HHS delays, but does not change, rule on contraceptive coverage

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Although Catholic leaders vowed to fight on, the Obama administration has turned down repeated requests from Catholic bishops, hospitals, schools and charitable organizations to revise its religious exemption to the requirement that all health plans cover contraceptives and sterilization free of charge.

Instead, Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, announced on Jan. 20 that non-profit groups that do not provide contraceptive coverage because of their religious beliefs will get an additional year “to adapt to this new rule.”

“This decision was made after very careful consideration, including the important concerns some have raised about religious liberty,” Sebelius said. “I believe this proposal strikes the appropriate balance between respecting religious freedom and increasing access to important preventive services.”

But Cardinal-designate Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the Obama administration had “drawn an unprecedented line in the sand” with the decision.

“The Catholic bishops are committed to working with our fellow Americans to reform the law and change this unjust regulation,” he added. “We will continue to study all the implications of this troubling decision.”

See HHS, page 24

‘I thank God every single day’

Unwed mother who chose life shares her moving story at annual Respect Life Rally in Indianapolis

By Mary Ann Garber

Tears filled her eyes as Liz Carl spoke of her beautiful 4-year-old son, Braden, who was conceived during a rape when she was only 17.

“Smiling through her tears, she took a deep breath and described how God helped her as a rape survivor to choose life then place her baby in an open adoption with wonderful parents. “He is the love of my life,” the University of Louisville graduate student told nearly 900 pro-life supporters gathered on Jan. 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis for the archdiocese’s second annual Local Solemn Observance of Roe v. Wade.

The pro-life Mass, march and Respect Life Rally marked the 39th anniversary of the tragic 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy.

Msgr. Joseph Schaeodel, pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis and principal celebrant, said in his homily that “Washington wants to force every employer to offer contraception and sterilization coverage in employee health plans then make all of us Americans pay for it. The Church cannot put up with this nonsense.”

T-shirts, banners proclaim pro-life crowd’s convictions

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Mark Hosbein stood on the corner of a busy Washington intersection under the steady rain on Jan. 23 with a small duffle bag at his feet and a simple message for passers-by—“Please consider spiritually adopting an unborn baby who is in danger of abortion.”

Handing a reporter one of his brochures, Hosbein said as president of Hearts For Life, he is following the lead of the late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, who promoted the idea of spiritual adoptions for the unborn years ago.

People who commit to such an adoption agree to pray once a day for an unborn child, he explained. “Our belief is God will save the life of the baby. It’s a simple and powerful devotion.”

Hosbein, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, said in the past five or six years, the organization has passed out 100,000 of the brochures.

As they streamed toward the rally site from various points, rallygoers carried signs that declared their pro-life views.

Among the messages were: “Adoption is...LIFE, LIBERTY, & THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS”

A young man leans on a sign while standing in mud during the annual March for Life rally in Washington on Jan. 23. The annual pro-life demonstration solemnly marks the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion across the nation.

Elizabeth Jamison, center, associate director of vocations for the archdiocese, and more than 400 other pro-life supporters from parishes in central and southern Indiana brave the cold during the archdiocese’s second annual Local Solemn Observance and Respect Life March on Jan. 23 in Indianapolis to peacefully protest the 39th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the tragic Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States during all nine months of pregnancy.

Wearing a white shirt with its message “Saving The Unborn Child,” Joy Huber, St. Michael Church, Washington Township, walks toward the March for Life rally on the National Mall near the Smithsonian Castle. From the castle, the Washington Monument in one direction and the Capitol in the other were shrouded in fog and barely visible.

Premiering a new video for life, “In Our Hearts,” lead singer Liz Carl, center, sings as members of Hearts For Life, from Scottsdale, Ariz., perform at woman’s rights rally on the National Mall Jan. 23. Tens of thousands of women and pro-life supporters sang along.

A young woman holds a sign during the annual March for Life rally in Washington Jan. 23. The annual pro-life demonstration solemnly marks the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion across the nation.


Donning rain gear and holding umbrellas, school and college age, were undeterred. Following the 39th anniversary of the tragic Roe v. Wade decision, they cast their eyes on Congress and Washington Monument and the Capitol.

But as in most years when the weather was bad, the tens of thousands of pro-life supporters, a majority of them high school and college age, were undeterred. Following the 39th anniversary of the tragic Roe v. Wade decision, they cast their eyes on Congress and Washington Monument and the Capitol.

As they streamed toward the rally site from various points, rallygoers carried signs...
"With the existing restrictive definition in this mandate, the ministry of Jesus Christ himself would not be considered a religious entity."  
—Father Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA

Indianapolis parish to host seminar on end-of-life issues

By Sean Gallagher

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5692 Central Ave., in Indianapolis will host a seminar on end-of-life issues at 7 p.m. on Feb. 9. It is free and open to the public.

Leading the discussion will be bioethics expert Father Joseph Rautenberg, pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Cambridge City, and Dr. Edward Drocheap, a professor of neurology at the Indiana University School of Medicine and member of the IU Health Ethics Consultation Service.

Fr. Joseph Rautenberg

Drocheap is also a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish.

Topics to be discussed include establishing a health care power of attorney, withdrawing and withholding care at the end of life, and advance directives.

For more information on the seminar, call 317-251-7902.

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You just can’t deduce the right answer. You need the information about the actual situation.

Drocheap agreed that having a basic understanding of the Church’s bioethical principles is helpful for patients and their families.

"Practical decisions flow from that [understanding]," he said. "I certainly make my decisions based on the basic framework, but I think there is misunderstanding. You don’t have to do every single thing that could be done. But, at the same time, we have responsibilities to try to do some level of care."

Father Rautenberg said that Catholics should be proud of the way that the Church has been a leader over time in shaping conceptions regarding medical decision-making, and that they should take the initiative to learn more about its teachings in the last few days.

"It’s a way to get some tools for learning from the Church on both the value of life and how to be a good steward of life," Father Rautenburg said.


Saying it would force individuals and religious organizations “to surrender their beliefs”—rooted in long-held Judeo-Christian tradition and practice—for the sake of political and financial expediency, he called his opposition to “pray for our elected officials and to work to reform this unjust regulation.”

Sebelius announced the policy and a narrow religious exemption to it on Aug. 1, 2011. Under the plan, after Aug. 1 of this year, new or significantly altered health plans will be required to provide all FDA-approved contraceptives, including some that can cause abortion, without co-pays or deductibles as part of preventive health care for women.

The only religious organizations exempt from the requirement would be those meeting four specific criteria—(1) has the inculcation of religious values exempt from the requirement would be preventive health care for women.

French Cardinal Jean-Louis Marie Cardinal-designate Francis Sister Jane Marie Klein, who chairs the board of Franciscan Alliance, a system of 13 Catholic hospitals, including Franciscan St. Francis Health in Indianapolis, characterized the decision as “nothing else than a direct attack on religion and First Amendment rights.”

Mary Ann Klein, president of the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., described the Obama administration’s decision as “profundely disturbing on many levels,” and called for “a national dialogue among religious groups, government leaders and a sigh of relief from the American people to reaffirm our country’s historic respect for freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and defense of religious liberty.”

Sebelius’ announcement brought an outcry from religious leaders and a sigh of relief from groups such as Planned Parenthood and NAARL Pro-Choice America, which had opposed any moves to weaken the contraceptive mandate or strengthen the religious exemption.

In a video posted on the USCCB website, Cardinal-designate Dolan said the decision put the Obama administration “on the wrong side of the Constitution” and should be rescinded.

“(1) has the inculcation of religious values (2) is a religious organization (3) primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; (4) a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Those sections “refer to churches, their integrated auxiliaries and conventions or associations of churches as well as to the exclusively religious activities of any persons who share its religious values as its purpose; (2) primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets; (3) primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; and (4) is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Historic parish plans outreach to Super Bowl visitors

By Sean Gallagher

October 5, 2011

Faith is at events of at St. John Parish in days leading up to Super Bowl

By Sean Gallagher

In the days leading up to Super Bowl XLVI on Feb. 5, the streets surrounding St. John the Evangelist Parish, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis will resound with concerts, the screams of people zooming down an 800-foot zip line and the excitement of visitors going from one party to another.

A few feet away, however, inside the parish’s church, thunderous voices will rule the day, as choirs giving thanks of the historic church, others saying prayers—perhaps some for a victory for the New England Patriots or the New York Giants.

From Jan. 27 to Feb. 5, St. John will host a series of events to welcome the more than 100,000 visitors expected to come to Indianapolis for the Super Bowl.

Daily Mass will be celebrated Monday through Saturday at its usual time of 12:10 p.m.

On the weekend of the Super Bowl, Masses will be celebrated at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 4, and at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Feb. 5.

Confessions will be heard at its usual time of 11 a.m. to noon daily—except Sunday— from Jan. 27 through Feb. 1. On Feb. 4, confessions will be heard from 1-3 p.m. and 9-11 a.m. Each hour long will take place daily from 10 a.m. to noon from Jan. 27 to Feb. 4—except Sunday.

The parish’s First Friday Holy Hour for Vocations will take place as usual beginning at 7 p.m. on Feb. 3. Speaking during it will be Chris Godfrey, a starting offensive lineman for the New York Giants team that won Super Bowl XXI in 1987.

Times of the parish’s historic church will be given by parishioners known as “St. John evangelists” from 3-9 p.m—except during Masses—from Jan. 27 through Feb. 2. On Feb. 3, tours guides will be available from 1-6 p.m. and 9-11 a.m. On Feb. 4, tours will be given from 1-5 p.m. and 9-11 a.m.

During those same times, an “Ask a Catholic” booth will be manned inside the church’s narthex to answer questions about the Catholic faith. Visitors will also be able to have their photo taken with a life-size cutout picture of Pope Benedict XVI.

The parish will also invite Super Bowl visitors to pray for specific intentions from Jan. 27 through Feb. 5. The intentions, which all archdiocesan Catholics are invited to pray for, are:

† Jan. 30—For the protection and dignity of all human life, especially for all women that they may be treated with the respect they deserve as daughters of our heavenly Father.
† Jan. 31—For the protection and dignity of all human life from conception to natural death.
† Feb. 1—For the protection and dignity of all human life, especially for all women that they may be treated with the respect they deserve as daughters of our heavenly Father.
† Feb. 2—That all people may celebrate these 10 days in a peaceful, non-violent way, giving glory to God in all things.
† Feb. 3—For the broken, addicted and suffering; that they may know God’s healing, especially through reconciliation.
† Feb. 4—For an increase in the virtue of temperance and self-control, especially during these times of celebration, that everything may reflect the glory of God in their lives.
† Feb. 5—That God’s abundant grace will draw more people back to his Church.

(For more information on events at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, including its outreach activities in the days leading up to Super Bowl XLVI, log on to www.stjohnsindy.org. More information can be found on the parish’s Facebook page or Twitter feed @StJohnIndian).
The new evangelization and the New Year

It is a recent speech to bishops from the state of New York who were heading the visit to Rome that is required of each bishop ordinarily every five years, Pope Benedict XVI returned to two of the themes that dominated his visit to the United States in 2008—the sexual abuse crisis and the new evangelization.

The pope's speech was the first of five major addresses that he will give as part of the American bishops' journey in the next five months he plans to devote to the new evangelization. The pope said that "the urgency and demands of a new evangelization" are "dramatically changing social and religious landscape.

Concerning the sex abuse scandal, which has recently spread to several European countries, the Holy Father once again committed the universal Church to "exacting standards" of transparency and decisiveness, actions that will "ensure the safety of our children, and to deal with allegations of abuse as they arise.

"It is my hope that the Church's conscientious efforts to confront this reality will help the broader community to recognize the causes, true extent and devastating consequences of sexual abuse, and to respond effectively to this scourge that affects every level of society," the pope said.

Pope Benedict's second theme was "the urgency and demands of a new evangelization." The pope said that during the coming months he plans to offer "a number of reflections" on this topic for the bishops' consideration as they lead their dioceses in today's "dramatically changing social and religious landscape.

"Many of you have shared with me your concern about the grave challenges facing our Church and society as a whole," the pope said. "The Holy Father says the bishops must "exercise the prophetic dimension of their ecclesiastical ministry by speaking out, humbly yet insistently, in defense of moral order and in favor of that word of hope capable of opening minds and hearts to the truth that sets us free.

As Pope Benedict has taught consistently throughout his pontificate, and from his earliest days as a pastor as well, the truth that sets us free is not an ideology. It is a person, Jesus Christ, the meaning of the world and our individual lives. He alone can free us from the dictatorship of relativism and from every other form of tyranny known to humanity.

"Immersed in this [increasingly secularized] culture, believers are daily threatened by the objective reduction of the human person to a being of limited and finite significance in his greater scheme. We have not even grasped the full force of this gospel truth: it is a question of faith, of the truth of faith, and of its consequences. In the name of the Lord, let me appeal to all of you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, to reject this spirit of relativism, this spirit that seeks to dominate the public arena. It is not a question of imposing one's own moral vision on others, but rather of conveying the universal call to holiness that the Church herself is charged to proclaim.

Bishops must first rekindle the flame of Christ's love in their hearts. They must ensure that renewal of God's people in the world in which the love of God has grown cold in so many hearts," the pope observed, speaking to his brother bishops. "Evangelization thus appears not simply a task to be undertaken ad extra; we ourselves are the first to need re-evangelization."

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"The truth that sets us free is Jesus. We find him by opening our hearts to the fire of his love and by allowing his Gospel to govern our lives and to shape social, economic and political structures.

Let us be good stewards of his truth and his love. Let us proclaim him boldly and unapologetically in the New Year and always.

—Daniel Conoway

The Criterion Opinion

Intellect and Virtue/John Garvey

Is anybody out there?

In November 2009, the Catholic Church made headlines by putting on a conference for astronomers and theologians to discuss the possibility of alien life. Nearly a year later, the Pope's top astronomer raised the subject again with the Vatican's space agency.

He said that the Church would welcome and even baptize any intelligent extraterrestrials—"no matter how many tentacles."

I remember reading this and worrying that people might think the Church was falling prey to the same anti-intellectualism that has recently gripped Hollywood. No credible observation of intelligent—or even unintelligent—alien life has ever been made. We have not even found another planet, besides our own, that could conceivably host it. But we might be close. Columnist Charles Kuralt mentioned recently in The Washington Post, "It’s only a matter of time—perhaps a year or two, perhaps 10 years—before we find the right [planets] on the right size in the right place" within its solar system.

If he is right, then the Church is ahead of it in time in worrying about other worlds. Way ahead in fact. In 1277, the pope of Paris, Étienne Tempier, condemned some ties in the philosophical work that the recently deceased St. Thomas Aquinas and others at the University of Paris had produced. One proscribed idea was the Aristotelian notion that there could not be many worlds because, as St. Thomas had argued, this would be less perfect than a single, unitary universe produced by and ordered to God—"the One First Cause." Tempier agreed.

