Building the foundation

By John Shaughnessy

Nearly everyone knows or remembers a teacher whose care and influence made a difference in their life. Sometimes the difference comes when a student is unsure, scared or even crying—and the teacher is there to reassure, encourage and wipe away the tears. Other times, the difference comes from the teacher who sets high standards for his or her students—and then watches the students go from grumbling about those “impossible” expectations to taking pride in reaching them or surpassing them. Then there are the times when a teacher lets a student try something different or a teacher realizes that he or she has to try something different to reach the students—all in the hope of helping them understand the material and maybe even inspire them to believe in themselves and the possibilities of their lives.

These difference-making qualities are evident in the five teachers from across the archdiocese who were honored on March 1 as the winners of the Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award. Lisa Vogel, above, the eighth-grade teacher at St. Mary School in North Vernon, says her main focus when teaching students is to be a Christian by the love that she shows others. She is pictured with students, seated, from left, Trace Spenfelder and Taylor AmRhein. Standing are Kobe Eder, Vogel and Stefani Williams.

Making a difference is at the heart of Saint Theodora winners’ approach to teaching

Five teachers—Vicki Auger, from the top down, Mary Briscoe, Stephen Buell, Patricia Musgrave and Lisa Vogel—from across the archdiocese were recently recognized as winners of the Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award. Lisa Vogel, above, the eighth-grade teacher at St. Mary School in North Vernon, says her main focus when teaching students is to be a Christian by the love that she shows others. She is pictured with students, seated, from left, Trace Spenfelder and Taylor AmRhein. Standing are Kobe Eder, Vogel and Stefani Williams.

Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein celebrates 25 years as a bishop

March 2 is a special day in the priesthood of Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein. It will mark his 25th anniversary as a bishop. On March 2, 1987, Archbishop Buechlein was ordained and installed as Bishop of Memphis. Five years later, in a homecoming of sorts, he was appointed Archbishop of Indianapolis. He was installed as archbishop here on Sept. 9, 1992.

To celebrate his 25 years as a bishop of the Church, The Criterion has produced a two-page photo essay on pages 8 and 9 to reflect some of the ways in which Archbishop Emeritus Buechlein has ministered to people of faith throughout his priesthood.

From his commitment to Catholic education to his love of celebrating the sacraments, from the Jubilee 2000 celebration to the canonization of St. Theodora Guérin in 2006 to the 175th anniversary of the archdiocese in 2009, in times of great joy and sorrow, Archbishop Buechlein has logged thousands of miles as a shepherd to share his faith and help others seek the face of the Lord—the motto for his episcopal coat of arms taken from Psalm 27 (Ps 27:8).

People interested in sending greetings or congratulatory notes can mail them to Archbishop Emeritus Buechlein at Saint Meinrad, IN 47577.
HHS mandate presents problems of principle, practicality, bishop says

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) abortifacient, contraceptive and sterilization mandate and its extremely narrow religious exemption present problems both of principle and of practicality, according to the bishop who heads the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn., said in a Feb. 23 telephone interview with Catholic News Service that the “accommodation” announced on Feb. 10 by President Barack Obama represents “an intrusion into the internal life of the Church that we think is a violation of religious liberty.”

On a practical level, he added, the mandate as revised by Obama “does not really address how we are organized” as Church institutions.

“It should be clear to the government that to ask us to override our teachings, whether popular or not, there has to be a compelling government interest,” Bishop Lori said. But he said 90 percent of insurers already cover contraceptives, with companies that object to contraception representing a “relatively small number” of employers.

“The insurance plans that are in question are good benefits packages, but they don’t include these things that are abundantly available elsewhere and at a reasonable cost, despite what is being said,” he added.

Obama’s revised mandate says religious employers could decline to cover contraceptives and other medicaments and procedures if they were morally opposed to them, but the health insurers that provide their health plans would be required to offer contraceptives free of charge to women who requested such coverage.

Bishop Lori questioned why the federal government would compel coverage of contraception, but leave other decisions on “essential health services,” such as coverage of high blood pressure medication or HIV/AIDS drugs, to the states under the health reform law.

“It’s hard to see how that is a compelling government interest” when other important treatment decisions are left to the states, he said.

Asked about his Feb. 16 testimony before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Bishop Lori said that he “could not help but notice how polarized the committee is, as I think the whole Congress is.”

“The opportunities to engage and to look for points of commonality are few and far between,” he said.

But he said the Catholic bishops will work with any administration to advance the Church’s social teachings in the areas of human dignity, solidarity and the common good.

“Our cause is to work wherever we can and whenever we can toward the common good,” he said.

The HHS mandate “is not a Republican or Democratic issue,” Bishop Lori added. “It’s something that is an American issue and something that should concern us all at the level of our own [Church] teachings.”

Bishop Lori joined with Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a Feb. 22 letter updating the nation’s bishops on the fight against the HHS mandate.

“It is not just about contraception, abortion-causing drugs and sterilization—although all should recognize the injustices involved in making them a universally mandated health care program,” they wrote. “It is not about Republicans or Democrats, conservatives or liberals. It is about people of faith. This is first and foremost a matter of religious liberty for all.”

The letter called on Obama to rescind the mandate or, at the very least, provide full and effective measures to protect religious liberty and conscience.

The White House has said it will be arranging meetings with faith-based representatives, including the Catholic bishops, to discuss remaining problems with the HHS mandate, especially as it relates to self-insured employers.

A White House official told CNS on Feb. 23 that planning for those meetings is still under way.

Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Lori urged Catholics to contact their members of Congress in support of passage of the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act, which was expected to come up for a vote as early as the beginning of March.

It’s moving to read more than 1,000 e-mails—particularly from doctors, nurses and teachers—expressing their gratitude for the Catholic Church’s willingness to stand down the government’s claim to speak for all women and women’s health.”

—Helen Alvare

How has faith affected your marriage? The Criterion is inviting readers to share stories of how their Catholic faith has had an impact on their marriages, especially in specific moments of joy, struggle, heartbreak and hope.

Send your stories to assistant editor John Shaugnessy at shaugnessy@archindy.org or in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your phone number in case additional information is needed.

(Mark Simoni/Mary Kaye)

Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn., chairman of the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, testifies during a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington on Feb. 16. Witnesses at the hearing of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee were asked to address the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, testifies during a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington on Feb. 16.
Little Sister guides St. Augustine Home with faith and love

By Mary Ann Garber

Love, prayer, respect and care are the ingredients of a happy life for the elderly poor who reside at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

Mother Mary Vincent Mannion, the superior of the Little Sisters of the Poor at their home at 2345 W. 96th St., has found that those ingredients—love and prayer, respect and care—are the recipe for lives filled with faith, hope and joy regardless of people’s ages or ailments.

The former administrator of Little Sisters’ homes in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Louisiana, New York and Connecticut also has ministered at the order’s homes for the elderly poor in Massachusetts and Illinois.

She brought a wealth of experience as a licensed practical nurse and administrator as well as a master’s degree in health care administration when she began her ministry at the St. Augustine Home last year.

But it is the priceless things in life, Mother Mary Vincent said, that teach the greatest lessons.

Those life lessons learned over the years, she explained in a recent interview, are the result of God’s Providence, the devout residents of each home and the dedicated sisters who serve the elderly poor.

“God can use whoever he wants or however he wants to help his poor,” Mother Mary Vincent said. “The very fact that we’re in existence is a result of that.

