod was born, Janie held his tiny hand, wrote him a letter and let him go. “It was so hard for her,” Teresa said. “I have all the respect and love for her under the sun.”

Shortly after Jerod’s phone call, he and Janie decided to meet at an Olive Garden restaurant in Manhattan. “When you’re here,” says the chain’s slogan, “you’re family.” Janie brought three of her daughter’s and, when they spotted Jerod, tears of joy filled her eyes.

Over breadsticks and pasta, they talked for hours, sharing tidbits from decades, and stories of her life. “When he smiles, there are my mom’s dimples,” Teresa said.

One young teenager was viewing the situation for what it is—evidence of God’s Providence that Jerod would be raised by such devoted parents. Jerod and his mother have been reunited with his birth mom and her vibrant, faith-filled family.

“Teresa was just excited to be a part of his family and for him to be a part of ours,” Teresa said. “I always wanted a bigger family. I didn’t think six was enough.”

In January, Teresa was chosen Nebraska’s first Miss America, the youngest woman in a decade to claim the title.

“I finalized that it is those times when we’re least prepared, when we’re least ready, when we have the lowest chance of victory—that’s when God uses us,” she said. “It takes our feeble little attempts and turns them into amazing things.”

One week after being crowned Miss America, Teresa became an aunt. Jerod’s girlfriend, Providence, welcomed their baby and their two, away from their parents, and that day. United with other religious bodies, the Catholic Church is a moral force that stands against the immorality that is so widespread in the world today.

Premarital sex is an epidemic, unwanted pregnancies and abortions abound, and the divorce rate is more than 50 percent, resulting in countless broken homes and broken dreams.

“The Church stands against this tide of failure, and upholds marriage and the family at every turn. A number of wayward priests who are systematically being weed out have poisoned the image of the Church in the minds of people. Bernie Sanders, the American Catholic Church educates 2.6 million students every day at a savings of $637 hospitals, which account for hospital treatment of one out of every five people, just Catholic schools in the United States today.

And yet the press continues negatively, denigrating the Catholic Church. There are no positive things being said about it.”

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The Precious Blood of Christ

Blood, the life force, flowing through arteries, veins and heart. The heart, the pulse beat, subtle and at times beating like a drum in the ear. The consecrated Host, raised before eyes, “This is the Body of Christ.”

Feeding all with the new beat of unconditional forgiveness and love. The consecrated Host and Blood entering into my body and blood. Asking that I give to others the unconditional forgiveness and love Given to me in the breaking of the bread.

By Trudy Bledsoe

(Trudy Bledsoe is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis. An image of the 11th Station of the Cross painted by artist Virgil Cano of Pittsburgh depicts Jesus being nailed to the Cross.)

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 15, 2011

• Acts 2:14a, 36-41
• 1 Peter 2:20b-25
• John 10:1-10

Readings from the Acts of the Apostles frequently occur during the Easter season. They clearly show life in general in the first Christian community. More particularly, they reveal the special place of the Apostles among the early Christians, and that St. Peter was the head of the Apostles. So often, Peter speaks on behalf of the Apostles. Such is the case in this weekend’s first reading. Peter preaches on Pentecost, an important Jewish feast. His sermon goes to the heart of the Gospel message. Jesus is the Lord. The Shepherd. He came among us, not as a human, but also as God’s own Son. He died. He rose. He reconciled humankind with Almighty God. Humans have an option. They can accept Jesus as Lord. They can follow the Gospel. Or they can reject Jesus.

The author of Acts, traditionally believed to also have been the author of St. Luke’s Gospel, dates the sermon. It was preached on Pentecost, a Jewish holiday. Jewish holidays celebrated God in relationship with people, and in particular with the Hebrew people. The holidays therefore celebrated the Covenant, and God’s constant and uninterupted mercies.

In this case, the Jews recalled their special status as the people whom God protected and through whom God was revealed. The First Epistle of St. Peter provides the second reading.

Jesus died on the cross to bring, forever and without qualification, God and humanity together. Individual persons affirm this reconciliation for themselves by freely accepting Jesus as the Lord and by living as the Lord’s true disciples and as children of God.

St. John’s Gospel, the last reading, presents a theme that was among the Lord’s favorites, and that has always been beloved by Christians, namely the theme of the Good Shepherd.