Strictly speaking, Aquinas was referring to what we would today call multiple universes. But Tempier's objections—Aquinas' way of thinking puts God in a box, limiting his power in ways that revealed truth does not justify—applies to the discussion of alien life as well. Yet the possibility of alien life poses further questions about our beliefs as Catholics. Where would other intelligent life fit into the economy of salvation? The possibility of extraterrestrial life is not at least as great an moral exercise—offering an opportunity to consider our own story of sin and redemption.

If we are a intelligent alien races, did he involve himself in their story, too? Did some of all of them reject God originally as we did? Did some of them find God, though, and reject temptation and choose more wisely than Adam and Eve? Do some even now remain in communion with nature and with nature's God?

"If it is so, is not an inborn error or weakness but a choice that is not possible that others have chosen better? Imagine the story of Genesis coming out differently in a different world as C.S. Lewis did in his Space Trilogy."

If alien races followed our own course in rejecting God, did they receive the same divine assistance afterward? Would Jesus have come to save them, too? And if they obeyed God, could they have found God that had made himself known to them in the same way?

As Catholics, we believe that God created the whole universe, visible and invisible. It is a realm full of stars and planets, yet so empty as to contain distances we will likely never travel and can only measure in light-years.

Perhaps the great mountain before us, of which we must compose a mere grain of dust, serves only our edification, as a monument—to God's greatness, to our own insignificance and to his love for us despite our insignificance.

Maybe it actually makes more sense if we consider the possibility that the Son of God's marvels—a further sign of our own insignificance in his greater scheme.

(John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.)

Be Our Guest/Joanie Nobbe

Living in the Christmas spirit

During the Christmas season, we all have Christmas spirit. We love more, spend more time with family, we all have the Christmas spirit.

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(John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.)

Letters to the Editor

Letters must be signed, but, for serious questions, names may be withheld. Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2307.

Related: http://www.criterion.org
Proposals expand school choice to non-public school students

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

It could be a dream come true for Catholic school families—access to Choice Scholarships, also known as a state-funded voucher.

Three state lawmakers are offering proposals to be considered by the Indiana General Assembly this year to expand school choice options to families with children currently enrolled in a non-public school.

Sen. Doug Eckerty, R-Yorktown, is proposing the most expansive of the three school choice bills.

Eckerty’s proposal, Senate Bill 198, would remove the eligibility requirement that a student must attend a public school for two semesters prior to receiving the scholarship. If families meet income requirements, children currently enrolled in a non-public school would be eligible for the scholarships.

Sen. Jean Leising, R-Shelbyville, is proposing a similar bill, Senate Bill 208. This bill would give students who are currently enrolled in a non-public school an “educational voucher” to qualify for a state-funded voucher in the eighth grade. Once eligible for the STC, students could qualify for a voucher for high school.

Eckerty said his bill is primarily “corrective” in nature to the education reforms passed last year.

Under the current program, before a child can qualify for school choice scholarships, the student must be enrolled in a public school for two semesters prior. There isn’t any rule or logic behind that,” Eckerty said. “If you already have a child in a non-public school and qualify for the scholarship otherwise, the family should be able to receive the scholarship.

“It becomes problematic for the family and the child to be pulled from the non-public school and placed in a public school when the student is doing fine in the non-public school,” Eckerty said. “But to a single mother, or a family struggling to make ends meet, a parent may do this to qualify for the scholarship.”

Parental choice is what it’s all about. It is the basis of the problem, not anyone else, to decide what’s best for their children,” he said.

In addition, Eckerty said that the legislation has a cost benefit to the state. He said it roughly costs the state an average of $5,000 a year to support a student in public school. The voucher is only $4,500. So do the math,” Eckerty said. “It saves the state roughly about $500 a student. The bill is a positive for the parents and a positive for the state.”

Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, who is Catholic, is also proposing legislation to assist current non-public school families. Leising’s proposal, Senate Bill 209, would give students who are currently enrolled in a non-public school an “educational voucher” to qualify for the scholarship tax credit (STC) in the eighth grade. Once eligible for the STC, students could qualify for a voucher for high school.

Leising explained that under current STC guidelines, kindergarten graduates who meet the income requirements that are eligible for the STC could then be eligible for a state-funded voucher in first grade.

“I’m trying to do is allow eight-graders to make a decision on a scholarship tax credit, which would allow them to be eligible to receive a school voucher for high school,” Leising said. “And the reason they’re doing this, and the reason they’re doing this, are high school costs.”

“I think it would be really helpful for parents who want to keep their children in a non-public school, but aren’t sure how to do so financially,” this bill gives parents who are trying to do what’s best for their children a little bit of relief,” Leising said. “People interested in this issue could be very helpful in getting this bill passed by giving their senators a little nudge.”

“Leising said, “I would encourage parents to contact their senators and ask them to support Senate Bill 296.”

Sen. Carlin Yoder, R-Bremen, is author of Senate Bill 331, which would provide eligibility for scholarships in families who receive a voucher.

“Yoder said that it’s important for families who are receiving a voucher for an older child to require their younger sibling to start at a public school in first grade, but that’s what the law requires.”

Yoder said he has heard from many of his constituents that this is a problem for families participating in the voucher program.

“It’s not fair to split up the siblings, especially when they meet the income requirements and want to keep their younger siblings in public school from a scholarship-granting organization,” Yoder said. “It puts an unnecessary burden on parents to have to have children in two different schools.”

“I don’t think families should have to try out the public school for each child, especially when the scholarship’s for non-public students who are having success in the non-public school,” Yoder said.

Eckerty said, “One of the reasons [that] he’s such a positive for the parents and a positive for the children and their loved ones’ bodies to science. And anatomical study was undergoing a revolution in the 18th century as anatomists shed the superstitious theories about the body work in favor of hands-on study with actual cadavers. According to Andrea Carlino, professor of the history of medicine at the University of Genoa, Pope Benedict threw his full support behind this new methodology. Carlino noted that the Church had never formally prohibited the dissection of the deceased for anatomical study.

At the time, however, the culturally and legally acceptable sources of corpses for scientific study were limited to the unclaimed bodies of the poor, executed criminals or executed criminals and criminals.

The Church of the time, the papal court of Rome, was more reasonable expression of faith.” †

According to the Legislative Services Agency Fiscal Analysis on proposed Senate Bill 198, there are 3,919 students currently receiving Choice Scholarships—vouchers. Those figures include 3,382 students attending public schools for a scholarship tax credit, which would allow them to be eligible to receive a voucher for a scholarship for high school.

There are approximately 26,630 students attending private schools who would be eligible for a scholarship for high school, and 537 students receiving a scholarship from a scholarship-granting organization.

Eckerty said it roughly costs the state an average of $4,500 for elementary schools. To stay connected to the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), join the Indiana Catholic Action Network—L-CAST.

Interested parties may join electronically at the ICC website. In addition, to the ICC-Update, people can obtain the latest information regarding the bills and legislative process through the “Legislative Action Center” part of the website.

Under “policy tools,” click on “vouchers and legislation” to find state or federal bills by clicking “current legislation.” Archived updates, ICC positions and other background information are also posted on the ICC website.

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

For The Criterion | January 27, 2012

Choice Scholarships by the numbers

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By Brigid Curtis Ayer

For The Criterion | January 27, 2012

Choice Scholarships by the numbers

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CPR and AED training for Office of Family Ministries Indianapolis. January 29 Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5335 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Open house, 1-3 p.m. Information: 317-557-3136. St. Lawrence School, 6950 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Open house, 1-3 p.m. Information: 317-543-4923. St. Malachi School, 330 N. Main St., Noblesville. Catholic Schools Week open house, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Information: 317-852-2242 or www.saintmalachyschool.org. February 1 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable, social and singles 50 and over, single, widows, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-770-2404. Columbus Bar, 322 4th St., Columbus. Theology on Tap, “The Bible Is a Catholic Book,” 7-30 p.m. Information: 317-839-9553, ext. 241. February 2 LaRossa’s Restaurante, 1856 Pearl St., New Albany. New Albany Deannary Catholic Youth Ministries, “Teaching on End of Life Issues,” 7-9 a.m. breakfast following Mass at Pure Eternity. Information: tmighth@mymac.com. Sacred Heart Parish, 315 E. Washington St., Jeffersonville. Junior high dance, 7-9:30 a.m. and non-perishable food donation per student, grades 6-8. Information: 812-222-0232 or mwater@sdheartschool.edu. February 3 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable, social and singles 50 and over, single, widows, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-770-2404. Columbus Bar, 322 4th St., Columbus. Theology on Tap, “The Bible Is a Catholic Book,” 7-30 p.m. Information: 317-839-9553, ext. 241. February 4 Bishop James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donations accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 6 Bishop James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donations accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 7 Notre Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Scheller Lane, Indianapolis. Catholic Life with St. Meinrad’s Father Chris Lovesick. February 8 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 11 a.m., ages 90 and over. Information: 317-787-2434 or dhowen@sdheartschool.edu. February 9 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5335 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Divorce and Beyond” program for separated and divorced Catholics, 7-9 p.m., $10 per person includes meals, registration limited. Information: 317-236-1586 or drwelsch@archindy.org. February 10 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5335 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Divorce and Beyond” program for separated and divorced Catholics, 7-9 p.m., $10 per person includes meals, registration limited. Information: 317-236-1586 or drwelsch@archindy.org. February 11 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Family Ministries, six-week “Divorce and Beyond” program for separated and divorced Catholics, 7-9 p.m., $10 per person includes meals, registration limited. Information: 317-236-1586 or drwelsch@archindy.org. February 12 The Criterion  Friday, January 27, 2012 Page 6A The events will also feature a speech by an expectant mother experiencing a crisis pregnancy who was considering abortion but called the Gabriel Project helped her by mistake. The care and ministry offered to her by Gabriel Project volunteers led her to choose life for her baby. The dinners are, which free of charge, will begin with seating at 6 p.m. The evening’s program will begin at 7 p.m. and concur at 9 p.m. Donations are appreciated to help fund the ministry’s operations. To make a reservation for the dinners, send your name and phone number by email to projectgabriel@comcast.net. For more information, call Donna Dovren at 317-308-0127 or send an e-mail to 2012philadelphia@ymail.com. "Celebrate Life with Great Lakes Catholic Project," dinner and program, Father James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donations accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 15 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. “Care–A Spiritual, Medical and Legal Perspective,” 7-9 a.m., no charge. Information: 812-944-1184 or steve@49Frontier.com. February 9 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5335 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Sacrament–Formation,” one-day spiritual retreat, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $31 per person includes lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or ext. 15, or mark@hearts4life.org. February 14 Knights of Columbus Hall, 2000 E 71st St., Indianapolis. “Celebrate Life with Great Lakes Catholic Project,” dinner and program, Father James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donations accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 15 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 1-3 p.m., donation accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 17 Bishop James Farrell, keynote speaker, 1-3 p.m., donation accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 18 Bishop James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donation accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 19 Bishop James Farrell, keynote speaker, 7-9 p.m., donation accepted. Reservations: 317-308-0127 or projectgabriel1049@comcast.net. February 20 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5335 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Parenting the Child with a Disability,” one-day spiritual retreat, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $31 per person includes lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or ext. 15, or mark@hearts4life.org. February 21 Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 1-3 p.m., donation accepted. 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New novice welcomed into Saint Meinrad Archabbey In a brief ceremony at the monastery entrance, Matthew Scheeser was clothed in the Benedictine habit at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad on Jan. 19. He now begins a year of monastic formation, including study of the Rule of St. Benedict and monastic history. Novice Matthew, 34, is a native of Sandusky, Ohio. He was a member of SS Peter and Paul Parish in Sandusky, and attended Mary Central Catholic High School there. In 2000, he earned a bachelor of arts degree in music with a voice concentration at the University of Dayton. He also earned a master of music degree in choral conducting at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. He ministered for six years as music director of St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg, W.Va., and Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Fairfax, Va. From 2006-10, he was a music director and managing director for Choralis, a nonprofit chorus in Falls Church, Va. As a novice, he will take a year off from formal studies and/or trades. The novice is a time of prayer and learning intended to help a novice discern his vocation as a monk. At the end of this year, a novice may be permitted to become a temporary monk of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community of Saint Meinrad. Bishop Coyne visits Bedford Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, will join on Jan. 17 with members of the third-grade class at St. Vincent de Paul School in Bedford and their teacher, Kathy Quaas, at St. Vincent Parish’s new parish life center, which also serves as the school’s first gymnasium. Bishop Coyne visited the Bloomington Deanery parish that day to devote the multipurpose center.
CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (CNS)—For several students at the Ciudad Juarez seminary, classes in theology and philosophy are integrated with experiences to prepare them for Church work in this violent city.

Every Sunday, Genaro Montes, 25, a third-year seminarian, travels with Father Alberto Melandiez, prison chaplain, to the notorious state prison on the edge of Juarez. Montes assists at Mass and with Scripture readings.

Fifth-year seminarians Francisco Laotiza, 25, and Jesus Mendoza, 24, preceded Montes. Participation in the assignment is strictly voluntary. The seminarians say they are never told what the inmates are incarcerated for, but they know many are there because of the nearly 12,000 murders the city has experienced over the past four years, as well as for crimes involving narcotics, extortion, child abuse, battery and burglaries.

“We can’t ask, but sometimes they tell us what they are in for,” said Montes, a burly, soft-spoken man. “Many are ashamed they are in jail because they were there because of the nearly 12,000 murders the city has experienced over the past four years, as well as for crimes involving narcotics, extortion, child abuse, battery and burglaries.”

“We can’t ask, but sometimes they tell us what they are in for,” said Montes, a burly, soft-spoken man. “Many are ashamed they are in jail because they were forced to do things they didn’t want to do.”

The challenge of any religious group working in Ciudad Juarez is how to break the cycle of violence that many young people feel equals money, which equals power.

“We are trying to teach the opposite—the love of God, Church and life,” Laotiza said. “The trio is not naive about what is occurring outside the walls of their seminary, and the prison ministry brings it into vivid focus.

“We have never told what the inmates are incarcerated for, but they know many are there because of the nearly 12,000 murders the city has experienced over the past four years, as well as for crimes involving narcotics, extortion, child abuse, battery and burglaries.”

“We are trying to teach the opposite—the love of God, Church and life,” Laotiza said. “The trio is not naive about what is occurring outside the walls of their seminary, and the prison ministry brings it into vivid focus.

“Life here is very complicated,” Mendoza said. “The violence has gone so far.”

Life in the prison reflects life on the streets. At the core of life here are the population subsets mostly made up of the Artistas Asesinos, Aztecas and Mxicles gangs, all very active and violent with connections to the streets. In late July, four gunmen entered the jail with automatic weapons and sprayed a cell block, killing 17 in a gang-style execution.

“Our problem is not being in the prison, it is when the gangs get together and this happens,” Montes said. “It is frustrating not being able to work with the men any longer. They are the ones who need it the most.”

Since the massacre, the seminarians have not been permitted to return to the men’s unit for security reasons, but they still minister to the women.

Whether working with the men or women inmates, work in the prison is cyclical, with the seminarians rarely seeing the same group of 10-20 inmates, who range from 18 to 50 years old.