We depend totally on God’s Providence. That’s the beauty of our work as Little Sisters.

Our life is very simple and very holy.”

Each day, she looks to God, Mary, St. Joseph and the order’s founder, Jeanne Jugan, for divine inspiration and assistance in supervising the care of 96 residents in the skilled, intermediate and independent living areas of the home.

“The needs of the elderly continue to grow,” Mother Mary Vincent said. “I think we always will be a need for our homes. We would hope that more families would be able to take care of their elderly relatives in their own homes, which is really the best way.

But very often, that’s not possible.”

Ministering to the elderly as a Little Sister of the Poor “is a beautiful life,” she said. “I’ve never questioned my vocation. I’ve always known that this is what God wanted me to do. That is really a gift.”

The Pittsburgh native was the superior of the Little Sisters home there before being assigned to the St. Augustine Home in Indianapolis on May 1, 2011.

“I think the life of any Little Sister is being willing to build up the body of Christ,” Mother Mary Vincent said. “We try to bring Christ to the residents and they bring Christ to us. … I think that’s the duty of every Christian. We have to seek him out in one another.

“Life as a Little Sister is very easy because we have such holy residents,” she said. “They have always been more of a teacher to me than I’ve ever been to them. Really they are beautiful people. … With help from our wonderful volunteers, benefactors and staff, we can do nice things for our residents.

‘People have been very generous to us, and we’re grateful for all of their help with this.

“I think that one of the great graces we have as Little Sisters is to have the privilege and to pray with the residents as they are dying,” Mother Mary Vincent said. “When their time comes, they are peaceful and are ready to go home to God.”

“I think it is a beautiful life,” she said to a 90-year-old woman at one home whose only child, a Dominican sister, died of cancer. “I have read the sad news with faith and hope.

“The woman said, ‘You could become closer to our Blessed Mother now because she lost her only son,’ ” Mother Mary Vincent recalled. “She accepted it. What a wonderful way to see life—totally through the lens of faith.”

An elderly woman at another home who had reached the age of 100 told her that she remembers something new each day.

“She was sitting at the window, very content, very serene,” Mother Mary Vincent said. “She told me, ‘I just read this poem and it’s so beautiful.’

She had memorized the 23rd Pslam, ‘The Lord is my shepherd, I could see such serenity in her face.’

Yet another elderly resident at this home who was near the end of her cancer battle used her final hours on Earth to share her faith with others. Mother Mary Vincent said.

“She was lying in her bed singing songs and reading her Bible every day. I enjoy life,” she said. “It is a great joy to give happiness to our residents.”

St. Paul Hermitage resident Phyllis Martin of Beech Grove walks with Benedictine Sister Rebecca Marie Fitterer, administrator of the Hermitage, who helps her walk to Mass on Feb. 2 at the Hermitage chapel.

Benedictine sister feels blessed to serve at St. Paul Hermitage

By Mary Ann Garber

BEECH GROVE—Love for God and love for nursing led Benedictine Sister Rebecca Marie Fitterer to join the Sisters of St. Benedict at Our Lady of Grace Monastery after graduating from the sisters’ former academy in 1969.

A religious vocation with the monastic community just seemed like the right choice for her life, Sister Rebecca Marie explained, and her latest assignment as administrator of St. Paul Hermitage, the sisters’ retirement home, is a wonderful ministry opportunity.

“When I was a junior in high school, the idea started to form in my mind and wouldn’t go away,” she said about answering God’s call to profess her monastic vows with the Benedictine sisters after growing up in Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis.

I asked to enter the community after graduation,” Sister Rebecca Marie explained. “It was a very positive experience for me. My parents were very supportive.”

Her early ministry assignments as a staff nurse at the Hermitage and nurses’ retirement home were followed by community service in formation and as sub-provisor then clinical and administrative work at several hospitals as well as positions as assistant director of nursing and later director of nursing at the home.

Now, Sister Rebecca Marie has a prayer list of goals to accomplish after being named administrator of the health care facility by Benedictine Sister Juliann Babcock, the prior, then licensing requirements and beginning her duties on July 1, 2011.

St. Paul Hermitage was founded in 1959 by the Benedictine sisters of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., at 501 N. 17th Ave. in Beech Grove at the request of the late Archbishop Paul C.Schulte.

The Hermitage also serves the archdiocese as a residential care facility.

The Hermitage is licensed as a residential care and comprehensive care facility, Sister Rebecca Marie said. “We have about 100 beds, and about 120 staff members.

We offer physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, and we have two full-time activity directors.

Five priests—Father Gerald Burkhert, Father Thomas Murphy, Father Herman Lutz, Father H. Elmer Bierwinkle and Father James Rogers—are among the Hermitage residents.

“We are very happy that we can offer daily spiritual activities,” Sister Rebecca Marie said. “We have daily Mass, and there is a group that prays the rosary daily. We also offer Mass in the health care center weekly.

Her new ministry assignment has been a “good fit,” she said. “I’m growing into the position. I learn something new every single day. I’ve blessed with a wonderful staff. The transition has been easier than I thought it would be.”

There goals include offering more choices for the residents, she said, as well as working with staff members to implement some of their ideas for other improvements.

“It’s been a really good experience for me because I find the staff very receptive,” Sister Rebecca Marie said.

The residents are very happy here. They want to share their lives with us in the health care wing especially, the nursing assistants and the nurses become part of that.”

“All of the kitchen staff members know the residents very, very well,” she said. “They know what the residents like, what they don’t like, and cater to that as much as they can. There’s a lot of love here. It really becomes home as much as we can make it.”

Sister Rebecca Marie hopes to expand assisted living care and the health care center as well as update residents’ rooms with newer amenities. She also wants to enlarge the dining room and fitness facilities.

Each morning, when she makes her rounds to greet all the residents, Sister Rebecca Marie said, she is always energized by one elderly woman’s enthusiastic attitude.

“We have a resident in health care who is the most upbeet little lady,” Sister Rebecca Marie said. “She is confused, and has some dementia. But when I walk in here in the morning and she sees me, she always says, ‘Oh, happy day! We’re so glad you’re here.’

Are you glad we’re here?”

“Every day is a good day for her,” Sister Rebecca Marie explained. “Every morning is a good morning. And that’s her mantra. ‘Oh, happy day!’ And I think, you know, it is a happy day.

We’ve got so many blessings. If anything, it’s made me count my blessings, and when my day is busy or stressful I can think back to her greeting. She brightens my day. She is a disciple of Christ, and she doesn’t even realize it. I really appreciate that.”

All the residents brighten her work day in many ways, she said, which is a priceless blessing in her ministry.

“I’ve had a wealth of experience in my life from the opportunities I’ve had, the places I’ve been able to work, the people I’ve met and the education that I’ve had,” Sister Rebecca Marie said.

“It’s just been wonderful. God has blessed me.”

(For more information about St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove, log on to www.stpaulhermitage.org.)
Lent is a time to discover true joy

“A selfish faith would be an unreal faith. Whoever believes in Jesus Christ and enters into the dynamic of love that finds its source in the Eucharist and enters into the dynamic of love”

We need Lent for the same reason we need the sacrament of penance. We are sinners who need to be cleansed and healed before we are truly able to experience God’s forgiveness in the Eucharist and in the Easter mystery.