Especially in this country, the imagery may not be as immediately telling as in a rural society. However, at the time of Jesus in the Holy Land, everyone would have been familiar with shepherds and sheep. The nature of sheep is important to the Scripture narrative. They are docile and quiet, often in peril from predators, such as wolves. They need their shepherds. Also, young sheep, or lambs, were the preferred animals for sacrifice in the temple. The meat of lambs was ritually prepared for Passover. They were regarded as innocent. Of course, sheep can wander. The shepherd does not tie them to himself. He leads them, but they can turn away from him. The Gospel’s message is clear. All people are apt to wander and to be as vulnerable as sheep are without a shepherd to guide them and protect them.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, leading us to pastures rich with nutrition and away from the predators that prowl in search of us—predators that sometimes succeed in tempting us to sin and actually rob us of our very lives.

Reflection

Weeks have passed since Easter, but the Church still rejoices in the Risen Lord. He lives! Giving us the words once preached by Peter, it calls us to repent, to turn away from sin, and to turn to the only source of life, the Lord Jesus.

Preparing us for this message, the Church frankly reminds us of who and what we are. We are as vulnerable as sheep. Predators lurk, waiting to assail us. The devil is the most vicious and crafty of these predators. Temptation draws us to death if we sin.

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He leads us to the nourishment that we need for spiritual health. He goes before us to prepare our way to the eternal fields of heaven.

The essence of this weekend’s message is clear and simple. We need the Lord. Otherwise, we shall die.

Here, the Church’s final lesson reminds us that we can follow the Lord or we can go our own way. If we turn from Jesus, however, we walk into peril.

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

TheCriterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org. •

Daily Readings

Monday, May 16

Acts 11:1-18
Psalms 42:2-3, 43:3-4
John 10:11-18

Tuesday, May 17

Acts 11:19-26
Psalm 87:1-7
John 10:22-30

Wednesday, May 18

John 1, pope and martyr
Acts 12:24-13:5a
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
John 12:44-50

Thursday, May 19

Acts 13:13-25
Psalms 89-2, 21-22, 25, 27
John 13:16-20

Friday, May 20

Bernardine of Siena, priest
Acts 13:26-33
Psalms 2-6, 11
John 14:1-6

Saturday, May 21

Christopher Magallanes, priest and martyr
and his companions, martyrs
Acts 11:34-42
Psalm 98:1-4
John 17:7-14

Sunday, May 22

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 6:1-7
Psalms 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19
1 Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12

Question Corner Fr. John Dietzen

Early writings not part of Bible are considered apocryphal books

(Reader’s note: Father John Dietzen died on March 27 in Peoria, Ill. His earlier column, “My Journey to God,” in the Criterion appears here under his wishes.)

Question

What are the apocryphal books of the Bible?

There recall that these books were eliminated from the Bible many centuries ago, and also that they should be restored and again be part of the Scriptures.

Is that true? If so, why hasn’t that happened? (Michigan)

There’s a good bit of misinformation underlying your questions.

A The apocryphal books of the Bible are not and—with perhaps one or two exceptions—never considered part of Scripture.

Generally, they owe their existence to the need to explain or interpret the Hebrew Scriptures. The Christian church in the first centuries gradually discerned which of the numerous Christian documents were becoming central to the authentic word of God and constituted the norm or rule for Christian faith. Anyone familiar with the books of the New Testament, however, will quickly recognize the superficial and even bizarre nature of most of the apocryphal texts.

They include cryptic “sayings” of Jesus and odd legends—such as one that described how the boy Jesus formed a bird out of mud then made it fly away—as well as much information which simply verifies the daily circumstances of biblical times, already recorded in the New Testament.

Some writers, as apparently the ones you refer to, claim that apocryphal books are not in the Bible only because of whim and jealousies between conflicting factions in the early Church.

One scholar of Christian history suggests that the best response is to let the books tell their own story. “It will very quickly be seen that there is no question of anyone’s having excluded them from the New Testament,” the scholar noted. “They have done that for themselves.”

At one level of history, however, these ancient documents may provide valuable insights into the cultural, political and daily circumstances of biblical times, even perhaps some genuine information about the family of Jesus.

The only source we have, for example, that Joachim and Anna were the names of Mary’s parents or that “the brethren of the Lord” were the children of Joseph by a former wife is the apocryphal gospel of James.

Christian art through the centuries draws heavily from apocryphal legends as did Dante Alighieri in his scenes of hell, purgatory and paradise created for his Divine Comedy.

Finally, we should note again that a few books in Catholic Scripture are treated as apocryphal—or non-canonical books—in many Protestant Bibles.
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obits of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in this paper. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


BLACKER, Joan M., 82, St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Indianapolis, April 20. Mother of John and Margarita Blacker. Great-grandmother of four.†


BRYANT, Emily B., 89, St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Indianapolis. Sister of Margaret (Little Flower) Bryant. Great-grandmother of nine.