“Every time we go, we redo the work with new people, but that’s all right,” Montes said. “Professing the faith is a process—do something now for something better in the future.”

The seminarians can train the seminarians available for visits with inmates who have no family coming to see them. They see this as an opportunity to reach out to the inmates on a more personal level to just talk, develop trust and bolster the prisoners’ faith. They hope the expression of compassion and understanding will help with the inmates’ rehabilitation.

Luis Maldonado, 26, a seventh-year seminarian, has not volunteered at the prison, but his street ministry is intended to help keep young people out of detention.

“Something is the most imminent,” many of whom drop out of school by middle school and get caught up with cartel-sponsored street gangs. Maldonado has seen the violence firsthand. Recently, a 19-year-old confirmation coordinator from his home parish was shot in the head and chest.

“One of my friends had a business and members of the Juarez Cartel asked him for a quota—extortion. He said he didn’t want to do it so they told him in order for them to leave him alone, he would have to transport drugs, be a get-away driver for a murder, and kill someone himself,” Maldonado said. “He did all three things, and now he is safe.”

Riot police officers arrive at a high-security prison near Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, in 2010 after a fight among inmates. Local seminarians and a chaplain regularly visit the prison, but they say they miss ministering there when security is tightened after gang fights.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Participants at the annual March for Life were urged in advance of the march not to let themselves be compromised in their beliefs as the federal government imposes regulations that Catholic leaders say constitute an attack on conscience and religious liberty.

“I beg and pray for the young people present and all youth and young adults not to be compromised in your dedication to the protection of life of each human person, born and unborn,” said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston. “Keep it before your eyes and in your hearts immediately. Threats against life and the consciousness of the conscience of the believer in life must be met with timely and unavering action in our families and institutions and, yes, in the public square.”

Cardinal links religious liberty fight with abortion struggle

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, made his remarks during his homily at the Jan. 22 opening Mass for the National March for Life. The overnight vigil, which included a closing Mass on Jan. 23 and hourly Holy Hours in between, was held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

The cardinal linked the 39-year struggle to end abortion on demand with a Jan. 20 announcement from U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius that no religious organizations would have to cover contraceptives and sterilization free of charge in their employee health plans, rejecting appeals from Catholic groups to widen the exemption.

“Never before in our U.S. history has the federal government forced citizens to directly purchase what violates our beliefs,” Cardinal DiNardo said, adding that the issue is “the survival of a cornerstone constitutionally protected freedom that ensures respect for conscience and religious liberty.”

Cardinal DiNardo said Pope Benedict XVI addressed the issue when meeting with U.S. bishops from the Mid-Atlantic. (See related story, page 15A.)

“Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience,” he quoted Pope Benedict as saying.

“In light of last Friday’s announcement about health care mandates, it seems that the Holy Father has nailed the issue in advance,” Cardinal DiNardo said. “His calls for courage to counter a reductive secularism which would delegitimize the Church’s participation in public life and debate have targeted the issues we face in our pro-life efforts, to defend those who defend human life and to defend their religious liberty.”

Cardinal DiNardo pointed to gains made by pro-life supporters, including “a record number of state laws that now restrict abortions. State prosecutors have begun to prosecute late-term abortionists who deny life, and injure and maim women.”

Cardinal-designate Timothy M. Dolan of New York, who celebrated the closing Mass, repeatedly lauded the “radiant inspiration” generated by the marchers who gather at the shrine each year.

He said that after nearly 40 years of legalized abortion, “we might be tempted to give up.” But “not us,” said Cardinal-designate Dolan, president of the U.S. bishops.

“Not for thousands who have stayed up all night in prayer. For hundreds of thousands who will march today with the word we have received ringing in their ears.”

For vigilers who spent the night in the shrine, Cardinal Dolan brought two bits of “good news” to them—The New York Giants did win last night to go to the Super Bowl,” and weather around Washington prompted a delay in the regular opening time for the federal government. “That leaves less chance to pass a new anti-life regulatory rule,” he said.

Recalling the story of King David, whose anointing as king of Israel was part of the first reading for the Mass, Cardinal-designate Dolan noted that little David killed Goliath. “The New York Giants may have won, but Goliath the giant did not,” he said.

Brad Agostinelli of Rochester, N.Y., said he has grown in his Catholic faith over the past couple of years and his conviction that abortion is wrong has only grown stronger. Heather Wilson, 28, a member of a nondenominational Christian church in Pennsylvania, held a sign that read, “Stop unborn pain.” She told CNS, “I’m here to put my feet in the direction of what my heart believes.”

What was in the news on Jan. 26, 1962? Speculation on what topics the Council will discuss, and dozens of nuns taking vows

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.

RIO DE JANEIRO

Variety of topics explored by Preparatory Commission

Holiness Pope John XXIII has announced that he will issue two new documents—one calling on the world’s priests to recite the Divine Office for the success of the coming ecumenical council, and the other urging increased use of Latin in seminaries. The Pope revealed his plans in a speech at the final meeting of the third session of the Preparatory Commission for the council. A highlight of the central commission’s

third session was a discussion of a proposal to revive the ancient office of deacon to aid priests in pastoral work. The wide variety of topics considered by the commission during its eight meetings between Jan. 15 and 23 also included improved relations between Catholics and Orthodox Christians, use of Latin in seminaries in the Eastern Rites, modern morality, spiritualism and related errors, the need for early baptism and the real nature of sin.

• Natural law problem: Crumbling jail breeds corruption and crime

• Soviet Union stepping up persecution

• Rap Castro’s claim on Church liberty

• Electric utilities and the public interest

• ACCM announces plans for Leadership Institute

• NCCW study concludes: No constitutional bar to private school aid

• Mother of four asks the Catholic stand on population explosion

• Kennedy avoids favoring Catholics, article says

• USSR head bows to Madonna icon

• 74 pronounce vows as Providence nuns

• Holy hours planned for Council success

• 40 years of legalization, “we might be tempted to give up.”

• Lady Dominic new school board

• Hear more religious murdered in Congo

• Electronic instructor growing unpopular

• Lay apostolate term confusing, speaker says

• Benedictine speaker: Points up unity factors to Protestant pastors

• 7 congregations reported in China

(Read all of these stories from our Jan. 26, 1962, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com)
By Harry Plummer

When the florist would drop off two dozen roses in a glass vase at the school office, no one had to look at the card to know where to deliver them. Every teacher—myself included—knew that they were for the first-grade teacher, Sister Margo.

The lesson she planned began when the delivery came to her classroom door. She would get very excited about the roses and so would the children. She would put them on her desk, and let the students come up row by row to touch, smell and comment on their beauty. She would talk about where roses grow, share some poems about roses, and ask the kids to draw and write about them.

She also used them for a science lesson, teaching the children to observe and note the differences between plant and animal life, and even doing a simple experiment with food coloring to demonstrate the rose’s vascular system.

Later, while the students worked at their desks, Sister Margo would make some noise that was sure to attract their attention and, never looking up, would take the roses out of the vase, walk over to the sink, dump out the water, return the roses to the empty vase and resume her desk work.

Invariably, the shock that would run through the classroom at this action would quickly precipitate into a hand going up or a call-out asking, “Sister Margo, why’d you do that?”

She would then ask what was wrong with what she did, and always received the same reply, “But if you take the water out, the roses will die!”

She would then get up, refill the vase and say, “You’re right. Now we’re ready to talk about baptism.”

Later in the week, Sister Margo would complete the lesson by marching her students down to the parish’s weekly lunchtime soup kitchen, where the roses ended up as centerpieces or gifts handed out by the children to brighten the day of the homeless guests.

Do you think anyone in Sister Margo’s class ever forgot that lesson? I know I haven’t because it offers such a vivid snapshot of how Catholic school teachers light fires in the hearts and minds of students.

Her pedagogical method illustrates both the importance that Catholic school educators place on demonstrating interdisciplinary links between subjects, and bringing religious awareness into all human learning.

It also contains each of the elements of Catholic school education that we are celebrating this year—faith, academics and service. Let’s take a brief look at each of these as they are lived out in our Catholic schools.

Faith—Catholic schools celebrate our Catholic faith in word and sacrament, in service and in the ongoing development of a community spirit animated by the belief that Jesus Christ is Lord. As one of the privileged environments for the new evangelization, they have a missionary thrust and are often catalysts for bringing families into a renewed, life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ and his Church.

Academics—In category after category, the performance of our Catholic schools on academic assessments is remarkable, often significantly exceeding the performance of other Indiana school systems.

Our Catholic high school graduation rate is 99.2 percent. The percentage of our Indiana Core 40 graduates is 98.5 percent. And our Catholic schools have the highest number of National Blue Ribbon School Awards of any diocese in the country. Many other academic accolades could be mentioned so if you are interested in them or other information about our Catholic schools, contact the archdiocese.

Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers, pages 7B and 10B.

Belief in angels spurs educator to guide children, page 5B.

Students’ outreach creates special bond with senior citizens, page 14B.

HOW CAN I POSSIBLY AFFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOL? Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers, pages 7B and 10B.

(Harry Plummer is executive director of the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Catholic Education and Faith Formation.)
Little Flower students look to Jesus to become servant leaders

By Sean Gallagher

When the faculty and staff at Little Flower School in Indianapolis wanted to turn their eighth-graders into servant leaders, the choice for a role model for them was obvious: Jesus Christ.

But in using the example of Jesus to help the students become good leaders, Little Flower principal Kevin Gawrys didn’t just look to Scripture and the Church’s teachings. He also took advantage of the writings of Ken Blanchard, a secular author known for promoting effective methods of business leadership.

In his book, *Lead Like Jesus*, Blanchard argues that servant leadership is the most effective way to lead others in a common task, and that the best example of this form of leadership is found in Jesus Christ.

The past three eighth-grade classes at Little Flower School have taken a Catholic version of *Lead Like Jesus* developed by Owen Phelps and learned how to become better leaders in their school and to lay the foundation for being good leaders as teenagers and adults.

Gawrys meets with the eighth-graders once a month for an afternoon to study the leadership qualities of Jesus, and how they can use them in their everyday lives. "I think most Catholic school [administrators and teachers] tell their eighth-graders, ‘Hey, you’re the leaders of the school. You’ve got to be the leaders,’" said Gawrys. "But we don’t always give them the tools to be the good ones. And this has really helped them understand that they are called to look out for everybody.

"Leadership is every time you have an interaction with another person." The leadership that Little Flower’s eighth-grade students show isn’t just in school-wide events such as Masses or athletic activities. It happens in ordinary events in the classroom and the cafeteria.

"They’re more willing to include everybody in the classroom," said Theresa Slaton, Little Flower’s eighth-grade teacher. "I’ve seen a lot of inclusion and not leaving people out. At lunch, nobody ever sits by themselves. I’ve actually seen people get up on their own and wrestle some kids that didn’t have to sit alone at lunch."

Wesley Moss, an eighth-grade student, explained the way that *Lead Like Jesus* has changed his and his classmates’ perspective on various aspects of their lives. "I’ve noticed that we have become better leaders at home and at school, and even with people in day-to-day life outside of school," Wesley said.

"I’m more willing to watch my twin sisters or help them with homework. Little Flower’s faculty and staff have also started encouraging students at all grade levels to become servant leaders. This occurred last September at the start of the academic year when Little Flower had a ‘service-a-thon’ instead of a walk-a-thon to raise funds for the school. Students elicited pledges for the amount of hours they would give in service. "It sends a whole new message," Gawrys said. "I’m not going to go walk. I’m going to do things for other people. That’s what we’re about here.

And, starting this year, it’s what the whole school is about. Each grade at Little Flower is working to pair up with a service organization in the broader community.

The second-graders have reached out to the residents of St. Paul Hermitage, a retirement home and nursing home facility in Beech Grove.

Eighth-grade students have spent time volunteering at the Pratt-Kugrey Food Pantry of the Indianapolis Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Wesley said that going to the pantry to meet and help people is more powerful than simply donating food items in order to be able to have the privilege of not wearing his school uniform.

"They’re really thankful that you’re there and willing to help them," Wesley said. "When you do that, you feel more rewarded than getting out of uniform once.""Sheila Gilbert, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish and president of the national council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, sees great potential in the students giving of themselves in service to the community.

"What I hope it will do is create passionate hearts in them so that, when they see suffering, they’re going to be more moved to try to do something about it," Gilbert said. "They’re not going to be cold or indifferent.""Gawrys shares Gilbert’s hopes.

"Our job is to change the world," Gawrys said. "That seems like a huge thing, but I think these opportunities of service show them how to do it. They come back here realizing that they did it that day. They changed the world. They dealt with people and changed their world that day."

(For more information about Little Flower School in Indianapolis, log on to www.littleflowerparish.org/school.)

Award-winning Spanish teacher shows students a different world

By John Shaughnessy

When Paula Owen takes her students to a Mexican restaurant, it’s not just an occasion to savor burritos and enchiladas. It’s also a teaching moment to help the students practice Spanish, work on math skills and learn about a different culture.

"It’s all part of a bigger dish that Owen wants to serve his students that haven’t been to a Mexican restaurant. We’ll figure the tax and what the tip will be. Plus, there are some students that haven’t been to a Mexican restaurant. We’ll take about what a quesadilla, an enchilada and a burrito are. So they’re anxious to try something and share something they normally wouldn’t have.

"Before we take our seventh-graders to a Mexican restaurant, we practice on how to order in Spanish," says Owen, who is in her 11th year of teaching the foreign language at St. Malachy School in Brownsburg. "The wait staff will only speak Spanish to the kids, and the students have to express their needs in Spanish—say if they want a straw or more water.

"It’s an easy way to bring in a little bit of math. We figure the tax and what the tip will be. Plus, there are some students that haven’t been to a Mexican restaurant. We’ll take about what a quesadilla, an enchilada and a burrito are. So they’re anxious to try something and share something they normally wouldn’t have.

"It’s all part of a bigger dish that Owen wants to serve his students.

"I’m trying to get them to open their eyes and their minds to seeing different things and doing different things," she says. "There’s so much I want to teach them about the languages and the grammar, but I’m also interested in trying to teach them the culture and tying it in with the other parts of the curriculum.

That approach has helped Owen earn recognition as the elementary school-level Teacher of the Year by the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association.

"Wanting her students to be open to the world means Owen is always open to different ways of teaching them."

Twice a year, St. Malachy School has children’s Masses in “Spanglish”—half the celebration in Spanish and half the celebration in English.

When the Latino community celebrates the Day of the Dead—Nov. 1 (All Saints Day) and Nov. 2 (All Souls Day)—in the United States, Owen leads the school’s kindergarten students to the nearby St. Malachy Cemetery.

"We walked down to the cemetery to honor the lives of the in-laws of one of our kindergarten teachers," she recalls. "We carried unlit candles and left flowers on the gravestones. Some weeks after we did that, a kindergarten student’s mom had a parent die. The kindergarten student tried to help her mom overcome her sadness by telling her what he learned from our Day of the Dead celebration."