What are the three main disciplines we are called to observe during Lent? Prayer, fasting and almsgiving—generous sharing.

The Church urges us to pray more fervently during Lent. She invites us to come to know and love our Savior more intimately and completely. We Christians believe in the fullness of joy comes in communion with God. Prayer now helps to prepare us for the intense joy of Easter and the eternal happiness of heaven.

Prayer also helps us to learn patience, perseverance and the ability to accept suffering in whatever forms it takes. We are called to follow Jesus, and this may involve us in suffering and cruel death to Easter joy.

The Church asks us to fast during Lent. She reminded us of the words of Pope Benedict, that “a selfish faith would be an unreal faith.” To be genuinely happy, we must first learn to be unselfish, deny ourselves, and live for God and for all our sisters and brothers. The things we deny ourselves during Lent are sacramentals. They remind us of, and help prepare us for, the much larger sacrifices that are required of us as disciples and martyrs called to witness to the Way of the Cross.

Finally, the Church challenges us to be generous stewards of all God’s gifts. Stewardship is not seasonal. It places demands on us all year long—and our whole lives. The tradition of Lent almsgiving provides us with an opportunity to practice the virtue of stewardship, and to make a conscious effort to share with others the gifts of time, talent and money that God has so generously given to us. Stewardship is a virtue that has to be put into practice—one generous act at a time! Do you want to be happy? Pray, fast and give to others. Do you want to find perfect joy? Journey through Lent to Easter, and your joy will be complete!

—Daniel Conway

A woman once was told where to sit on a public bus. A group of young people once were told where to sit in a public lunchroom.

Many students once were told where to go to school.

Taken individually, these examples would have been unremarkable if solved locally. Rosa Parks would sit where she pleased in a city bus, black college students would be allowed at lunch counters in Woolworth’s, and school students would attend a school of their choice.

These instances seen as individual issues would never solve what was at their root—systemic racial prejudice.

It was more than where to sit on a bus, where to have lunch, where to go to school. It was a matter of a group—a racial minority—being denied their constitutional rights. These instances were packaged, branded as civil rights, which then resulted in legislation that brought practices into line with the Constitution.

Success came only when isolated incidents were recognized for more than they appeared to be.

Now, as then, it is necessary to convince President Barack Obama and a majority of lawmakers that mandates must be in the Department of Health and Human Services regulations are about more than contraception.

The mandate forces institutions, against their conscience, to pay for things they consider immoral.

The coercive power of the state imposing regulation on believers must be seen as a matter of religious liberty for all.

We need Lent because we never accept the description of what is at issue. Direct compulsion makes it a matter of religious liberty. Understanding the issue to be religious liberty, not just contraception, will find broader support.

It is a complex issue. One of the traditional ways of teaching—which was favored by Jesus—is by a parable.

The USCCB supports the Respect for Conscience Act introduced in both the House of Representatives (H.R. 1177) and the Senate (S. 1467)—to ensure that those who participate in the market for health insurance “retain the right to provide, purchase and health insurance coverage that is consistent with their religious beliefs and moral convictions.”

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—Daniel Conway
**WINNERS**

“When she was very comfortable, I took her next door and introduced her to her new teacher. She then helped her new teacher. After school started, I was available for hugs and pats on the back. I love my children and care for them as individuals.”

It’s no wonder that Briscoe notes; “Teaching is an adventure that will touch your heart in a way no other career can. If you can’t remember the time you ever wanted any other career. Taking care of little ones and helping them learn has been as natural to me as breathing. I consider myself a facilitator, helping them to become self-motivated to be the best Christian and best citizen they can be.”

**Building the foundation**

Though he had few male teachers throughout his education, Stephen Buell could find his primary influence in being a father figure to his students. “When I was young, my father would be a substitute teacher occasionally,” recalls Buell, a sixth-grade teacher at the consolidated St. Michael the Archangel and St. Gabriel the Archangel School in Indianapolis. “It made him a male teacher commonplace.”

As a teacher, Buell enjoys working in a career where he gets to know the students and important lessons blend. In a recent lesson focusing on Europe during medieval times, he taught the students about the Magna Carta, feudalism, and the Crusades. The creative touch came when his students made models of feudal castles from the era.

On a larger scale, Buell tries to build a foundation of knowledge, respect, and hopefulness. “Opportunities are prominent in his classroom. One reads, “Never select for less than your best.” The other states, “No one’s a success as great as your best.”

Despite this, Buell is quick to admit that the students are the ones who push him to be better. “I try to live by, according to the five teachers that some students ever get. I try to foster a sense of pride in knowing that it is a challenge. Even though I expect quite a bit from students, I always believe they have the power to make a difference no matter how grim the situation may become.

**Saint Theodora winners offer practical advice for new teachers**

The boy said that he had a book of science experiments at home, and he wanted to do one in front of the class. Other students asked about presenting an experiment, too, and so began the weekly “I’m the Science Expert” lesson taught by a student or a group of students. Students were expected to present a copy of the experiment to me before preparing it to the class,” says Auger, who teaches St. Roch School in Indianapolis. “This showed students that I am not the only ‘teacher’ in the class.”

**Living the faith**

A Bible verse guides Lisa Vogel as she teaches eighth-grade students at St. Mary School in North Vernon: “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me” (Mt 9:37).

“Never lose that idealistic vision that you can change the world,” says Vogel, an eighth-grade teacher at St. Michael the Archangel School at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. “Students were expected to present a copy of the experiment to me before preparing it to the class.”

“Every day that seems tough will only solidify you for those students down the line that need you.”

“Look out for your students and yourself”

“It takes a firm and nurturing hand to teach primary-age children,” says Mary Briscoe, a first-grade teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany. “My advice to new teachers would include these thoughts: Be flexible. Watch for teachable moments. Expect the best, and teach them how to express their love for Jesus and show it to others. Start a personal file. When parents compliment you and are grateful that you have taken the time to create something, make sure the student understands it. If the student is struggling, I need to find a different way of presenting the material. It can be as simple as restating the material in a different manner or it can be more involved and require a completely different method.”

“Vogel’s faith drives her teaching.”

“Part of the reason I felt public education was that I felt I could benefit more students in a private school setting,” says Vogel. “I also made this decision so that I could bring my faith to work with me on a daily basis. I do this by sharing Mass, Communion services, service projects and having discussions on moral issues regularly.”

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Lisa Vogel doesn’t hesitate as she shares her best piece of advice for new teachers.

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By John Shaughnessy

If you’re a parent who wants to help your children make the most of their education, there are two words you have to know by, according to five winners who are the winners of the archdiocese’s 2011-12 Saint Theodore Excellence in Education Award.

“Be involved.”

“Students are most successful when there is parent involvement,” says Patricia Musgrave, a resource teacher at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

“Know who is happening academically and socially with your child at school. Keep the lines of communication open with the teachers, and don’t be afraid to ask questions.”

Here is more advice for parents from the other four winners.

Communicate with your child

“Talk to them, listen to them and read to them,” says Mary Briscoe, a first-grade teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany. “Be a role model. Help them to know that anything is possible if they work hard. When possible, plan activities to enrich their studies.”

Be a partner—and a person of faith

“When we work together as partners, their children benefit the most,” says Vicki Auger, a second-grade teacher at St. Roch School in Indianapolis. “So they need to let their child know that they support the teacher and that we are working together to help the child reach his/her potential. Above all, they need to share their faith and take their child to Mass!”