COX, David, 74, St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Indianapolis. Brother of Margaret Cox. Great-grandmother of seven.
SPRED Mass participants are encouraged to believe Jesus is always in their midst

By Mike Krokos

It’s about building community. That’s how Ken Ogorzek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, described the Archdiocese of Indianapolis’ SPRED (Special Religious Development) program, which ministers to children and adults with developmental disabilities.

That community building was on full display on May 1 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis when the archdiocese hosted its 13th annual SPRED Mass.

Nearly 200 people, including SPRED participants, family members and catechists, attended the liturgy celebrated by Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, auxiliary bishop and vicar general.

In his homily, the bishop discussed how, depending on how things are going in one’s life, it is easy or difficult to believe that Jesus is present.

“It’s like you need to believe when things are going along well,” he said. “If my health is good, if I have a nice job, a lot of good things happening in my life, you say, ‘I believe God is with me.’

‘Then something happens. Things don’t go well. You get a bad diagnosis … or troubles start. ‘Lord, I’m having a real tough time believing here. Where is God?’

Like the first disciples, we need to believe that Jesus is always in our midst, Bishop Coyne said. “He’s in their midst, and things are a lot better,” he said.

We need to remember, as the Gospel of Matthew teaches us, “when two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst” (Mt 18:20), Bishop Coyne said.

“He is in our midst right now, in the Spirit, in the word and in the sacrament,” he said.

As Jesus tells the Apostle Thomas in St. John’s Gospel reading for the second Sunday of Easter, “Blessed are those who believe in me, even if they haven’t seen” (Jn 20:29).

That story from 2,000 years ago is a story of hope, “and it continues today,” Bishop Coyne said.

“In our suffering, in our problems and in our sorrows, we have someone who walks with us, who knows us, who helps us along the way,” he said.

Walking along with Jesus in their lives of faith is what SPRED participants do at both their parish and in larger settings like the annual Mass.

“One of the neat things about the SPRED Mass is that members of different SPRED groups throughout the archdiocese are able to spend time with each other,” said Ogorzek, “and I think you can tell folks who are a part of this ministry, they just love being together.

“They enjoy a sense of small community throughout the year in their respective SPRED groups in different parishes, but this is really an opportunity for them to experience that sense of community with SPRED friends and catechists throughout central and southern Indiana.”

Nick Shevman, 31, a SPRED participant and member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, was among the people who read the general intercessions at the Mass.

“I think it [the Mass] was really nice,” he said. “I really liked doing the prayers.”

Shevman, who has attended several SPRED Masses over the years, takes part in the SPRED program at St. Mark’s Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, where he serves in various ministries.

“I am an usher, and I did serve [as an altar boy] when I was 12,” he added. P.J. Sylvester, 33, a member of St. Pius X Parish and SPRED participant who assisted Bishop Coyne as an altar server during the Mass, says he has several favorite priests.

“My favorite priests are Father [Gerold] Kerkof, Father Jim [Farrar] and now the bishop,” Sylvester said. “I liked serving with the bishop. He’s a tall guy [6 feet 4 inches tall].”

Like Sylvester, Ogorzek said he felt everyone in attendance welcomed Bishop Coyne’s presence.

“I think this was a great introduction of SPRED to Bishop Coyne,” he said, “and I know that all of us SPRED friends, families and catechists really appreciated his presence here.”

(For information about the archdiocesan SPRED program, call 800-382-9836, ext. 1446, or 317-236-1446.)

Above, Stephanie Carlson, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, reads a petition during the general intercessions at the annual SPRED Mass on May 1 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis.

Right, Bishop Christopher J. Coyne distributes Communion during the SPRED Mass on May 1 at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis.
CATHOLICS

continued from page 1

and worshipped at an evangelical church there. During that time, they discerned that God was calling them to be overseas missionaries in Kyrgyzstan, the former republic of the Soviet Union in central Asia. They ministered in that remote country from 1998 to 2005 with their four daughters.

“I felt that we were doing the right thing in obedience to this calling,” Andy said. “We were being blessed and we were blessing others. And we saw, albeit at a very slow pace, lots of progress.”

When the Zehners returned to the U.S. in 2005, they settled in rural Putnam County near Greencastle. They searched for years for a congregation in which they felt comfortable. They took their faith in Christ seriously and wanted it to be part of a faith community that was earnest in its worship and the way it lived out the faith.

Finally, in 2010, they visited St. Paul the Apostle Parish.

“We walked in there and there was silence and there were people praying—not sports talk and not coffee,” Andy said. “It was a church.”