Trips to a nearby Mexican grocery have a different impact on kindergarten students and their families.

"Some of our parents go on the field trips and see the market, some for the first time," she says. "The people at the market always give us fresh pastries at the end of our visit. The families always want to go back and get more. It’s letting them see another way of life. We live in a global society, and the technology brings us even closer together. So to see the bigger picture beyond our house and beyond our church is helpful and healthy."

Kindergarten students at Little Flower School in Indianapolis pose on Jan. 4 with pajamas that they donated to charity. All grades at the Indianapolis East Deanery school are finding service organizations to partner with to help the students learn to be servant leaders.
Graduates celebrate their Catholic school’s timeless influence

By Dennis Brake

Playing kickball, marching in the May Crowning procession and saving entire villages of babies with mission collections are just a few of the many reasons to attend a Catholic grade school. But the best reason is that, contrary to what Thomas Wolfe said, you really can go home again. Even after five decades (that’s an entire rosary), you really can go home again. Even after five decades (that’s an entire rosary), you can hold a class reunion and, with the exception of a few expanding waistlines and some greying hair, very little has changed.

Last year, I had the privilege of helping to organize St. Joan of Arc’s Class of 1961 50-year reunion. That year, 109 little saints (with a small “s”) graduated, one of the largest classes ever at St. Joan of Arc. Somehow, we all fit into just two rooms.

One of the highlights during the reunion weekend was a tour of the school. As we walked through the halls and stepped into the classrooms, the most common question heard was, “How did we ever fit 55 kids into this tiny room?”

The bigger mystery was, “How did one nun ever control 55 of us kids?” The answer was “Providence,” as in the Sisters of Providence. They truly were a rare breed, and we were most fortunate to be the beneficiaries of their devotion.

Members of the 1961 graduating class of St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis share a group photo with Father Guy Roberts, pastor of the parish, during their 50th reunion at the school in June of 2011.

Parent finds a sense of community for her children

By Sara Graf

When searching for a school for my children, my number one goal was to find a community that would support our children’s emotional, religious and educational growth. St. Paul School in New Alsace has exceeded my expectations.

Matthew Graf, left, and his brother, Nathan, pose for a picture at St. Paul School in New Alsace with Father Scott Nobbe, who is both the parish priest and the principal of the school. School secretary Millie Kraus watches in the background.

Graduates celebrate their Catholic school’s timeless influence

By Katie Buck

There are two things that come to mind when I reflect on the joys of working at a Catholic school. One is the first all-school Mass I attended with the student body. Even though I was excited about my new job at St. Malachy School in Brownsburg, I was also feeling anxious because it required some sacrifices from me and my family. That first Mass gave me such a sense of peace and gratitude.

The second memory that comes to mind is from this past Advent. I was shelving books and listening to a class of first-graders work on their computer lesson. Mrs. Wagoner had asked the class to brainstorm Christmas words. Our students’ answers made me laugh and also touched my heart: “Jesus! Santa! Birthelhems! Presents! Angels!”

Listening to the class compile this list, with words about Jesus and the Nativity coming as naturally as words about Christmas trees and presents, made me think of how much my community is shared and reinforced each day, and how the truth of our Catholic faith is shared and reinforced each day, and that is an invaluable gift.

Staff member gives thanks for an invaluable gift of faith

By Katie Buck

I have also personally grown in my faith through talking to my children about what they have learned in school.

Sara Graf
Cardinal Ritter students focus on care for God’s creation

By Mary Ann Garber

Cardinal Ritter students focus on care for God’s creation

“Reuse. Recycle. Rejoice.” The sign in Mary Pat O’Connor’s ecology classroom at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis reminds students of the importance of caring for God’s creation.

Cardinal Ritter students are doing their part to protect the environment and lower their carbon footprints with a number of ecology-related projects at the Indianapolis West Deenery campus.

Seniors gathered in O’Connor’s ecology class are working hard to help achieve National Green Ribbon Schools status for Cardinal Ritter by educating all the students about ways to be kinder to Planet Earth.

Ecology students also are enthusiastic about raising funds for water purification projects in Haiti, collecting electronics and other kinds of recyclables, monitoring water quality in nearby Crooked Creek, reducing litter on city streets, starting a salad bar in the school cafeteria to promote healthier diets, and encouraging more eco-friendly lifestyles among peers.

Senior TadStarsiak became interested in protecting the environment when he was a student at St. Christopher School in Indianapolis and began volunteering as a Zoo Teen at the Indianapolis Zoo.

“That was a lot of fun,” Tad said. “We did [educational] shows with the animals and talked about the environment.”

At Cardinal Ritter, he appreciates how the students are focused on recycling, and the faculty and administrators are open to implementing the students’ ideas about ways to improve the school environment.

Next year, he will major in philosophy at Marian University, play football for the Knights and make time for nature walks in Marian’s outdoor EcoLab.

“We’re supposed to care for God’s creation,” Tad said. “That’s one of the Catholic social teachings.”

Senior Anna Beyer attended St. Michael School in Indianapolis, where she developed an interest in science.

She enjoys ecology class assignments, which are “all about becoming healthier and more environmentally friendly” as well as trying to make a positive difference in the world.

A class field trip to the White Violet Center for Eco-Justice at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in Vigo County was “really cool,” Anna said, because the students watched a demonstration on water and wetlands.

Nature field trips to nearby Crooked Creek are fun too, she said, and include monitoring water quality, picking up trash and searching for different kinds of insect larvae that indicate whether the stream is clean or polluted.

“That’s a real hands-on experience,” Anna explained, “to teach kids how we can make a difference in the world.”

At home, she takes shorter showers, turns off lights when she leaves a room, and appreciates energy-efficient lighting and appliances.

As a science teacher, O’Connor enjoys helping the students learn ways to connect biology, faith and respect for the environment.

Cardinal Ritter has promoted paper recycling for years, she said, and the school began recycling aluminum, glass, plastic and cardboard last year.

During this school year, O’Connor said, the faculty, staff and students increased the amount of recycled paper weight by 30 percent more than last year. Ecology class assignments include field trips, school and community service projects, and studying environmental regulations to make the students aware of legal protections for natural resources.

“We talk about ‘Where does this object end up if we aren’t recycling it?’” she said. “We clean up the area near the [Major Taylor] Velodrome every time that we go to Crooked Creek, which is about five minutes from the school. You would not believe what kinds of things we have found there—shower doors, grills, tires, all kinds of litter and trash.”

The good news, O’Connor said, is that “the water really is of good quality” in the creek, which runs through Marian’s campus then past the Velodrome and Lake Sullivan into the White River.

Field trips offer “fantastic teaching moments for the kids,” she said.

“One year, we participated in the city’s cigarette litter clean-up campaign. We picked up cigarette butts along 30th Street and by the creek.”

The students learned that toxins from the cigarettes wash into the water supply.” O’Connor said. “They talked to business owners about putting containers outside their stores to collect cigarette litter. They realized that they could affect a change by trying to correct the source of the problem, and they could tell they were making a difference.”

O’Connor begins the ecology curriculum each fall by asking the students to choose an environmental project to focus on all year, which empowers them to work harder to improve their community.

“Last year, we studied water quality and that evolved into discussions on water as a right of life,” she said. “We started looking at places in the world where people did not have enough water or they had flooding and didn’t have clean water.”

That research led the students to sponsor a fundraiser on March 22—which is World Water Day—to help pay for a $3,500 water purification system provided by Fountains of Hope and St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg for St. Marguerite Parish in Port Margret, Haiti.

The fundraiser also built school unity as teachers, staff and parents donated a work for each vote to select faculty and student “Brain Game” teams for a school competition.

The match was broadcast on the school’s television channel, and the student team won by one question. The same students also won WTHR Channel 13’s “Brain Game” competition.

But the real winners were the Haitian people who benefited from clean water thanks to the $900 donation raised by the Cardinal Ritter family.

“It was a combination of science and our Catholic social teachings, which made it a perfect project,” O’Connor said. “We are continuing that fundraiser again this March to send more funds to Haiti for water purification.”

Last semester, students wrote essays on how climate change affects the water cycle worldwide and our responsibilities as Christians to take care of the environment.

Cardinal Ritter’s most recent ecology project on Jan. 18 resulted in donations of nearly two truckloads of electronics and other recyclables.

This semester, students are studying more ways to conserve natural resources, create more green spaces and protect the environment.

Those educational efforts will give them a head start on celebrating Earth Day on April 23.

(For more information about Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School’s recycling program, contact Mary Pat O’Connor at mopconnor@cardinalritter.org. For more information about the Green Ribbon Schools program, log on to www.greenribbonschools.org.)
Belief in angels spurs educator to guide children

By John Shaughnessy

It could be just a terrific coincidence—but try to sell that explanation to Sherlynn Pillow, who believes that angels protect and watch over people.

In June of 2010, Pillow was depressed because her nearly 30-year career in education seemed to be coming to an end due to budget cuts and the closing of the school where she had worked for the past 12 years, Craig Middle School in Indianapolis.

During her last days at the school, Pillow received an unexpected phone call from Connie Zittman, executive director of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in the archdiocese. Pillow had previously applied for an education position with the archdiocese, but wasn’t contacted. So the call from Zittman about a job opening for a principal caught her off-guard.

“Connie even told me that I probably never heard of the school, that it was a little school on the west side of Indianapolis called Holy Angels,” Pillow recalls. “I busted out laughing. Connie asked me why I was laughing. I said, ‘I was baptized at Holy Angels. I grew up a block from the school. It’s the area I know. It’s my home.’

After a few days of interviews, Pillow had the job. “I tell people that it was God calling me home,” says a smiling Pillow as she sits in her office where her door, shelves and window sills are decorated with items from her extensive collection of angels. “When I got the phone call from Connie, it was another moment when the angels were watching over me.”

In her second year as principal, Pillow tries to be an angel for the 132 children at the school that serves students from kindergarten through the sixth-grade. She views the fact that she is black and from the neighborhood as an advantage in connecting with Holy Angels students, who overwhelmingly come from black families.

“The one thing that the kids at Holy Angels may have not had in the past is someone who looks like them who is a role model,” says Pillow, the mother of two teenagers. “They know I came from this area. They look at me and say, ‘She’s able to go to college. She was able to do things.’ I think the parents are a little more comfortable with me, too.

“I want to build relationships—with high expectations. I expect a lot from the students, the parents, the teachers and myself. I think any one of these kids can meet those expectations. I want them to understand that their charge as young people is to make their community better.”

As a parent, Cardis Morton appreciates that approach to education for his son, Matthew, a third-grade student at Holy Angels School.

“She’s a hands-on principal who cares, who listens and who gets involved,” Morton says. “They don’t accept bullying. And if you have a concern, she always has time to sit and talk with you and solve it. She’s a blessing. I wish myself. I think any one of these kids can meet those expectations. I want them to understand that their charge as young people is to make their community better.”

Pillow views Holy Angels as a school based on the foundations of Catholic identity, academics and cultural identity—a theme that appears frequently throughout the school building.

Tributes to George Washington Carver, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., President Barack Obama and other black heroes hang in the hallways.

A prominent display honors black role models from religious life. St. Martin de Porres was hailed for his medical skills to help the poor. Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange is praised as the founder of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first United States-based religious order of black women. St. Charles Lwanga of Uganda is saluted as a martyr who died for his Catholic faith.

“I decided to try to get the kids to understand that Catholicism is not a white religion,” she says. “I’ve focused on people who are saints or missionaries who look like them, who are part of the Catholic Church. The Catholic identity is important to me. I like being able to voice what I believe as far as God. As far as what Jesus Christ has done in my life, to talk about men and women who have achieved great things because of their faith.

She also connects with the children through their interests.

She does Tai Bo exercises with the school’s youngest children. After school, she joins students as they dance to a Michael Jackson video song. She tries to attend their Catholic Youth Organization games. And she is always challenging the older students about taking responsibility for their actions while still being there for them—even sometimes buying shoes for a child in need.

If others see the touch of an angel in what she does, Pillow downplays that comparison, saying, “I just do what needs to be done.” Still, she believes she is guided by angels.

“I get up in the morning and I’m happy about coming here,” she says. “I go home exhausted, but I’m still happy. I truly believe someone is watching over me and guiding me.”

Spirit of family inspires students to help teacher’s baby

By John Shaughnessy

There are moments when teachers learn just how special their students are.

For Kyle Jolly, that understanding came in the midst of a difficult time for him and his wife, Kimberly, shortly after the birth of their first child, Landon.

When their son was born on July 22, 2011, it was soon determined that he would require surgery on his right hand, where some of his fingers had grown fused together.

Even more of concern was that he had a very severe club foot on his right leg, and he was born without one of the main bones of his right leg. So doctors have determined that it will be best to amputate Landon’s right leg at the knee and fit him with a prosthetic limb—a process that will begin this spring.

So at times, it’s been overwhelming for Kimberly and Kyle, who teaches physical education and third-grade math at St. Louis School in Batesville. There have been concerns about paying for the surgeries that Landon needs—concerns that family and friends have tried to help with, including the “family” of St. Louis School.

“A couple of teachers came to me at the beginning of the school year and asked if the kids could bring in some of their loose change to help Landon,” Kyle, 29, recalls. “I’m thinking in the back of my mind, ‘This is nice. They’ll collect a couple hundred dollars, and this will be a way for the kids to feel a part of it.’

Yet, Kyle’s view changed later when St. Louis School principal Chad Meoller told him that the students had raised more money than anyone had expected.

“He also said they wanted to make a presentation the next week with the whole school coming together,” Kyle says. “I’m still shocked by what they did. They gave me more than $1,500.

“One of the teachers told me later that one girl came in with a bag of money that was filled with bills and coins. The teacher said, ‘That’s a lot of money. Do your parents know you brought this in?’ The girl said, ‘Yes. I emptied my piggy bank and told my mom what it was for.’ And my mom said it was the best decision I could make’.

Months have passed since Kyle first heard that story, but he still gets emotional when he tells it.

“When I heard that someone had emptied their piggy bank for my little boy, I was overwhelmed,” he says. “What everyone else and I did for me and my little boy showed the kind of families, the kind of kids and the kind of community we have at our school. It’s really amazing.”

A teacher at St. Louis School in Batesville, Kyle Jolly recently received a check to help with the health expenses for his first child, Landon. Students at St. Louis School raised the money, which included a donation from one girl who emptied her piggy bank.

The check was presented to Jolly by St. Louis students, from left, Calvin Shenk, Jack Tonges, Sarah Meier, Abby Roell and Molly Weigel.
Lesson in empathy connects students to homeless people

By John Shaughnessy

Abby Wienesch realized how much she had changed when she saw a man on the street holding a sign that read, “Homeless. Need food.” In similar situations in the past, the 16-year-old sophomore at Bishop Chatard High School would have looked past the man, believing that he had chosen to live on the streets, thinking that he was someone to avoid. Yet this time, she and a friend approached the situation differently.