Share information and respect

“We appreciate some knowledge of the children—allergies, temperament, any academic difficulties in the past,” says Stephen Buell, a sixth-grade teacher at the consolidated St. Michael the Archangel and St. Gabriel the Archangel School in Indianapolis. “Teachers love talking to parents whenever they can, but there are times and places for each meeting, and a formal setting is always best. Catching a teacher at the supermarket and talking about concerns can put a teacher in an awkward position and an unprofessional position.”

Get to know all the right people

“Know the teacher, the principal, the assistants and the maintenance staff,” says Lisa Vogel, an eighth-grade teacher at St. Mary School in North Vernon. “Know the other young people that are sitting beside your child every day while they are at school. Volunteer at the school. Parents are a critical piece to the success of any school.”

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“It takes a firm and nurturing hand to teach primary-age children,” says Mary Briscoe, a first-grade teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany. “My advice to new teachers would include these thoughts: Be flexible. Watch for teachable moments. Expect the best, and teach them how to express their love for Jesus and show it to others. Start a personal file. When parents compliment you and are grateful that you have taken the time to create something, make sure the student understands it. If the student is struggling, I need to find a different way of presenting the material. It can be as simple as restating the material in a different manner or it can be more involved and require a completely different method.”

“Vogel’s faith drives her teaching.”

“Part of the reason I felt public education was that I felt I could benefit more students in a private school setting,” says Vogel. “I also made this decision so that I could bring my faith to work with me on a daily basis. I do this by sharing Mass, Communion services, service projects and having discussions on moral issues regularly.”

Stephen Buell, a sixth-grade teacher at the consolidated St. Michael the Archangel and St. Gabriel the Archangel School in Indianapolis, assists students Trey Hunt, left, and Ken Getts Jr.

By John Shaughnessy
March 2
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, chapel, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. Lumen Dei, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast following Mass at Pure Eattery. Information: thommu99@yahoo.com
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 30 S. Downey St., Indianapolis. Men's Club, Lenten fish fry, 5-7 p.m., $6 adults, $3 children. Information: www.ollindy.org

March 3
Carmelite Monastery, 59 Alleghade, Terre Haute. Help of God's Precious Infants, prayer vigils, Mass, 7:30 a.m., Planned Parenthood, 30 S. Third St., Terre Haute, prayer, v. 9:30 a.m. St. Patrick Adoration Chapel, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute, Divine Mercy Chaplet, 10 a.m. Information: mlhbbmn.tom@gmail.com

March 4
St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Family Life Center, 1723 I St., Bedford. Lenten program, “A Day of Reflection,” Mage Joseph Schaelen, presenter, 3-7 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-275-6539 or candrews1148@comcast.net

March 5
Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Gregory Hall gallery, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Archabishop Thomas C. Kelly Lecture Series in Pastoral Ministry, “Connecting Young Adults and the Catholic Church—The Reality, the Challenge and the Possibilities,” Paul Jarzembowski, presenter, 7 p.m. Information: 800-62-0988 or news@stjohnsmeinrad.edu

March 7
St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. Program on human trafficking, Theresa Flores, presenter, 7-9 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 317-233-2193, ext. 2, or parishoffice@stmonicaindy.org

Archbishop O’Mara Catholic Church, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced, new members welcome. 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-376-1189.

Columbus Bar, 322 Fourth St., Columbus. Teology on Tap, “Prayer for Dummies,” Deacon candidate Thomas Hill, speaker, 7:30 p.m. Information: 812-379-4933, ext. 241.

March 8

March 9
Wheeler Arts Building, 1035 Sanders St., Indianapolis. Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, “Eveing of Irish Music with Eamonn McDraty,” 8 p.m., doors open at 7 p.m. $10 per person, adults only. Information: 317-224-6415.

March 10
St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Little Sisters of the Poor, rummage sale, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: deshindrean@dhp.little sistersofthepoor.org.

Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Twister Circle, Oldenburg. Oldenburg Academy Drama Club, You Can’t Take It With You, 7 p.m. Information: 812-933-0737, ext. 244, or red/oldenburgacademy.org

VIPS
William and Mary Jane Breslin (Brady), members of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 3 with a family dinner. The couple was married on March 3, 1962, at St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis. They are the parents of five children: Maureen Chernoff, Ellen Farrell, John, Robert and William Brady. They also have 14 grandchildren.

Frankiscan St. Francis Health begins to exhibit highlights history of Franciscan St. Francis Health in Beech Grove

March 10
St. Roch Parish, Family Life Center, 3803 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-4207.

Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. Bishop Chatard High School social, “Tropical Tribute VI,” 7:30 p.m.-midnight, $30 per person. Information: 317-872-5088 or sherryre@comcast.net

St. Mary Parish, 415 E. 29th St., Indianapolis. “Celebrate St. Mary’s,” gala, 6:30 p.m.-midnight, $50 per person. Reservations: 812-444-0417 or www.smcanewalbany.org/gala

March 11

March 12
Holy Cross Parish, 125 N. Orient St., Indianapolis. St. Patrick’s Day party, adults only, 4-7 p.m., $5 per person, food available, table reservations available. Information: 317-787-1779.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. “Liturgy of the Hours” 7 p.m. Information: 317-634-4519.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Discalced Carmelites Secular Order meeting, noon. Information: 317-545-7681.

March 13
Covenant Reformed Church, 60 N. 56th St., Indianapolis. “What Does It Mean To Be the Salt of the Earth?” Franciscan Sister Kaele Barker, presenter, 9-11 a.m., $25. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgcsf.com

March 5
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Hospitality—A Doorway into Lent,” FBI (Fatima/Benedict/Inn) evening of reflection, Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, presenter, Mas, 5 p.m., buffet dinner and program, $30 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima

Super Catholic Schools Week

March 7
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. “Lenten Journey—Ways of Forgiveness,” session three of four, Benedictine Sister Angela Jorbar, presenter, 6:30-9 p.m., $25 per person includes dinner. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org

March 8
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Four Contemporary Stories of Discovering One’s Way,” Lenten series, session two of four, Franciscan Sister Barbara Lombard, presenter, 6:30-8 p.m., $15 per session or two for $25. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgcsf.com

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Exhibit highlights history of Franciscan St. Francis Health in Beech Grove

An exhibit of photos and other imagery that recounts nearly a century of Franciscan St. Francis Health’s history is on display until March 10 at its hospital at 1600 Albany St. in Beech Grove. The exhibit, which is on display in the gallery on the first floor of the hospital, is available for public viewing as Franciscan St. Francis Health begins to consolidate medical services to their campus on the south side of Indianapolis. The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration began their ministry in Beech Grove at the turn of the 20th century. They first rented their hospital in Beech Grove in 1914.†

Fundraiser to help cancer patient is March 3 at Roncalli High School

A pledge-free walk-a-thon and prayer-a-thon to benefit Matt Schroeder will take place from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on March 3 at Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Road, in Indianapolis. A graduate of St. Barnabas School and Roncalli Scholler, 37, was recently diagnosed with brain cancer and is beginning aggressive radiation treatment. Participants walking in the event will gather at Roncalli’s indoor track while those who come to pray for Schroeder will go to the school chapel.