David Emerson was attracted to the Catholic faith professed at St. Paul in part because of its universality.

“That was particularly meaningful for me,” he said. “I was born in Bangladesh at a Catholic hospital because that was the best hospital in town. We were living in India, one of our best friends was a German [missionary] priest.”

David started attending Mass regularly at St. Paul, Katherine Zehner, 17, felt right at home, especially in the parish’s youth group.

“From the first meeting that I went to, all the people there have been looking out for me,” she said. “I was the first person of color in the group. And not one of my friends was a German missionary priest.”

Emerson previously was the pastor of a small church near Shelbyville after having a period when she lived there.

The beauty of that church led Chalfant to ask her cousin and uncle about the Catholic faith.

“They had really, really open minds,” she said. “Nothing was a stupid question. They were really good at answering questions.”

Nevertheless, it took several more years before Chalfant explored her Catholic faith more deeply and sought to join the Church.

That happened last year when she met a young man named Travis, “who is a very devout Catholic.

His whole life revolved around his faith,” Chalfant said. “I gave him a purpose. And I wanted in that faith.”

Chalfant and Travis dated for a while. But even after their romance ended, she was still convinced that God was calling her into the full communion of the Church.

“The more I learned about the Catholic faith, the more I wanted to be a part of it,” she said. “Very soon, I felt a part of it. I already started to believe.”

At that point, however, Chalfant’s family expressed grave doubts about the new spiritual path that she was taking, and asked her questions about Catholicism.

“Answering their questions—although it was a challenge sometimes—gave me more of a drive to know more about the faith and its practices,” Chalfant said.

“The more questions that I answered, the more they understood and the more respect that they had for my decision.”

The Easter Vigil in which she was received into the Church “was absolutely beautiful. I just had this great sense of peace. I wasn’t really nervous or scared. I was just happy and excited.”

That excitement reached its climax when Chalfant received the Body of Christ for the first time in holy Communion.

“I cried,” she said. “Just being able to understand what means, it was just overwhelming for me. I just couldn’t hold it in. I had to cry.”

“Looking back on how God led her to Catholicism through the openness of Catholics in her life, Chalfant had some advice for fellow members of the Church she just joined. “I think that is the best way to spark people’s interest.”

Learning to love liturgy

In the past, David Emerson worshipped with many people that “at times, in many ways like Amber Chalfant’s family.”

David Emerson was an ordained Baptist minister, and previously was the pastor of a small congregation in Shelby County.

About five years ago, his wife, Karen, came into the full communion of the Catholic Church at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County.

“I had just always felt an attraction [to Catholicism],” she said. “I was raised Baptist. I had some cousins that were Catholic. And I had attended services with them. I just guess that there was an affinity there.”

Last year, David left another Baptist church near Shelbyville after having a falling out with some members there.

Without a congregation to call his spiritual home, he started attending Mass more frequently with Karen and came away astonished.

For years, he had heard his fellow Baptists say that Catholics don’t proclaim the Scriptures in their worship as much they do.

“I was very impressed that the entire Christian message is given in every service that I have attended. Practically everything that goes on in the Mass is directly out of Scripture.”

Earlier, he had thought that liturgical prayer was “boring and odd.”

“The more I went [to Mass] with her, the more I saw that everything has a reason, and that it’s all pointing to Jesus,” Emerson said.

He would like to see Jesus in a special way at St. Vincent’s Easter Vigil on April 23 when he was received into the full Church. “I practically everything that goes on in the Mass is directly out of Scripture.”

“The young people of both faiths are waiting to see the decision was based on “the Holy Father’s statements about his concern for Christians generally in the world and particularly in Egypt after the bombing of the church in Alexandria (in December), and this was taken as a form of interference. But if you examine the statements carefully, this is only appealing to the government to look after their citizens and not saying we are going to intervene in any way.”

“We hope this will blow over eventually,” the archbishop said.

At the same time, he said, dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Egypt continues on a local level.

“The young people whom I mentioned who are engaged in revolution are Christians and Muslims together. And that dialogue on the question of human rights, of citizenship, has been going on for quite some time. This is not an official religious dialogue, but it’s a dialogue between Christians and Muslims as individuals, as citizens,” he said.

In a speech on May 6 at the Lay Center in Rome, Archbishop Fitzgerald said official dialogue meetings are “only valid if they are a part of the service of the dialogue that is going on all the time around the world.”

The meetings of theologians, scholars and religious leaders must be “an example and a stimulus” to people in parishes and mosques around the world, he said.

“The real dialogue is the dialogue of living in peace and harmony together, living in friendship together, working together,” the archbishop said.