“We got him a piece of pizza,” recalls Abby, a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. “I think he was in a state of shock when we did that, but I think he was thankful, too. I’ve had my eyes opened. I’ve learned that I shouldn’t be awkward around homeless people. I should give them a smile.”

Abby’s change in attitude came from an immersion program about homelessness that each of the 170 sophomores at Bishop Chatard High School has experienced this school year—a program started by Benedictine Sister Kathleen Yeardon, one of the school’s sophomore religion teachers. Her idea to start the program developed last spring when the bishops in the United States decided that sophomore religion classes at Catholic high schools should focus on the Paschal Mystery, the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ.

“If the students don’t have an understanding of suffering, the Paschal Mystery wouldn’t make sense to them,” Sister Kathleen says. “So I thought the best way for them to experience suffering was to go into the inner city and encounter people who suffer. The whole purpose was to try to give them an understanding of what it is like to be homeless.”

A humbling moment

The program exposed the students to real-life situations they had never experienced. They stood and slugged through a pouring rainstorm that flooded the Regan Mall in downtown Indianapolis—a place where homeless people can be found during the day.

They met a homeless person named Stanley, who shared his life story filled with mistakes, told them to stay in school and then led them in prayer, asking God to keep the students safe and let them realize their blessings.

They walked through a shelter with homeless people, ate lunch with them and listened to their stories. They visited a room inside a shelter where everything the homeless people had in their lives fit into a plastic container.

“It’s a humbling room,” recalls Nick Rulong, an 18-year-old senior at Bishop Chatard High School who helped Sister Kathleen coordinate some of the trips. “I think it was a great experience for them.”

That connection, the understanding of human suffering and the appreciation for anything.”

Among the things that Sister Kathleen has noticed are the changes in attitude of Bishop Chatard teachers who have helped Sister Kathleen with the program. “That lesson has even changed the attitude of Bishop Chatard teachers who have helped Sister Kathleen with the program.”

“We’re called to serve,” Nick says. “We’re supposed to serve God first, others second and then ourselves.”

“Christ comes in many disguises”

It’s a message that Sister Kathleen was able to bring to life with the help of about 25 social service agencies that work to help homeless men, women and children—including the archdiocese’s Holy Family Shelter, Cathedral Soup Kitchen, St. Vincent de Paul Society and several parishes.

“Each time they came, the students really worked hard helping to make casseroles, making fruit salads or making meals we would freeze for later,” says Margie Pike, director of the Cathedral Soup Kitchen. “I think it was a great experience because it was really hands-on.

“Many students have preconceived ideas about the poor. Most of them are surprised at how nice and polite they are. The students also see the struggles of the people. We always talk here about St. Benedict and how he always said to welcome all as Christ. We tell them that Christ comes in many disguises.”

That lesson has even changed the attitude of Bishop Chatard teachers who have helped Sister Kathleen with the program. “That connection, the understanding of human suffering and the appreciation for anything were the goals that Sister Kathleen sought for the sophomores students.”

“Overall, I’d say it was an incredible experience for them. They got to do something outside of their normal world. And they encountered people they would never meet. Even when we stood out in the rain, we didn’t stop. It added to the experience of how we were connected to the people who are homeless.”

One more connection stands out to Sister Kathleen, making her smile as she shares it:

“I was hoping for them to see how people don’t give up, how people can go against incredible odds and overcome them. We saw how good came out of suffering. They encountered a man who had been homeless and a street person for years. Now, he has a lawn care business, he’s getting married and he helps the homeless. I think they definitely saw the connection between people’s passion, the love of God and how God is calling them.”

The joy of Catholic schools: ‘You never sit alone at lunch’

By John Shaughnessy

As a fourth-grade teacher at St. Roch School in Indianapolis, Dick Gallamore asked his students, “What do you like about going to a Catholic school?”

Here are some of their answers:

• “I like going to a Catholic school because we get to learn about God and the saints.”—Lillian Egan
• “I like going to a Catholic school because you never sit alone at lunch.”—Riley Prewitt
• “I like going to a Catholic school because we have prayer partners.”—Katy Reed
• “I like going to a Catholic school because they have nice teachers.”—Miles Marshall
• “I like Catholic schools because we have a priest like Father James Wilmot. He is my favorite priest!”—Lance Brand

• “I like going to a Catholic school because they have nice teachers.”

Jesus said, “If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? And if you lend money to someone who can pay you back, what credit is that to you?”

But when you do good to those who are poor and unfortunate, you are being good to Christ himself. We are, after all, called to be his hands and feet.

We’re supposed to serve God first, others second and then ourselves. (Luke 6:33-34)

We’re called to serve. (Luke 10:30-37)

We’re supposed to serve God first, others second and then ourselves. (Luke 10:30-37)
TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS

What are Tax Credit Scholarships?
The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the private school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a $500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?
- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart on next page), AND
- A student who is entering Kindergarten or 1st grade, AND/OR
- A student who is coming to a private school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school.

Why should I apply now?
If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 13 years. Kindergarten and 1st grade students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for a Tax Credit Scholarship?
1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit choicetrust.org/apply.

INDIANA SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What is an Indiana School Voucher?
A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades 1-8 can receive a maximum of $4,500 per school year. High school students can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

Who qualifies for a Voucher?
- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart on next page), AND
- A student in grades 2-12 who is coming to a private school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
- A current private school student in grades 1-12 who has received a Tax Credit Scholarship in a prior year.

Why should I apply now?
If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 13 years. Kindergarten and 1st grade students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for a Voucher?
1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit doe.in.gov/schoolchoice.
WHAT AM I ELIGIBLE FOR?

Follow the chart below to see if you qualify for Tax Credit Scholarships and Vouchers.

I’m enrolling my child in Kindergarten or 1st grade at a Catholic school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:
- Indiana resident
- My family is between 150% and 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP

I’m moving my child in grades 2 – 12 to a Catholic school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:
- Indiana resident
- My child attended public school the previous year (two semesters) OR received a Tax Credit Scholarship, or Voucher, the previous school year.

AND one of the following:
- My family is between 150% and 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).
- My family is at 150%, or below, the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

SCHOOL VOUCHER

Contact your local Catholic school or for more information about schools, contact:

Archdiocese of Indianapolis
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana
Office of Catholic Education
(317) 236-1430
(800) 382-9836
www.archindy.org/oce/
Prince of Peace schools graduates return to form new leaders

By Sean Gallagher

MADISON—Philip Kahn and Jill Mires were classmates for 12 years at Pope John XXIII School and Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison. Although they spent much of their childhood and teenage years together, they never imagined when they graduated from Shawe in 1987 that, 21 years later, they would work together to ensure the future of the schools that are a ministry of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison.

Mires is in her fourth year as Pope John’s principal after previously teaching there for 17 years. And Kahn is in his third year as president of the school.

“It’s been fun,” Mires says with a laugh about working with her classmate. “We talk about how things have changed so much. Things that we got away with. And now things that we don’t want our kids to be thinking of doing. “But we both just want these schools to be so successful. That’s the goal, to make them successful and sustainable for our children and grandchildren.”

Kahn and Mires are leaders at Pope John XXIII and Shawe. And they work together with Father Christopher Craig, Prince of Peace’s pastor, in making the schools as good as they can be and in promoting them in the wider community.

Father Craig also graduated from Pope John XXIII and Shawe, attending his high school diploma in 1983.

Just as the three graduates returned to Madison and the school that they love, many of the teachers who taught them are still on the staff at Pope John XXIII and Shawe.

Father Craig said it’s that tight-knit community that draws people to the schools and keeps them there.

“It’s the sense of community and the family spirit,” he said. “I think it’s the Church, feeling that being a part of the body of Christ. We’ve had so many common experiences—together, joyful experiences and also struggles of people that have lost family members.”

Kahn knows from experience how the schools’ communities can be a support in times of trial.

The youngest of four siblings, his father worked where he was a fringe child.

“The support and the family atmosphere that I got from teachers and friends and family really helped my family through a tough time,” Kahn said. “I think that helped create that bond at an early age that I have with the schools.”

That bond led him to walk away from a career at Eli Lilly & Company to return to his hometown and work with people like Mires and Father Craig to form the next generation of leaders to come out of Pope John XXIII and Shawe.

A young adult who is working with them in this mission is Chelsea Sims, 24, the first-grade teacher at Pope John XXIII.

She attended Pope John XXIII and graduated from Shawe in 2006. Her first-grade teacher at Pope John XXIII was Mires.

“I knew right then that she was going to make a great educator,” Mires says with pride.

Now Sims is enjoying doing the same thing as her first-grade teacher did—recognizing the gifts in her students and encouraging them to excel.

“I have several little girls in here that I could see being teachers one day,” Sims says. “It’s very rewarding to find that spark in them, and to light it and make it go forward, especially when they’re interested in it and they know that you’re interested in making it happen.”

—Chelsea Sims

“**It’s very rewarding to find that spark in them, and to light it and make it go forward, especially when they’re interested in it and they know that you’re interested in making it happen.”**

Mrs. DeWitt passed out tubes of toothpaste and paper plates to several people. The partners were instructed to squirt out all of the toothpaste onto the plate. All the partners were able to squeeze their toothpaste onto the plate without a problem. Then Mrs. DeWitt told us to put all the toothpaste we had squirted out on the plate back into the tube. This task seemed nearly impossible, and none of the groups were successful in their attempts. The significance of the toothpaste, Mrs. DeWitt told us, was that it represented our words. It is easy to quickly say hurtful and unkind words, but much harder to clean or mend the damage that these words can cause.

We can never take back the hurtful words we have said to our peers just like we couldn’t put the toothpaste back into the tube.

Later, Mrs. (Pam) Scheck shared with us her personal experiences about bullying. She gave the analogy that when someone hurts you, it is like they are shooting an arrow through your heart. She then proceeded to hand all of us paper arrows and told our class to write down all the hurtful words we have spoken or others have said to us.

After several minutes of reflection, everyone threw their arrows into the fire and watched them burn. Suddenly, all the emotions of the night ran together and slowly many students began to cry. We walked around hugging each other while tears streamed down our cheeks.

No one asked us to cry and hug one another, yet we did.

We made an emotional connection without saying a word.

At the closing ceremony, we described each other not just as classmates, but as a family. We all made a pact to make this last year our best ever.

*Emerson Wolff is an eighth-grade student at St. Luke the Evangelist School in Indianapolis.*

The joy of Catholic schools: ‘We can make an immense difference together,’ student says

By Katie Pankow

At our First Monday Celebration, the whole student body gathers in the gym to embrace our faith and to celebrate what students did the previous month to help those in need. First Monday is started with the usual prayers, pledge and birthday announcements. One of the greatest parts, though, is when we recognize the all people who did wonderful things for our community.

Some examples are when students have guests donate money for those in need instead of getting birthday presents or when a family goes to another country to help build houses for hurricane victims. This helps us realize that we can help the world individually, and that we can make an immense difference together.

To end First Monday, the middle school choir sings uplifting songs. The voices of the choir echo through the gym and remind us that singing is one of the highest forms of prayer.

First Monday is one of the countess reasons why I am thankful that my parents sent me to St. Luke the Evangelist School.

*Katie Pankow is an eighth-grade student at St. Luke the Evangelist School in Indianapolis.*
Three small “school systems” in the archdiocese are enhancing the ways that the Church provides its ministry of Catholic education to students of all ages during this challenging economic time.

In 2009, St. Gabriel the Archangel School and St. Michael the Archangel School in Indianapolis were consolidated by the archdiocese to form the West Deaconary United Catholic Schools Inc. with nearby Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School. The merger of the elementary schools on the St. Michael Parish campus next to the deaconery junior and senior high school enabled the archdiocese to better serve the students from those adjacent parishes by sharing administrative and academic resources as well as governance by one board of directors.

This parish partnership helped to resolve some longstanding financial and enrollment concerns affecting both elementary schools. Two other small school systems already in place in the archdiocese are achieving similar successes for parishes and families in east-central and southern Indiana.

Seton Catholic Schools in Richmond and Prince of Peace Schools in Madison also share a governance structure and a variety of resources with their elementary schools and high schools.

G. Joseph Peters, associate executive director of Catholic education for the archdiocese, said the St. Gabriel and St. Michael consolidation resulted from a 2009 study of the Indianapolis West Deaconary schools approved by Archdiocese [now emeritus] Daniel M. Buechlein as the best use of educational resources and facilities for the two parishes, which are only three miles apart.

“It’s a success story, but it wasn’t easy,” Peters said. “There were some struggles getting there…Elementary enrollment is up by 27 students this year.”

Sarah Watson, principal of the consolidated elementary school, brings a unique perspective to her ministry. She graduated from St. Michael School, returned to her parish years later as a youth minister then was appointed principal of St. Gabriel School, where she served for seven years and assisted with the transition duties for the merger.

“Both schools were performing well academically, but both suffered from declining enrollment,” Watson said.

“This year, our [combined] enrollment is 280 students in prekindergarten through the eighth grade. Our school serves both parish communities as well as a number of other church communities…We are a diverse school religiously and ethnically.”

Last July, with the assistance of Catholic School Management Inc., the board of directors of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School was reconfigured to include the elementary school.

“Because of the partnership with Cardinal Ritter High School, we are able to expand what we can offer to our students on a daily basis,” Watson said. “The academic possibilities that have opened up between the two schools really benefit the students and families.”

“We have seventh- and eighth-graders who take advanced language arts classes at the junior high level at Cardinal Ritter, said Watson. “Most of our eighth-graders will graduate at the end of the year with dual credits in language arts, composition, digital communication and honors algebra.”

The elementary school and Cardinal Ritter also share faculty members, she said, who teach classes at both schools.

“We provide an extended day for our students,” Watson said. “But this was not an easy process for the two parishes because it required sacrifices. We are grateful for their support. We also are grateful to the board and committee volunteers that worked through this partnership process for two years. We would not be here today without their help. We have some tough issues we are unified and we are blessed to have each other.”

Greg Perkins, Cardinal Ritter’s president and administrative officer of the West Deaconary United Catholic Schools Inc., oversees the principals of both schools. Joe Hoy and Watson—who work together with Perkins as a team on administrative matters.

“I think the most important aspect of this is that it is a different approach to managing our Catholic schools,” Perkins said. “It is a different governance model…It helps relieve the parishes of some administrative burdens because running a school is not easy…It is a very practical, resourceful and efficient approach that allows for more central organization to focus on the needs.”

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School students represent West Deaconary parishes from Indianapolis, Avon, Plainfield and Brownsburg.

In Richmond, Seton Catholic High School principal Rick Ruhl said collaborating on planning, curriculum and student life issues as a small school system has many benefits for the students at the high school and two elementary school campuses.

Ruhl said, “The exciting thing that we are finding in our unification as a small school through grade 12 system is that we are approaching these issues in a much more systemic fashion.

“We consider ourselves to be a family, and we take advantage of opportunities to gather together more often than we have in the past,” Ruhl said. “It has strengthened the bonds between the elementary school and the high school.”