Donations accepted at the fundraiser will help support Schroeder and his young family.
For more information, call Ann Caskey at 317-840-0825, John Schroeder at 317-373-0741 or Pete Schroeder at 317-840-4915. Donations may be also be mailed to Ann Caskey at 370 Rodeo Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46217.†

Honoring priests

Posing for a group photo during a Feb. 7 dinner honoring priests who minister in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are, from left in the front row, Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf and Fathers Noah Casey, William Munrower, James Farrell and Gerald Kirkhoff, and, from left in the back row, Fathers Stephen Giannini, Christopher Wadsworth, Michael Magiera, Gerald Burbert and Robert Haustaden. The dinner, which took place at the Northside Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis, was hosted by the Bishop Chatard Assembly of the Fourth Degree members of the Knights of Columbus. Also honored at the dinner were previous leaders of the Bishop Chatard Assembly.
Amendment aims to help undocumented students gain in-state tuition

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Promising young college students have come to Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, with a problem. A new state law has brought these bright students’ pursuits of a college degree to a screeching halt.

Victoria, who recently brought the issue to Leising’s attention, is one example.

A junior at Indiana University who has a 4.0 grade point average, Victoria had her college education abruptly cut short in the fall semester of 2011. She was required to pay out-of-state tuition because of a new law which prohibits undocumented students who reside in Indiana from getting in-state tuition.

Tuition for out-of-state students, which is now almost three times what Victoria was paying for the 2010-11 school year, made it impossible for her to return to school. She is a waitress now, and unsure about when or if she will be able to finish her college degree.

Leising would like to change this law, especially for college students who were already attending college when the law was changed. The amendment does not help students who are currently in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Last year, the Indiana General Assembly passed a law to prohibit undocumented immigrants from receiving in-state tuition. It stipulated that students must be lawfully residing here to qualify for in-state tuition rates. ICC opposed the legislation.

“Until last year, high school graduates entering college could get in-state tuition even if they did not have legal status,” Leising said. “Students like Victoria are funding 100 percent of the tuition by their hard work and hard work of their family. Undocumented immigrants are not able to get financial assistance for college.

“The young women I have talked to were brought to this country when they were in preschool. They have attended school from grades K-12 and are as Americanized as any other American child would be. Their child would be misplaced if they went back to their home country.”

The out-of-state tuition fees for these students are compounded by the fact that they can’t qualify for any kind of student financial assistance from the state, Leising said.

“I do not believe that they should qualify for state student-assistance—I’m not advocating that—but I just want them to be able to complete their college education so that hopefully they can continue to pursue their legal status,” she said.

“These kids all want to be legal. One young person came to see me with her immigration attorney. The immigration attorney told her that there are young adults who are in their early 20s that might have to wait up to 20 years to achieve legal status because they have aged out of the system.”

The immigration attorney told Leising that when a person ages out of the system that means it basically took the system too long to grant them legal status. The process starts all over again, and the person must apply in a different category.

“These kids are in the prime of their life as far as working and career making, yet they potentially will not have access to a legal status or may have to wait 20 years to get it,” Leising said.

Currently, 12 states have laws allowing undocumented students who meet specific requirements to receive in-state tuition, according to an October 2011 report issued by the National Conference of State Legislatures. California and Texas were the first to enact laws in 2001. Utah, Washington, Oklahoma, New York, Kansas and Illinois also have similar laws allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition.

Four states, including Indiana, prohibit in-state tuition for undocumented students. Arizona passed its in-state prohibition in 2006. Colorado and Georgia passed a similar law in 2008.

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

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Profit cannot be primary motive in treating infertility, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—An almost exclusive reliance on technology and a focus on financial profit seem to dominate the field of medical responses to infertility, Pope Benedict XVI said. However, what couples need and deserve, he said, is “a correct diagnostic evaluation and a therapy that corrects the causes of infertility.”

With in vitro fertilization, a woman’s eggs are removed, united with sperm in a laboratory, and then implanted in the womb of the mother or a surrogate. The procedure is costly, and the Catholic Church teaches that IVF is immoral because fertilization does not take place through the sexual union of a husband and wife. The Church also condemns the common IVF practice of destroying or freezing fertilized embryos that are not implanted.

“In effect, scientism and the logic of profit today seem to dominate the field of infertility and human procreation, reaching a point where it also limits many other areas of research,” Pope Benedict said. The Criterion Friday, March 2, 2012 Page 7
Archbishop Emeritus Buechlein celebrates 25 years as a bishop

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein walks in the 36th annual March for Life on Jan. 22, 2009, in Washington, D.C., with Mary Schaffner, then program coordinator of young adult ministry for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education; Sergeant of the Gospel of Life Star-Done Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry; and St. Malachy parishioner Donna Johnson of Brownsburg.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, when he was bishop of Memphis, and the late Blessed Teresa of Kolkata talk to reporters in Memphis about plans for the Missionaries of Charity to send several sisters to minister to the poor in Memphis.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, center, prays the eucharistic prayer during an Aug. 25, 2010, Mass at St. Roch Church in Indianapolis honoring his 10th year as archbishop. Concelebrating the Mass were Father James Wilmoth, left, pastor of St. Roch Parish, and Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, then vicar general.
What was in the news on March 2, 1962? Latin as the official language of the Church.

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. Here are some of the items found in the March 2, 1962, issue of The Criterion:

- Pope John again emphasizes position of Latin in Church
- Vatican City—His Holiness Pope John XXIII has issued a document reconfirming Latin as the official language of 1.3 billion Catholics.
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Always unswerving to him. "My brother was somewhat better behaved than I," Msgr. Ratzinger says, yet he recounts a boyhood prank in which the two brothers tricked a rural farmer into losing track of his ox cart.

Recreation of a more edifying sort came when the boys played at being priests, using a toy altar made for them by an uncle. "It was a really beautiful high altar, which he even equipped with a rotating tabernacle," Msgr. Ratzinger recalls. "Naturally, we used water instead of wine for the make-believe consecration."

The future Pope Benedict, now a proficient amateur pianist and lover of music, "did not take to music quite as spontaneously as I did," says Msgr. Ratzinger, who went on to become the choremaster of the Regensburg, Germany, cathedral. His brother "was a little more restrained, although he is a very musical person," Msgr. Ratzinger says.

Recounting Hitler’s rise to power in 1930s Germany, Msgr. Ratzinger says that their father regarded the dictator as the "Antichrist," and refused to join the Nazi party.

"But so as not to put our family completely at risk, he advised Mother to join the women's organization," Msgr. Ratzinger says. "The pope later confided that his election had "struck him like a bolt of lightning," Msgr. Ratzinger says.

Readers get a glimpse into the papal household as Msgr. Ratzinger describes his brother's daily routine. On Thursdays, for example, Pope Benedict listens to tape recordings and practices his pronunciation of the remarks in foreign languages that he will make at the next day’s general audience. Msgr. Ratzinger says that his brother has not been indifferent to the many criticisms that he received during his ministry as prefect of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and then as pope.

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Christ’s Transfiguration ‘reverberates through the ages’

By Dolores Leckey

The synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke—all have the amazing story of what has come to be called Jesus’ Transfiguration.

The three versions have similar details. Jesus and his disciples, including Peter, James and John, have been living as itinerants. Jesus has been preaching the good news of the kingdom of God everywhere. He also has been doing the work of God. In Matthew, we read that great crowds followed Jesus and brought with them the blind, the lame, the mute and the deformed so that the light and power of Jesus could enter into their hurt and misery and heal them.