Three years ago, Seton Catholic Schools—Seton Catholic Jr./Sr. High School and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Elementary School—began a four-year strategic planning process with assistance from Catholic School Management Inc. and the archdiocese Office of Catholic Education to redefine the board, develop long-range goals and identify areas for possible growth in the archdiocese.

“Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School senior Chloe Storm, left, and junior Joe Nchia of Madison share basic information about the French language during a class discussion on Jan. 12.

“Every month, we have an all-school Mass for the kindergarten through the 12th grade students,” Kahn said. “The community is also welcome to attend the all-school Masses, which is nice.”

High school students serve as mentors for elementary school students, he said, and occasionally help teach elementary classes.

“We promote a family environment,” Kahn said. “We want Prince of Peace Schools as a small community within a small community. Madison has about 13,000 residents, and people take care of each other here.”

Sharing resources helps keep the cost of Catholic education affordable, he said. “We are always looking at how we can benefit from sharing resources, whether it is copy machines or assigning teachers to different roles at both schools. We work hard to provide a family atmosphere, safe environment and great Catholic education.”

By Mary Ann Garber
First education summit marks new era for Catholic schools

By John Shaughnessy

It was a defining moment for Catholic education in Indiana—a moment when the issues of the Indiana school voucher program, the future of Catholic schools in the state and the importance of Catholic identity in schools were addressed in a historic education summit.

For the first time, educational leaders from the state’s five dioceses met at an education summit to discuss the different ways they can collaborate to make Catholic education even stronger statewide.

When the two-day summit at Marian University in Indianapolis ended, education leaders from the five dioceses—Evansville, Gary, Indianapolis, Lafayette and Fort Wayne-South Bend—had established the groundwork for a new marketing campaign and several other initiatives that could “allow even more students to experience the great, quality Catholic education.”

“We all have the same mission in the state of Indiana,” said Kathy Mears, an assistant superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, who wrote the executive summary of the Catholic Education Summit 2011 that was held on Nov. 29-30. “We haven’t been maximizing, through collaboration and cooperation, all the gifts we’ve been given. With this approach, the possibilities are endless.”

A main factor that led to the summit was the Indiana school voucher program that became law on July 1, 2011—a program that offers state-funded, financial assistance to families of certain income levels to help them select a school of their choice for their children. (For information about the program and how to apply, see pages 7B and 10B in this supplement.)

While the voucher program connects the school systems of the five dioceses even more and offers opportunities for increased enrollment, it also creates the challenge that the Catholic identity of these schools is not lost as they “become more involved in the educational reform movement in Indiana,” Mears noted.

“We want to make sure our faith is integrated into the standards of what we teach,” Mears said. “If we’re going to teach about the civil rights movement, in addition to talking about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we’ll talk about Cardinal [Joseph E.] Ritter and how he integrated Catholic schools in Indianapolis 15 years before Brown v. Board of Education. In Biology, we’ll talk about the sanctity of life.”

Another challenge is to continue to develop teachers and administrators who can teach the faith and lead students to academic excellence—while also finding ways to better compensate those Catholic educators.

“The gap between a Catholic school teacher’s pay and a public school teacher’s pay continues to widen,” Mears said. “I don’t think the average parent knows the difference in compensation. We’re looking at different compensation models.”

Holding the first summit at Marian University also showcased the benefits and possibilities of connecting Catholic elementary schools and high schools to nearby Catholic colleges.

“The state of Indiana talks about P-12 education [preschool to 12th grade],” Mears said. “We think it needs to be P-16. There’s expertise at the college level that we can use. I believe other Catholic universities will come on board for the next summit.”

The summit has already led the school systems of the five dioceses to embrace the same marketing theme that will be used by Catholic schools in Indiana—“Catholic Schools: The Good News.”

“We hope it comes to mean Catholic education in Indiana,” Mears said. “The Good News means the Gospel, which is our evangelization. The Good News also means Catholic schools are good for kids.”

For the first time, educational leaders from Indiana’s five dioceses met at an education summit to discuss the different ways they can collaborate to make Catholic education even stronger statewide.

Marian University president Daniel Elsener makes a point during an education summit that involved educational leaders from Indiana’s five dioceses. The summit was held on Nov. 29-30 at the Indianapolis college.

Plans to continue the education summit among the five dioceses are also good news for the future of Catholic education in Indiana, according to Mears.

“I think the summits will help make our Catholic schools strong and viable,” she said. “Together, we’re going to consider a lot more ideas than we did before. The result will be that we Catholics will come together in communion and community to develop our students into faith-filled adults. That’s the real goal.”

2011-12 facts about Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

**Catholic schools:**
- 69
  - Elementary schools: 58 (26 in Marion County)
  - High schools: 11 (seven in Marion County)  
  
**Preschool programs:**
- 44 (Pres-K programs for 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds)  

**High school (9-12):**
- 1,705 (full-time and part-time)

**Total enrollment (2011-12):**
- 22,909

**Religious composition:**
- Elementary:
  - Catholic: 85%
  - Non-Catholic: 15%
- High school:
  - Catholic: 92%
  - Non-Catholic: 8%

**High school graduation rate (Class of 2011):**
- 99% (in four years or less)

**Percent of graduates entering college (2011):**
- 97%

**Average tuition rates, first child (est. 2011):**
- Catholic: $3,809
- Non-Catholic: $5,053

**Estimated Operating Costs of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese (est. 2011):**
- Elementary schools cost-per-pupil: $4,900
- Interparochial high schools cost-per-pupil: $8,813

**Total operating cost of archdiocesan schools (est. 2011):**
- $110 million

**Annual savings to Indiana taxpayers (estimated):**
- $200 million
Sacred connections

Students’ outreach creates special bond with senior citizens

By John Shaughnessy

FRANKLIN—Ryan Long and Sarah Barnard shared the same feeling of being nervous and overwhelmed as they entered the Franklin United Methodist Community for senior citizens with the other students.

The two eighth-grade students from St. Rose of Lima School in Franklin hadn’t had the opportunity in their young lives to interact with senior citizens who have Alzheimer’s disease. So school counselor Nikki Kirch thought the experience could help the fifths- and eighth-graders make a difference to the senior residents. She also hoped the experience would make an impact on the students.

At 13, Sarah wasn’t sure what to expect when she and a few friends sat at a table with a group of grandmothers.

“It was difficult at some points,” Sarah said in recalling the visit in November 2011. “I don’t have grandparents who have Alzheimer’s. One of them couldn’t remember the names of her grandchildren. That made me sad.”

Her mood started to change when she began a conversation with a talkative woman who is 106.

“The two of us just talked and talked, and we ended up laughing together,” Sarah said with a smile. “By the end, I enjoyed just being able to talk to them and know we were making them feel better.”

For Ryan, the ice breaker moment in the two-hour visit came when he was part of an interactive game with the residents. The students and the senior citizens bounced balloons around the activity room, keeping the balloons in the air by hitting them with large, foam sticks.

“At first, it was an overwhelming experience, but when we began the game, I saw the smiles on their faces,” said Ryan, 13. “It was like they were getting their inner-kid out. It was a lot of fun. By the end, the experience seemed rewarding for all of us.”

While community service for students has always been a significant focus at St. Rose of Lima School, the visit with the senior citizens who have Alzheimer’s disease was also designed to lead the students to a deeper understanding of their faith.

“We spent all of October talking about the value and sacredness of life,” said Estelle Britner, eighth-grade teacher at St. Rose School. “We talked a lot about babies, but most of them don’t have the experience of seeing older people being sick. This lets us talk about the sacredness of life at both ends of life.”

The visits also offered the students the opportunity to look beyond the images they had of the senior citizens, and personally connect with them.

“It was an eye-opener for the kids to see that these aren’t people they should be afraid of,” Britner said. “One of the ladies told the kids that her grandson is playing volleyball in college so our volleyball players were excited about that. And one of the women said her grandson was playing football in college so our football players were excited about that. The whole experience was great for so many of the kids.”

That result was also true for the senior citizens, according to Jack Cronin, activities director at Franklin United Methodist Community.

“The residents talked about the visit for days,” Cronin said. “The students exercised with them, and they were singing songs and playing games with balloons and a parachute. About a week after the final visit, we got about 25 to 30 cards from the students. We passed them out, and the residents really cherished those cards. We’re looking forward to doing it again.”

Above, during a visit to the Franklin United Methodist Community, St. Rose of Lima student Nate Fries, left, and Ethan Sullivan bring smiles to senior citizens as they use large, foam sticks to bounce balloons around the activity room.

Left, for St. Rose of Lima student Sarah Barnard, a visit to the Franklin United Methodist Community offers an opportunity to talk and laugh with senior citizens.

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Providence graduate embraces faith in home, life and business

By Christa Hoyland
Special to The Criterion

It took 15 years, but the faith that was nurtured in Katie Butt Beckort’s heart while she was a student at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville finally blossomed.

Raised in the Presbyterian faith, Beckort came to Providence in seventh grade because her mother, a public school teacher, wanted her to have the education that Providence provided. But she learned so much more.

“She teachers made a good impression on me, especially my religion teachers,” said Beckort, a 1995 Providence graduate. “My religion classes and learning the history of the faith built an appreciation for traditional religion in me.”

Still, she had stopped attending church in recent years. And when her mother encouraged her to return to Sunday services, Beckort instead chose to attend Mass. In the spring of 2011, she was received into the full communion of the Church at St. Michael Church in Bradford.

“What I was taught at Providence just stuck with me,” she explained. “I’ve always been intrigued by it. As I grew older, I had a lot more respect and understanding of the Catholic faith, and I wanted to be part of it.”

Now a member of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon, she plans to have her three sons—Blaine, 5, Duke, 4, and newborn, Henry—baptized in the Catholic faith.

“I have a strong passion for Catholic education, and I want my children to experience it,” she said.

Beckort said it’s amazing that she ever became a Catholic elementary school student at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville. (Christa Hoyland is director of communications and alumni relations for Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.)

Archdiocesan students succeed at high levels on assessment tests

Third- through eighth-grade students at Catholic elementary schools in the archdiocese took the Indiana Statewide Test of Educational Progress in the spring of 2011.

The Indiana Department of Education has a goal that 90 percent of all Indiana students will pass ISTEP+ by 2012. More than 90 percent of archdiocesan Catholic school students passed both the English/language arts (93 percent passing) and mathematics (92 percent passing) portions of the test for 2011 as compared to 73 percent of students at all Indiana schools taking the test.

On a related measure, 93 percent of archdiocesan schools compared to 51 percent of all Indiana public schools earned the top 2 percent Public Law 251 performance categories on ISTEP+ scores and annual improvement, while 1 percent of archdiocesan schools and 20 percent of all public schools placed in the bottom two categories. Archdiocesan schools have steadily increased students’ performance since 2007. The archdiocese was recently honored by the College Board as an “AP District of the Year” for the increased number of high school students taking advanced placement (AP) classes and for the high marks that students are earning (3 or higher on the AP exams).
Principal overcomes challenges to lead high school students

By John Shaughnessy

In every child’s life, seeds of doubt and seeds of inspiration get planted. Sooner or later, one of those seeds takes root, making all the difference in how a life blooms.

Just look at the life of John Hegarty, principal of Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. His story could serve as a guide for any student who has ever wondered and worried about overcoming the challenges to a dream.

When Hegarty was a teenager, the seeds of doubt were spread for him when college advisers in both the United States and Ireland recommended that he shouldn’t pursue a career in education because he had a speech impediment that caused him to stutter noticeably. In the 1990s, Hegarty married his wife, Patricia, welcomed two sons into the world, continued to work and pursued his degree in education at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. He earned his degree in 1999, the same year he started teaching at Scecina. A short while later, the severity of his speech impediment faded significantly. “It started to go away the first year I was teaching,” he says. “I noticed that the kids didn’t care. I felt if the kids didn’t care, then I shouldn’t worry about anyone else. In the 20 years I’ve been at Scecina, I’ve never heard a child mock me because of my speech impediment. That’s amazing. I came to the realization that it’s part of who I am, that’s how God made me, and if you have a problem with that, talk to God. It’s not totally gone, but that approach has helped it to go away.”

It also helped Hegarty to realize he had found a home at Scecina. In 2005, he became the vice principal. In 2010, he became the vice president of student life. He started as principal this school year.

“My strengths are academics, teacher development and a student-centered approach to education,” he says. “At Scecina, we have a huge cross-section of society. Every child comes in with a different set of strengths and weaknesses. And we’re small enough (343 students) that we’re in a position to know what those strengths and weaknesses are, and direct our attention to them.”

One of the strengths of the school—its foundation of faith—led to one of the most memorable moments that Hegarty has experienced at Scecina. It came on the morning of the terrorist attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11, 2001. “I had an Honors English class that morning,” he recalls. “We started praying the rosary in the classroom. That was so powerful a moment when those students got down on their knees and prayed. It helped us get through it. It’s a blessing to teach in a Catholic school.”

Fans of Hegarty believe it’s a blessing that he’s an educator at a Catholic school. “The Catholic faith is at the core of his identity,” says Joseph Thberer, president of Scecina High School. “John recognizes the unique gifts and strengths in every student. He’s a hard worker with a great sense of humor. John values our traditions, values and mission. He has been a significant factor in Scecina Memorial’s growth and success for many years.”

Hegarty had such an influence on Francisco Gomez that the 1998 Scecina graduate became a teacher after he played soccer for Hegarty and served as an assistant coach with him. “He’s the type of person who puts kids first,” Gomez says. “When he coached me, everyone on the team played hard for him because he cared about us, and we cared about him. He’s just a wonderful human being.”

For Hegarty, it all comes down to a motto that guides his life, a motto that dominates a wall in his office: “May you live every day of your life with faith, hope, love.”

It’s an Irish blessing from an educator who overcame the challenges to live his dream. “I feel very strongly that I’m a role model for kids,” he says. “I have an impediment, but it’s not a rock, it’s not a wall. I want to tell people that whatever they have, you can get around it. It may slow you down, but it can’t stop you. We have some kids here who have speech impediments. I tell them they can do whatever they want—especially teach.”
the rally, Carl said her first reaction to the unexpected pregnancy was shock. “I don’t believe there are words for that moment,” she said. “It wasn’t fair. I didn’t choose this. I didn’t make a mistake, but I was having to deal with the consequences. I wanted out. It was a problem and I needed to fix it. It wasn’t a baby. It was a problem. I scheduled an abortion to murder my own child.”

Blinking back tears again, Carl said, “I thank God every single day” because her alarm clock never rang that morning and she missed the appointment to have an abortion. “But it was a long road ahead,” she admitted. “I was 17 and I was pregnant out of wedlock and that wasn’t acceptable, but I had to do what I had to do.”

Her mother, Teresa, arranged for counseling at Catholic Social Services in Kentucky, where they learned about open adoptions. “I wanted to know that my child was safe and growing up in a loving family,” Carl said. “It just seemed like a good fit for me.”

Bredan was born on July 9, 2007. “My son’s parents are great,” Carl said, smiling. “We’re honestly just one big confusing family now. I get to see him a lot. My parents are his grandparents, and they get to see him more than I do because they live closer to him.”