The words of Matthew are simple. The crowd placed the ill and miserable and healed them. Can you imagine what they must have thought when they witnessed Jesus reversing what is supposed to be impossible? Can you imagine what they must have thought when they witnessed the Transfiguration?

Peter, according to the conclusion that Jesus must be the long-awaited Messiah. It is only after Peter awakens to Jesus’ true identity that Jesus takes Peter, James and John up a high mountain.

It is a place of deep solitude. They witness there a prelude to the Resurrection. Their teacher, their rabbi, the one that Peter recognizes as the Son of God becomes—before the words of Jesus—Mercede Manley Hopkins—‘charged with the grandeur of God’

Jesus’ garments are described as dazzling white and as light. Two accounts note how his face changes. In Mark, it is described as looking like the sun. In all three accounts, Moses and Elijah appear talking to Jesus. In Luke’s account, they discuss how Jesus will accomplish an exodus in Jerusalem.

Remember, Moses led the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. In all accounts, a cloud covers over the disciples. They are frightened—as you might expect. They hear a voice in the cloud saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.” (Mt 17:5, Lk 9:35, Mk 9:7).

These words are reminiscent of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River when the voice of God the Father speaks almost the same message. We don’t know how long this Transfiguration experience lasted, but we know Jesus told the three men not to speak of it to anyone. We know it burned itself into the memory of Peter because he later spoke about it. After Jesus’ suffering and death, after his Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, after the Holy Spirit enlivened the frightened followers of Jesus, after Peter’s agreement to include the Gentiles in the Christian way—after all of this—Peter would write about witnessing the glory of God as manifested in the Transfiguration of Jesus.

These words from the Second Letter of Peter continue to stir hearts today. “When we had come to know you the power and coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, ... we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he honored and glory from God the Father. ...” (2Pt 1:16-19).

Peter never forgets the walk up the mountain with Jesus. It opened a window to heaven. I wonder if he held onto that experience at the time of his martyrdom.

For me, Peter’s remembrance has long held a place in my pantheon of scriptural passages. The image of the morning star rising in my heart is not only comforting, but an impetus to action. Day is upon us. There is work to be done.

Could there be some cosmic significance? Is it merely coincidental that the first time an atomic bomb was dropped on a populated city was on the feast of the Transfiguration—on Aug. 6, 1945?

The reports say that “the light was blinding, dazzling, the world seemed lighted up.” Jesus’ Father Pedro Arrupe, who had medical training and was serving at a Jesuit school a few miles from the center of the blast in Hiroshima, was nearly blinded from the force of the blast.

The memory of that day and the suffering of the thousands who stayed with him for the rest of his life, especially when he celebrated Mass, have been living as itinerants.

It is less clear why Elijah appears rather than one of the great prophets, such as Isaiah or Jeremiah. Like Moses, Elijah has links to Mount Sinai, where the commandments were given to Moses and where God appeared. When he was fleecing for his life, Elijah went to Mount Sinai—also called Mount Horeb—to seek the Lord, who revealed himself to him there. At the Transfiguration, Jesus is revealed as the new lawgiver and the one who speaks for God. “The voice from heaven indicates: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to his.” (Mk 9:7).

Thus, Jesus supplants the roles of Moses and Elijah.

Mig. Romano Guardini, a famous liturgist and theologian, suggested another reason that the two figures appear with Jesus. Moses and Elijah had difficult lives. Moses led the people through the desert for 40 years during a time of constant struggles. Elijah had a difficult time preaching God’s word under King Ahab, and fled for his life and for his life.

This led to the expectation that Elijah would return to prepare the way for the Messiah. So the disciples wonder why Elijah has not yet returned. Jesus says Elijah already has arrived in John the Baptist. Mark hints at this identification, while Matthew makes it explicit (Mt 17:13).

This doesn’t mean John is literally Elijah. He fulfills the role of Elijah in preparing the way for Jesus. Jesus also notes that John was mistreated, another hint that Jesus, too, will suffer before entering into glory, which Matthew also makes explicit.

(Father Lawrence E. Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)

The Old Testament plays an important role in the Transfiguration

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

Each year on the second Sunday of Lent, we hear an account of a mysterious event that took place on a mountain. We call it the Transfiguration. The mountain traditionally has been identified as Mount Tabor, a rather small mountain in lower Galilee. Some scholars suggest the event may have happened on Mount Hermon, a higher mountain near Caesarea Philippi, where the events just before the Transfiguration took place.

What happened on the mountain is less certain. The event is recounted in the three synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke. Each Gospel describes the events a bit differently.

This year, we hear St. Mark’s version. All three accounts agree that the vision included Moses and Elijah with Jesus. Why these two supporting actors and not others from the history of the Jewish people? One explanation is that Moses represents the law and Elijah represents the prophets. Together, they represent the two central parts of the Old Testament.

The law means the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, which are greatly revered by the Jews. The words of the prophets also were revered because the prophets spoke for God and called the people back to faithfulness to the covenant.

It makes sense that Moses stands for the law. He is a central figure in the Book of Exodus, the second book of the Torah. It was through Moses that God gave the Ten Commandments.

It is less clear why Elijah appears rather than one of the great prophets, such as Isaiah or Jeremiah. Like Moses, Elijah has links to Mount Sinai, where the commandments were given to Moses and where God appeared.

In 1965, Father Arrupe was elected superior general of the Jesuits, and under his leadership influenced by the experience of Hiroshima’s blinding light or the ministry of Jesus. The Move the emptied from the personal to the need for structural changes in society, to benefit poor and oppressed people. One could say the Society of Jesus underwent a transfiguration of sorts.

The Transfiguration is not a single moment in time, but reverberates through the ages—today, tomorrow and beyond.

(A Dolores Leckey is a senior fellow at Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.)
Biblical readings: Exodus and God’s covenant

The biblical readings in the Office of Readings next week are from the 17th verse of Chapter 13 through the 17th verse of Chapter 20 of the Book of Exodus. They run from the beginning of the Israelites left Egypt, taking the bones of Joseph to be buried, to the delivery of the Ten Commandments.

It took two months to travel from Egypt to the Sinai Desert. We don’t know what route they took. Biblical experts suggest that they walked along the Red Sea or the Sea of Reeds, wherever that might have been. That is when the Lord sent a strong wind that turned the sea dry so the Israelites could cross over safely. Then, as the Egyptians chased them, he let the water return to normal, drowning the Egyptians.

The Israelites were now free. But they were also stuck in the desert. They had exchanged the security of slavery for freedom in a wilderness. They had to find houses for tents, an urban life for a nomadic existence, arable land for sand. Where would they get food and water? And who would protect them from enemies?

There was great tension between Moses and the people who led him out of Egypt. Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and our livestock? (Ex 15:21-22).

God provided the answers to those questions. He gave them manna and quail and enabled water to gush forth from a rock. And when the Amalekites attacked, the Israelites prevailed only as long as Moses held up his hands in prayer. When Moses grew tired, Aaron and Hur had to support his hands until victory was won.

Finally, the Israelites pitched camp at the base of Mount Sinai in the Sinai Desert.

Embrace what you have been given and thank God for it

Difficult because she is ill and weak. Now her 7-year-old son has words like “chemotherapy.”