“When I see that pretty face of his, I know that I made the right decision,” she said, her voice ragged with emotion again. “It’s hard to even think that I almost killed him. It was my first parental decision to choose an adoption, and I’ll live with that. Seeing him happy with a loving family makes it all worth it. … It was the hardest nine months of my life, but it was absolutely 100 percent worth it. My son is worth it.”

“He matters,” Carl emphasized, her voice firm with resolve. “He deserves life. … He deserves to live and laugh. … Most importantly, he deserves to love. I thank God every day that I gave him that chance.”

When people hear the story of how the young man drugged her drink then raped her after a party, Carl said, they ask if her son reminds her of the rapist. “He got his nose from his biological father and his beautiful tan skin,” she said. “One thing that I came to realize very quickly when I [first] saw him was that my rapist is not my son’s creator. Our Lord in heaven is my son’s creator, just like he created me and all of you.”

“He just doesn’t make any sense to me that a woman would rather her child end up dead through a brutal murder [in abortion] than in the home of a loving family,” Carl said. “… I know that I had the greatest support system in the entire world. My parents are the greatest. … But at the same time, there are thousands of pregnancy centers in this country that will bend over backwards for girls that need help.”

Choosing life takes courage, she admitted, but “every woman on this planet is strong enough to love her child enough not to kill [her baby] … I know that sounds harsh. … My heart goes out to all of those women that didn’t get the happy ending that I did. I get hugs and kisses and a smiling face. I had this big tragedy—something that I wouldn’t wish on anybody—but I get to watch him grow up. I’m lucky. “It is people like you that gave me the courage to give my son life,” Carl said. “Finding the bottom of my heart, I thank you.”

Her parents, Tim and Teresa Carl, are members of St. Joseph Parish in Crescent Springs, Ky. “We have been through a lot,” Tim said before the pro-life rally. “She’s very brave. … She speaks from her heart.”

“We are extremely proud of her;” Teresa said. “She’s a gift to us. She’s a gift to many people. It was a terrible experience, and she went through a very difficult journey. We all did. But through prayers, you heal. Now she’s doing something positive. She is getting her Ph.D. in counseling psychology. Her goal is to counsel at women’s crisis centers. She said, ‘Mom, there are not enough pro-life counselors’ … And we love our grandson very much. He is a precious little boy who we adore, and he loves us.”

St. John the Evangelist parishioner Pauline Katzally of Indianapolis, a therapist and Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat counselor, spoke next about the healing experience of post-abortion reconciliation. “Women and men who have experienced an abortion are indeed suffering and experiencing a loss, an unspoken pain, one that is forbidden to grieve,” Katzally said. “… Abortion is without a doubt a traumatic experience. … A personal interest out of one’s brokenness is placed above a human life.”

Rape victims often describe their abortions as “more traumatic and difficult to deal with than the sexual assault,” she said. “Over 90 percent of these women stated they would discourage other pregnant sexual assault victims from opting for abortion.”

Pro-life supporters are “called to be sensitive to these wounded spirits,” Katzally said, and to promote Rachel’s Vineyard Retreats, which “integrate the emotional, spiritual and psychological dimensions in the process of healing.”

Father Glenn O’Connor, pastor of St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes in Indianapolis, is one of the priests who assist with the confidential retreats. “I’ve seen miracles happen [there],” Father O’Connor said “… Nobody suffers abortion the same way. This retreat is a way for our Church to say ‘I love you’ in the most powerful ways you can imagine.”

U.S. Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) also spoke during the pro-life rally. “The Bible tells us if the foundations crumble, how can the righteous stand?” Pence said “… A nation that will not stand for life will not stand for long.”

“Like all of you who braved this cold January day, I believe that ending an unborn, innocent human life is morally wrong.” He said. “I also believe that it is morally wrong to take the taxpayer dollars of millions of pro-life Hoosiers, and use it to subsidize abortion and abortion providers at home and abroad.”

“Life is winning because of the ministry of organizations like those in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis that [help] women in crisis pregnancies,” Pence said. “Where the truth [about abortion] is being told, hearts are being changed one life at a time.”
Does indecency rest in the eye—or ear—of the beholder?

WASHTON (CNS)—After nearly a decade of threats, fines and court challenges, America may finally begin to understand what indecency is, and the FCC's challenge to federal appellate court decisions that declared no such authority existed.

The programs at issue? A few awards shows that were aired live while celebrities uttered profanities, an episode of a long-since-cancelled cop show that bared an actress' behind, and the infamous “wardrobe malfunction” at the 2004 Super Bowl.

Because Justice Sonia Sotomayor was serving on one of the appellate courts whose decision was argued on Jan. 10, she recused herself. For the FCC, it needs five votes to overturn the lower courts’ decisions. But the broadcasters can win with a stated 4-4 court since a tie is not good enough to change the law.

FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, one of those who think the key functions of the FCC is gone,” said Frank Morock, communications director for the Diocese of Raleigh, N.C., and head of the Catholic Academy of Communication Arts Professionals. Without the FCC, Morock asked, “then who will serve as the gatekeeper for these issues?”

“I think we’ll win,” said Patrick Trueman, the head of Catholic Media, in New York. After decades of being headquartered in New York. “I was there (at the court), and I thought that it certainly appeared to me that, from the oral arguments, the justices were not going to give the broadcast networks this newfound right to broadcast indecency into our homes.” Trueman said, citing the 1976 Supreme Court’s “seven deadly words” ruling, which cemented an FCC policy against indecency, although that threat is not good enough to change the law.

“Who are we to say that we are going to give the broadcast networks this newfound right to broadcast indecency into our homes?” Trueman said, citing the 1976 Supreme Court’s “seven deadly words” ruling, which cemented an FCC policy against indecency, although that threat is not good enough to change the law.

That’s going to be very, very interesting,” Copps said of the court’s ruling, excepted before the justices take their customary summer-long recess. “I hesitate to predict the outcome of decision based on the questions that were asked. But there seemed to be some palpable measure [by the justices] of the FCC’s responsibilities in this regard. I hope that is reflected in the decision that is finally made.”

“There’s the question of how parents will protect themselves and their kids from amoraluty as they perceive it,” said Frank Frost, who owns his own TV and film production company in the Washington suburbs and organizes the jury each year for the film awards bestowed by Signis, the international Catholic film and television association.

“My belief is you don’t protect kids, you talk to kids. When they do get exposed to something, you’re close enough when they watch as well. Guidance has to come from the parents. I think this is consistent with what I learned” reviewing films for the U.S. bishops’ office for Film & Broadcasting decades ago.

“You want to warn parents and people, but you can’t protect people totally.” Frost said. “You have to have well-formed consciences, and you have to be in communication to talk about these things.”

“Right now, the early comedies... are walking an extremely fine line,” Morock said, referring to shows airing in prime time. He posted to a recent point of the ABC sitcom “Modern Family” in which a young character says “fudge” but the word is bleeped. “How many families allow their 2-year-old to say the F-word?” Morock said. “But people are going to watch, and they’re going to laugh at that scene.”

Morokk added, “mostly because it seems to be a matter of politics and not of any real concern for parents and kids.”

Archbishop’s entertaining musings make one happy to be Catholic

Reviewed by Peggy Weber

Westchester County in New York who was moved to tears after a visit by Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan to her parish.

She said, “I’m a lifelong Catholic, but the last few years, it’s been so hard ... with the sex-abuse scandals, with bishops who don’t seem to listen, with all of it. I came tonight, not knowing what to expect, but this guy ... I don’t know, somehow he just makes me feel good about being Catholic.”

Her reaction in a parish hall is what readers will probably feel after finishing this interesting and entertaining book. One feels good about being Catholic and knowing the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is being led by Archbishop Dolan as apostolic. The archbishop will become a cardinal on Feb. 19.

Even if one disagrees with Archbishop Dolan, one still has to like him. He is described by Allen at “affirmative orthodoxy on steroids.”

Archbishop Dolan will not disagree with the Vatican. Although he does say that if anyone had asked him about the current Vatican-sponsored visitation of American nuns, he would have advised against it. However, he also will not ostracize or deal mainly with those with whom he and the Church disagree.

Archbishop Dolan says, “My hunch is that I’ll have more luck trying to nudge them closer to what the Church considers to be the truth if I’m in contact, in dialogue than if I’m standing off to the side tossing rhetorical bricks.”

Allen does a splendid job of introducing Archbishop Dolan and probing his mind. Allen acknowledges that this book is not a biography. Rather it lets the reader into the thoughts and personality of the archbishop who was profiled on “60 Minutes,” and is what one might call a “rising star” in the American Catholic Church.

Allen also gives the readers some “inside baseball” understanding of the topics of each chapter. Yet, he is very careful not to insert himself into the book. It is very clear that this is Archbishop Dolan’s book.

Both Allen and the archbishop have a clear and likeable communication style. It might have been a nightmare to edit hours of interviews and appearances, but the finished product seems polished and easy.

And the book truly contains many gems by Archbishop Dolan when asked about a variety of topics. For example, in the chapter about “Affirmative Orthodoxy,” Archbishop Dolan says, “I worry that we’ve become a glorified Rotary Club. We’re so stumbling over the how of Catholic life that I think we’ve lost the

who, meaning Jesus.”

Both authors show a keen sense of humor in their writing and responses. Although one of the best lines is when Archbishop Dolan quotes Hilaire Belloc saying, “I’ve come to reluctantly accept that the Roman Catholic Church must be divine because no merely human institution governed by such imbecility could have survived a fortnight.”

Although the book does not tell us too much about the life of Archbishop Dolan, it does provide some great insights into what has formed and shaped him—his home parish, his education and years in Rome, his friendships.

However, Archbishop Dolan provides the most telling statement about his life. “To this day, I think of myself as a priest, not a bishop or archbishop, and there’s nothing else I ever wanted to be.” His contentment and joy are apparent in this book. It is infectious and truly does make one feel good about being Catholic.

(Peggy Weber is a columnist and reporter with Catholic Communications in the Diocese of Springfield, Mass. A People of Hope: Archbishop Timothy Dolan in conversation with John L. Allen Jr. is available through Image Books for $22.5.)
Pope exhorts Catholics to be agents' of reconciliation

By David Gibson

It is possible for people to reside at very close quarters without acknowledging much of anything that is good in each other. It happens all the time.

Consider, for example, a wife and husband who seem only to find fault with each other. Their shortage of kindness is costly for them. Perhaps one or both of them fails consistently to pay attention to what the other person feels is important.

To others, these two people appear to live, rather indifferently, alongside each other, but hardly together.

The two have turned away from each other. Is there hope for them? Could they still turn toward each other?

Many couples manage to do precisely that. They change. They conclude that their habit of constantly finding fault must make way for noticing and accenting whatever is good about each of them.

In rediscovering each spouse’s goodness, a new perspective takes root in the marriage.

Will all the couple’s differences evaporate? Probably not. But when the couple’s essential goodness no longer is eclipsed by negativity, their approach to their differences may improve.

The spouses may begin to spend more time together, welcome each other’s presence and speak kindly with each other.

If that happens, a reconciling way of life will have replaced the couple’s former, more coexistence.

I have drawn this picture of a married couple to ease the way into why reconciliation in today’s world matters to Christians.

It is imperative that differences between people result in an endless climate of negativity for them.

Reconciliation is addressed at length by Pope Benedict XVI in a major document titled “The Commitment of Africa,” released on Nov. 19, 2011.

He is confident that when the Church’s people take reconciliation seriously, they will become peacemakers and promoters of justice. If nothing else, reconciliation is essential because our planet is so much less peaceful than it could be if people lived in reconciling ways.

Known as an apostolic exhortation, the pope’s document contains his reflections on the recommendations of the October 2009 Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops held in Rome. The synod’s theme was “The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace.”

So many citizens of our world live alongside each other, but hardly together.

This occurs in homes, workplaces, and even the relationships of cultural groups and nations.

Members of different religions—Christians and Muslims, for example—may live near each other without realizing they have any valid reason to cooperate in achieving important social goals. Racial and ethnic groups remain basically estranged in many parts of the world.

In Pope Benedict’s vision, divided groups in Africa—and surely everywhere—couldn’t help but benefit from encounters in which people get to know each other and learn what is good about the “other.”

After all, the world’s estranged social groups often resemble the troubled wife and husband described at this article’s outset, who need to learn that—despite their differences—they could do more than find fault with each other.

Pope Benedict says that the Church’s people ought to be naturally at fostering reconciliation. He wants them to serve as reconciliation’s “battalions” and “agents” (#20, #83).

In a key point, he views reconciliation as “at once a way of life and a mission” for the Church’s people (#34).

Think about it. Reconciliation for Catholics is a sacrament of forgiveness. So there is a certain tendency to think in terms of “receiving” reconciliation.

But the pope also wants us to think of reconciliation as something we do.

He writes that “Christians are reconciled with God and with one another.” Immediately, he adds that the new evangelization “demands that we be reconciled with our neighbors,” and “overcome every kind of barrier, including those arising from language, culture and race” (#169).

In another key point, Pope Benedict urges Catholics to adopt what is known as the spirituality of communion.

This spirituality ought to flow within the Church, making reconciliation a way of life in Church communities, he suggests.

But it also should flow outward from the Church.

Outlining the characteristics of a spirituality of communion, Pope Benedict draws upon the writing of his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II.

This spirituality leads to recognizing God’s face in others’ faces, and becoming attentive to one’s brothers and sisters in faith. This spirituality also:

• Welcomes what is positive in others.

• Makes room for one’s brothers and sisters in faith.

• Resists a spirit of competition and distrust.

For Pope Benedict, the spirituality of communion appears to represent a powerful liberating force. In fact, he includes this spirituality in a list of ways the Church could “help Africa be freed from the forces that are paralyzing her.”

I take it that when a spirituality of communion takes hold among the Church’s people, it shapes their attitudes toward each other. From that base, it accompanies them wherever they go.

Thus, they will not foster estrangement. Instead, in evangelizing their surrounding world and seeking justice within it, they will foster solidarity with others in whatever ways they can.

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.)

The African vision of life is a gift to the universal Church

By Marcellino D’Ambrosio

“The African” means “universal.” Though the Catholic Church was born in a Middle Eastern, Semitic culture, it had, within a generation, spread to North Africa and Europe.

From the first century until today, every ethnic group that has found that entrance into the Church is in many ways a coming home, the discovery of a place where it can truly be itself.

But in order to enter, each group has also realized that some things must be left at the door. The fascinating thing is that all this baggage proves to be not only contrary to the Gospel, but also contrary to the deepest instincts of each nation’s traditional culture.

Pope Benedict XVI speaks to the Church in Africa from this perspective in his apostolic exhortation “Africanae Munus” (“The Commitment of Africa”), which explored the theme addressed by the 2009 Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops.

In the section of “Africanae Munus” titled “The African Vision of Life,” the pope identifies the genius of traditional African culture: “In the African worldview, life is perceived as something that embraces and includes ancestors, the living—and those yet to be born, the whole of creation … a space of communion where past generations invisibly flank present generations” (#469).

The pope sees “this great openness of heart and spirit in the African tradition” as preparation for the Gospel, predisposing Africans to understand and live the mystery of the Church, and to take the dignity of every human person (#469).

The Church and the Gospel simply offer Africans the opportunity to be true to themselves, the pope says.

But there are forces at work in Africa today that are alien to the true African vision of life and, therefore, must be firmly resisted, he adds.

Some have come to Africa and, in the name of progress, advocated abortion on demand as a solution to poverty and the absence of work.

The pope points out how alien this is to the traditional African openness of heart and reverence for life. He goes on to point out how:

• Promiscuity has not only degraded marital communion but also fueled an epidemic of AIDS.

• Literacy has left large gaps of people in ignorance, allowing unscrupulous politicians to act like dictators.

Some political and business leaders have destroyed the environment for the economic benefit of a select few.

• The continent that offered refuge to the Holy Family is today often hostile to migrants seeking freedom, safety and better opportunities for their families.

• African Christians are called to be truly African, helping Africa to become truer to itself, the pope says.

Pope Benedict says the Church in Africa must unceasingly remind Africans of their most deeply held traditional values, and to do this in every area of social as well as religious life.

This means promoting universal literacy as well as health care and family planning that respects human dignity.

In the conclusion of “Africanae Munus,” Pope Benedict notes that, insofar as Africa is true to its own vision of life, its contribution is so indispensable to the world and also to the universal Church that it deserves to be recognized as “one of the spiritual lungs of humanity” (#817).

(Marcellino D’Ambrosio lives in Dallas and is co-founder of Crossock Initiative—www.crossroadsinitiative.com—an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.)

Pope Benedict XVI signs a document on the Church’s future in Africa at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Ouidah, Benin, on Nov. 19, 2011. The pope urged Catholics to become “apostles of reconciliation, justice and peace” across the troubled continent.

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Holiness is won through detachment

The vocations to which God calls us are, on one level, a life that is lost. The life of a Trappist monk can seem worlds away from the world of parents caring for their children and working to support their family. In the end, people in all walks of life are called to holiness.

And the way that this ultimately happens is through becoming detached from our own will and embracing wholeheartedly God's will.

Sometimes, in our busy day-to-day life as a husband and father of four young boys, it can be easy for me to forget such a fundamental truth of our life of faith.

But I was reminded of it in a beautiful way recently when I watched Of Gods and Men, a powerful 2010 French film about the true story of a group of Trappist monks living in an Algerian monastery.

Although these monks lived in peace and cooperation with their Muslim neighbors, their way of life became increasingly threatened by violent Muslim terrorists in the country.

The terrorists may have seemed to hold great power over Brother Luc, but they could not control him. They were faced with the choice of doing good or doing evil.

They were given the opportunity to control his life by whether they chose to follow God or follow their own desires.

The word “detachment” speaks to the freedom that we can win that freedom back and do what God is calling us to do. In any case, grace can open our eyes to the freedom that God has given us.

And most of us, I'd say, are bound to find that freedom.

In the end, people...
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012

- Deuteronomy 18:15-20
- St. John Bosco, priest
- Mark 1:21-28

The Book of Deuteronomy furnishes the first reading for this weekend. Deuteronomy appears in modern Bibles in the fifth book in sequence in the Old Testament. It is one of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament, and all of the books are attributed to Moses. In this reading, Moses addresses the Chosen People, whom he has led with God’s help from Egypt where they were enslaved. He promises them that God will send prophets, with whom they can relate. But if anyone proves to take the role of prophet upon himself or herself without having been called by God, then that impious one will die.

God will take care of his people. St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians is the source of the second reading. From the earliest days of Christianity, virginity has been treasured. Christians have never been forbidden to marry, although all Christians are bound to be according to their state in life. However, over the centuries, Christians have chosen lifelong virginity for religious reasons. However, over the centuries, Christians have chosen lifelong virginity for religious reasons.

Reflection

Thanks be to God, few people today say that they, or great numbers of people, are “possessed by the devil,” although the Church still teaches that such possessions occur in the world. Still, sin is real. Evil is real. All people sin at some point in their lives, and sin is the mark of the devil’s involvement, to some extent at least, in any person’s spiritual life.

An unfortunate mark of these irrigious times is that fewer and fewer people have any sense of sin. Few people think of themselves as sinners. They succumb to the age-old tactic of rationalization, abetted by this culture’s increasing rejection of any transcendental religious principle, taught by any religious authority.

The contemporaries of Jesus had a strong sense of sin. They saw personal sin, and society’s sin, as the root of all heartache and injustice. They knew that people and communities easily may be prey to temptation.

Jesus, the Son of God, in the words of Mark, rescues people from sin, forgiving them for sins committed and pointing the way to holiness.

Resisting sin, nevertheless, requires personal resolution, a determination equal to that urged by Paul in his message to the Corinthians.

My Journey to God

Indiana Blessings

Have you listened to joyful spring peepers, and sniffed one perfect flower after the rain? Wondrous are you, Lord. Did you smell the summer hayfields, and hear a chattering mockingbird answer the robin? Praise to you, God.

Did you taste an orchard peach or crisp fall apple, and feel the sun through a bright blue sky? Glory to you, Lord.

As I fret over dark winter, bemoaning cold and ice, I’ll recount our blessings and feel the snowfall. Thank you, God, your wonders never end.

By Libby Herman

(Libby Herman is a member of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Martinsville.)

Daily Readings

Monday, Jan. 30
2 Samuel 15:13-14, 30, 16:5-13
Psalm 3:2-7
Mark 5:1-20

Tuesday, Jan. 31
St. John Bosco, priest
2 Samuel 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3
Psalm 86:1-6
Mark 5:21-43

Wednesday, Feb. 1
2 Samuel 24:1-2, 7-17
Psalm 32:1-2, 5-17
Mark 6:1-6

Thursday, Feb. 2
The Presentation of the Lord
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 24:7-10
Luke 2:22-40
Or Luke 2:22-32

Friday, Feb. 3
St. Blaise, bishop and martyr
St. Ansgar, bishop
Sirach 47:2-11
Psalms 18:31, 47, 50-51
Mark 6:14-29

Saturday, Feb. 4
Isa 1:14-17
Psalms 119:9-14
Mark 6:30-34

Sunday, Feb. 5
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Job 7:1-4, 6-7
Psalm 147:1-6
1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Mark 1:29-39

Go Ask Your Father/Fr. Francis Hoffman

Roman Catholic Church is comprised of 22 Eastern Churches and the Latin Church

Q Could you tell me where to find information about the 18 different rites known within the Catholic Church, which are based on the liturgies and practices of five patriarchs? I’m looking for details about the origins and current status of these rites.

A The best place to find that information is in the Annuario Pontificio, the official directory of the Catholic Church, which is updated annually.

Q Our priest recently introduced someone as the “Master of Ceremonies” for our Masses. I had never heard that title before. What is a Master of Ceremonies for the Mass, and why do we need one?

A A good Master of Ceremonies is worth his weight in gold, especially if the liturgy is somewhat complicated or solemn as is the case for confirmations, ordinations, the liturgies of Holy Week and various large concelebrations.

Q I’m looking for details about the origins and current status of these rites.

A The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches defines the term “rite” this way: “A rite is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, culture and circumstances of history of a distinct people, by which its own manner of living the faith is manifested in each autonomous [sui iuris] Church.”

For the purpose of the question, you are correct. The Eastern Churches celebrate the liturgy according to five different rites or liturgical traditions, while the Latin Church employs primarily the Latin rite and, in limited cases, three other older rites.

In the Eastern Churches, the liturgy is celebrated according to the following rites: Alexandrian, Antiochian, Armenian, Chaldean and Byzantine.

The Latin Church employs two forms of the Latin rite. The ordinary form was developed following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council; the extraordinary form follows the texts and rubrics of the Missale Romanum published in 1962 by Blessed John XXIII. There are also still existing within the Latin Church the ancient Ambrosian rite and Mozarabic rite.

The Latin Church and all the Eastern Churches recognize and accept the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. Most of the Eastern Churches split from Rome in the great schism of 1054. Nevertheless, over the centuries they gradually returned to union with Rome while validly maintaining their own ancient liturgical traditions.

Q Our priest recently introduced someone as the “Master of Ceremonies” for our Masses. I had never heard that title before. What is a Master of Ceremonies for the Mass, and why do we need one?

A A good Master of Ceremonies is worth his weight in gold, especially if the liturgy is somewhat complicated or solemn as is the case for confirmations, ordinations, the liturgies of Holy Week and various large concelebrations.

Q I am a devout Catholic. When I die, I want to have Catholic funeral rites. But I want to be cremated since I want my remains brought back to my homeland, the Philippines.

A What is the proper way of handling the cremated remains?

Q I am a devout Catholic. When I die, I want to have Catholic funeral rites. But I want to be cremated since I want my remains brought back to my homeland, the Philippines.

A Canon 1176.3 states: “The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burial be retained, but it does not forbid cremation, unless this is chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching.”

I sense that you wish to be cremated because it may be too expensive and complex to send your uncremated mortal remains back to the Philippines.

In most places in our country, the cremated remains may not be shipped unless accompanied by three official documents—the death certificate from the medical doctor verified by the coroner; the permit from the registrar, who was notified by the coroner, allowing cremation; and the certificate from the crematorium.

In addition to the civil requirements for shipping cremated remains back to the native country, the Church stipulates only that the cremated remains be treated with respect.

I would suggest that a trusted person be charged with carrying the cremated remains with him on the plane, rather than ship them “air freight.”

Party and common sense suggest that disposition, although Church law has no such regulations.

The Criterion Friday, January 27, 2012

Page 13A
Margaret Mary Taylor, the mother of Father Kenneth Taylor, died on Jan. 17.

Margaret Mary (Elliott) Taylor, a member of Holy Angels Parish and the mother of Father Kenneth Taylor, died on Jan. 17 at the age of 89.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 24 at St. Rita of Cascia Church in Indianapolis, with Father Michael Mesich officiating.

Taylor was born in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, on Jan. 2, 1932, to Fred and Rosemary Elliott. She was the mother of nine children, including Father Kenneth Taylor, who served as pastor of Holy Angels Parish. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Roland Taylor, and her children: John, Mary, Judith, James, Michael, lanis, Elizabeth, Katie, and Fred.

Taylor was a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame, and later became a member of the Sisters of Mercy. She served as a teacher and principal at several Catholic schools in Ohio and Indiana.

Taylor was a long-time volunteer at Holy Angels Parish, where she worked as a secretary and in other capacities.

Taylor was predeceased by her parents, Fred and Rosemary Elliott, and her brother, Fred Elliott. She is survived by her husband, Roland Taylor, and her children: John, Mary, Judith, James, Michael, lanis, Elizabeth, Katie, and Fred.
Pope warns of threat to freedom of religion, conscience in U.S.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI warned visiting U.S. bishops that “radical secularism” threatens the core values of American culture, and he called on the Church in America, including politicians and other laypeople, to render “public moral witness” on crucial social issues.

The pope spoke on Jan. 19 to a group of up to 460 bishops who were in Rome for their periodic “ad limina” visits, which included meetings with the pope and Vatican officials, covering a wide range of pastoral matters.

Opening with a dire assessment of the state of American society, the pope told the bishops that “powerful new cultural currents” have worn away the country’s traditional moral consensus, which was originally based on religious faith as well as ethical principles derived from natural law.

Whether they claim the authority of science or democracy, the pope said, militant secularists seek to stifle the Church’s proclamation of these “unchanging moral truths.” Such a movement inevitably leads to the prevalence of “proclamations of these ‘unchanging moral truths,’ which the pope identified as “respect for God’s gift of life, the protection of authentic human dignity and the promotion of true human rights.”

The pope was not specific about the bishops’ relationship with such politicians, merely encouraging the bishops to “maintain contacts” with them and “help them understand” their duty to promote Catholic values.

While acknowledging the Pope Benedict XVI meets Bishop W. Francis Maloney of Wilmington, Del., during a Jan. 19 meeting with U.S. bishops on their ad limina visits to the Vatican. In a speech to the bishops, the pope issued a strong warning about threats to freedom of religion and conscience in the U.S.

“genuine difficulties” facing the Church in the United States, the pope concluded on a hopeful note, pointing to a growing appreciation for “Judeo-Christian” civic values, and a “new generation of Catholics” who he said will play a “decisive role in renewing the Church’s presence and witness in American society.”

Before the speech, Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, greeted the pope with brief remarks that recalled his 2000 visit to the United States.

The pope addressed bishops from the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, and the Virgin Islands.
Newly crowned Miss America knows talent, gifts are from God

**WAS HINGTON (CNS)—Father Julian Carron, the worldwide ecclesial movement Communion and Liberation, has one piece of advice for Catholics in this 21st-century world.**

Accepting the mystery of Christ to achieve inner peace, movement’s leader says

**NEW YORK—**Father Langi Giussani, 61, first became aware of the movement of Communion and Liberation when he was a teenager. There was something in his relationship with his students that didn’t work. There was something in my relationship with my students. My classes became more interesting for me, for my students. I thought that I knew Christianity, but there was something in my relationship that didn’t work,” he recalled. “But the moment [that] I encountered Father Giussani, something started for me in my relationship with myself, in my relationship with my students. My classes became more interesting for me, for my students. It was a fantastic experience, an adventure,” Father Carron said of his acceptance of the mystery of Christ—his life on Earth, his crucifixion and his resurrection. “I could understand who he was, became aware of my life for me and for the life of the Church.”

Communion and Liberation has been heralded by Pope Benedict XVI and Blessed Pope Paul VI as the kind of movement that can help people find meaning in life in a complex world. The organization was founded by Father Giussani in 1954 in a Milan high school. Then known as Gioventu Studentesca, or Student Youth, the organization is built upon the conviction that Christian life, lived in communion, is the “foundation of the liberation of humanity.”

The name of the movement evolved into Communion and Liberation in 1969. It claims more than 100,000 members in more than 70 countries.

Father Carron said that young people remain the primary focus of the movement because they are the generation most often longed for direction and meaning in life. At times, he admitted, young people are skeptical of the message that Christ is the answer.

“I want to show them there is another possibility of living,” Father Carron said.

During his address at the university, Father Carron demonstrated that the question of the meaning of life has been explored by philosophers, theologians, poets and authors throughout recorded history. Quoting Jewish philosopher Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, he said that no one can ever accept the idea that “life is hollow and devoid of meaning.”

Father Giussani, he said, offers a solution. “Christ proposes himself as the answer to what I am, with all my desire and only an attentive tender and impassioned awareness of my own self can make me open and lead me to acknowledge, admire, thank and live Christ. Without this awareness, even a Christian becomes just a name.”

Father Carron said that people who truly discovered the mystery of Christ saw their meaning in life increase “hundredfold.”

“When people started understanding what Christianity was about ... the possibility of finding an answer to my question, an answer to my desire, an answer to my longing is beyond the stars.”

(For more information on Communion and Liberation in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.archindy.org/youngadults.html.)