Later, I researched the origin of that green line and found it to be from a lovely poem by Mary Jean Iron.

In part, it reads, “Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are.” My son learned from you, love you, bless you before you depart. Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow. Let me hold you while I may, for it may not always be so. One day I shall … want more, than all you have, all you are.

It is easy to take ordinary blessings for granted. I suppose it is human nature to overlook that which we have, and recognize it only in hindsight.

When reminded, however, we can stop chasing what’s “better” and be grateful for what we have.

Admittedly, I don’t always enjoy helping my 7-year-old son with his homework. But it is an experience that I should embrace.

Some people would give anything to have that quality time with their children. I am not being in a hospital bed someone far from where they are able to help. Thus, it means that my son has been blessed with the capabilities to do his schoolwork.

I’ve noticed that bad days make the ordinary days feel positively radiant. If we look for a bright side, we are likely to find that. The perspective is a free gift that comes along with our problems.

I recall a sign in a front of a church that said, “Be thankful for dirty dishes. It means you have food to eat.” In light of context and perspective, my friend recently reminded me.

That same friend told me that her 7-year-old son said, “I want yogurt.”

She beamed with pride. Her son has special needs and has been unable to communicate verbally. She explained that the other children in his therapy group can say three sentences, while her son can only say one.

“But it’s about perspective, and I must be grateful that he is improved so much from two years ago,” she said.

My friend reminds me that we should embrace what we have been given and thankful for it. We should enjoy the ordinary day because it really is a gift. May it never take a setback, an illness or crisis to make us recognize the ordinary value of such days with which God blesses us.

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Was staircase a miracle or a wonder of construction?

Late last year, I found two copies of a booklet about a trip made years ago to the Loretto Chapel Museum Staircase of an employee who was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was difficult not to identify with her.

I was given instructions to reference the calendar. That’s when I noticed that everything penciled in on the calendar was related to her medical appointments. Terms like “nuclear injection” and “surgery” filled a tote bag with her belongings—a stunning woman with her special needs and has been unable to communicate verbally. She explained that the other children in his therapy group can say three sentences, while her son can only say one.

“Are there such things as miracles in this world?” I asked. “Just mine, but happened to friends, family and the lives of others who also know without doubt what miracles happen more often than we know.”

What I believe were miracles weren’t just happened, but happened to friends, family members and even strangers. I believe that miracles happen more often than we know.

When I first saw the Spiral Stairway at the Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe, N.M., I filled a tote bag with books for a young lady with her perspective is a free gift that comes along with our problems.

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Loretto Academy of Our Lady of Light was built. Then a Gothic Chapel was patterned after the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. Then a Gothic Chapel was patterned after the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

When he had completed the circular stairway, he turned the spirally shaped steps because they are so old. When I first saw the Spiral Stairway at the Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe, N.M., I filled a tote bag with books for a young lady with her 

The story of the stairway’s origin is unbelievable but true, and I believe that miracles happen more often than we know.

Carl R. Albach, a consulting engineer, asked in his first sentence:

“Are there such things as miracles in this world?” I asked. “Just mine, but happened to friends, family and the lives of others who also know without doubt what miracles happen more often than we know.”

What I believe were miracles weren’t just happened, but happened to friends, family members and even strangers. I believe that miracles happen more often than we know.

When I first saw the Spiral Stairway at the Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe, N.M., I filled a tote bag with books for a young lady with her 

The story of the stairway’s origin is unbelievable but true, and I believe that miracles happen more often than we know.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 4, 2012

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Romans 8:31b-34
Mark 9:2-10

The Book of Genesis is the source of this weekend’s first reading.

A major figure is Abraham. Historians and biblical scholars agree that Abraham actually lived. He was not a myth or the product of imagination. He lived very long ago. Historically, Jews have regarded Abraham as the first of their race. In a theological sense, Christians see Abraham as the first of their race because Christians believe that their religion flows from the Revelation initially given by God to the Jews. This weekend’s reading is very familiar. Abraham leads his beloved son, Isaac, to the top of a high mountain to kill him there as a sacrifice to God. As is well known, God intervenes and orders Abraham to spare Isaac. The story has several lessons. One lesson, usually overlooked, is the repudiation of human sacrifice by some other than God. Human sacrifice, in and of itself, was forever aberrant to Jews, but was very much a part of the ritual of pagans who lived around the Jews. Another feature of pagan worship was to conduct ceremonies including sacrifices, on the top of high mountains. Therefore, beyond sparing Isaac, beyond rejecting human sacrifice, in this story God draws Abraham, and all people, away from the error of paganism.

Instead, they learn from God about the best and true order of creation. God is the best teacher, and God provides for the people.

Isaac is a figure who, for Christians in later centuries, in a sense symbolizes Jesus. As was Isaac, Jesus was the sacrifice, killed by the ignorance and baseness of humans. However, Jesus did not die forever. By the ignorance and baseness of humans.

In later centuries, in a sense symbolizes Jesus. Later, in the Old Testament, God is associated with light. Indeed, the presence of God constitutes the difference between darkness and light. God is the Lord of life and of light.

Mountaintops are the places on Earth that are nearest to heaven. In a hopeful, awkward attempt to come as close as possible to God, humans climbed to the tops of mountains.

Indeed, the temple in Jerusalem was built at the summit of Mount Zion. Jesus was crucified on a hilltop. He ascended from a hilltop.

In this reading, all earthly fogs and veils are cast down. Jesus appears in the reality of divinity. In this divinity is eternal life itself.

The presence of Moses and Elijah indicate that Jesus is fully and absolutely in the historic train of communication with and the salvation of God’s people.

Reflection

The newness of Lent has ended. This weekend, we are observing the second Sunday of the season.

Now, the Church leads us in earnest into this period to prepare for Holy Week and Easter.

It is message is simple. It is profound. God is everything. We are human beings, and we are limited. Always, amid our limitations, and to relieve us in our limitations, God has provided for us. God spared Abraham, God spared Isaac, but only after being assured of Abraham’s unfailing faith.

Faith is indispensable in our search for and our path to God.

Faith is the opposite of selfishness and of foolishly over-exaggerating our limited human abilities.

God is in Jesus. Jesus is Lord. This is the greatest message of the Transfiguration given us this weekend in St. Mark’s Gospel.

It was St. Paul’s word to the Christian Romans. If we have Jesus, we have God. And in God, we lack nothing.

So, with this assurance and challenge, the Church this weekend prepares us for the season of Lent.

My Journey to God

Lenten Contemplation

The whole month of March is placed in Lent this year. As it is most years.

The sun is steadily getting brighter. As spring is announced.

How odd?

The time of greatest silence and interior darkness.

Comes as the Earth tilts into a greater Sunlit brilliance.

A paradox, a point of contradiction. Penance, fasting, alms-giving.

An inner search for light. As I put on sunglasses to drive.

Until

The dazzling light of Easter is remembered.

The rock rolled away. As a bacalyn radon penetrates all darkness.

Illuminating the heart as “Alleluia!” Is sung!

By Trudy Bedsole

(Trudy Bedsole is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.)

Daily Readings

Monday, March 5
Daniel 9:4b-10
Psalm 79:8-9, 11-13
Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday, March 6
Isaiah 1:10, 16-20
Psalm 50:8-9, 18bc-17, 21, 23
Matthew 23:12-13

Wednesday, March 7
St. Perpetua, martyr
St. Felicity, martyr
Jeremiah 18:1-5, 17-19
Psalm 31:5-6, 14-16
Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday, March 8
St. John of God, religious
Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 16:19-31

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

First Friday devotion was revealed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in France

Q: In order to receive the promise of the grace of final penitence, my understanding is that one must attend Mass on the first Friday for nine consecutive months. Recently, I was attempting to complete that devotion, but on the ninth first Friday, our parish had a Confirmation service. Is that considered a Mass, and would the promise be granted?

A: First Friday devotion dates back to the last decade of the 17th century when Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in France. In a series of conversations, Jesus urged her to make known the deep love symbolized by his Sacred Heart. Among the promises made to her by Christ was that “my all-powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the first Fridays for nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance, because it is in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my heart will be their secure refuge in the last hour.”

It is important that this devotion not be viewed mechanically as though in some magical way people could simply “catch Mass” on those nine days and otherwise conduct themselves in utter selfishness and still be guaranteed salvation. Instead, the presumption is that someone devoted to frequent reception of the Eucharist would try to match devotion with a virtuous life and that the power of the Eucharist would help them to do that.

As to your question, a Confirmation service is not a Mass. A Mass is a full eucharistic celebration in which the bread and wine are consecrated, offered to God in union with the sacrifice of Jesus and then received.

Did the Confirmation service “count” as your ninth first Friday? Of course, it did. God is not a giant referee in the sky with a whistle in his mouth looking for fouls. He is a loving Father seeking to give us the benefit of every doubt.

You wanted to go to Mass on the ninth first Friday and tried to do that. You did your best and—in my mind and, I think, in God’s—that’s enough.

How often is the pastor of a rather large, one-priest parish allowed to take a vacation? (Batesville, Ind.)

A: Your question is interesting. It seems to suggest that one particular priest is taking too much vacation time, whereas most doctors, counselors and spiritual directors today would define the problem as the reverse—namely, that priests take too little time off.

One priest is doing what a generation ago was the work of two or even three priests. Some priests are additionally carrying diocesan responsibilities.

An August 2010 article in The New York Times reported on studies which show that members of the clergy—Protestant as well as Catholic—now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than the general population.

Part of it has to do with the misperception some priests have that serving God means never saying no, that they are bound to answer every call for help from anyone at any time, and that any concern for self is a selfish thing.

To answer your question, Canon #533.2 of the Code of Canon Law says that “unless there is a grave reason to the contrary, a pastor is permitted to be absent from the parish each year for vacation for at most one continuous or interrupted month.”

In addition, dioceses commonly encourage priests to take one day off a week due to the fact that priests enjoy no weekends off.

These breaks allow the priest to enjoy recreation, to spend time reading, to be refreshed, and stay connected with family and friends—then hopefully return to ministry with new energy. A priest must use common sense and not take a vacation during particularly busy times in a parish, such as Christmas or Holy Week.

The reality is that often priests simply cannot take a week or two for a vacation. Because it’s becoming harder and harder to find sufficient coverage for weekend Masses, many priests are inclined to take two or three days off midweek.

A regular weekly day off for priests is certainly a boost to healthy living, but sometimes parishioners have crises that cannot wait and prevent a pastor from taking that time off.

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.
Ministry helps parents of stillborn babies

"We take great care to make sure things are perfect. We make it like how we would want for our baby because we know what it’s like. The last thing you think about in that situation is clothes. We do this so another woman doesn’t have to say ‘I don’t want my baby to be buried naked.’ We can eliminate that fear and give the mother something to say ‘I don’t want my baby to be buried naked.'"" says Tami Peters, Tam and Toby’s mother.

THE NURSE looked at us in disbelief and said, ‘Really?’ It was such a heart-wrenching time, said Binz, a former nurse who has become an advocate for bereaved mothers.

For the layman, laying a baby to rest can be a daunting task. But for Binz, it’s a matter of sorting through clothes and belongings, and helping bereaved parents make sure their child is properly clothed and rested for burial.

Binz, who is executive director of the Holy Sews Ministry, said she was inspired to create the ministry after her own experience of losing a baby in 2008.

In April 2007, she and her husband, Kevin, found out that their baby no longer had a heartbeat. Ryan was delivered the next day, and Binz and her family were faced with the difficult task of choosing clothes for the baby’s burial.

"I knew what I was doing was right and that mother needed that layette," Binz said. "I knew what I was doing was right and that mother needed that layette."

She called the growing interest in the effort "unbelievable." It has been so overwhelming that Binz and others are now working on an instructional video to show families how to properly prepare their little one for burial.

Once word spread about the group and its ministry, women from around the country have asked to start chapters of their own. One state chapter has been put on hold for now while Binz and others complete an instructional video. Some local groups have volunteered to help.

Binz called the growing interest in the effort "unbelievable." "It has been so overwhelming," Binz said. "I kind of thought that eventually I would want this to be in other places. It's all been very liberating."

It is an honor, she said, to help others start this ministry that assists women at one of their darkest hours.

"To hold my little child is the most agony [that] I've ever experienced," Binz said. "This affects everyone. It is more of what Jesus would do—extend caring and compassion to everyone. This is about respecting life by honoring [the children] in death.""
Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services were reported to The Criterion.

Batesville Deanery
March 4, 4 p.m. for St. Denis, Jennings County
March 5, 7 p.m. for St. Joseph, Center Township, Franklin County
March 7, 7:30 p.m. for St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
March 7, 3 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
March 8, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, North Vernon
March 9, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. for St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bloomington
March 9, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bloomington
March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
March 15, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklinville
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
March 27, 7 p.m. for St. Nicholas, Ripley County
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, and St. Louis, Batesville
March 28, 7:45 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, Enochsburg
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
April 4, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Dover
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Martin, Yorkville, St. Paul, New Albany, and St. Joseph, St. Leon, St. Leon

Bloomington Deanery
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
March 25, 7 p.m. for St. John the Apostle, Bloomington; St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington; and St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford

Connersville Deanery
March 6, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
March 8, 7 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty
March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Andrew, Richmond
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Rose, Knightstown

Indianapolis East Deanery
March 5, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bernadette and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
March 7, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit
March 8, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Floyds Knobs
March 14, 7 p.m. for Holy Cross and St. Philip Neri at Holy Cross
March 27, 6 p.m. at St. Rita
March 29, 7 p.m. for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and St. Mary at St. Mary

Indianapolis North Deanery
March 11, 2 p.m. at St. Pius X
March 12, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bernadette and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Pius X

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
March 19, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Clark County
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
March 25, 3 p.m. at Good Shepherd
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
April 2, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
March 6, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
March 8, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
March 8, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels at Marian University
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony
March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Clark County
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher
March 27, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
March 27, 9 p.m. at Marian University
March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
March 31, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel

New Albany Deanery
March 6, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
March 7, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
March 10, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd's Knobs
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Corydon
March 14, 8 p.m. for Holy Family, New Albany, and St. Mary, New Albany, at St. Mary, New Albany
March 22, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
March 27, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Clark County
March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Navilleton, and St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd's Knobs, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd's Knobs
March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
April 1, 11 a.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery
March 6, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay,

St. Nicholas Church, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

Tell City Deanery
March 7, 6:30 p.m. at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad
April 2, 2 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery
March 4, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
March 8, 8 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
March 8, 7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute
March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Ann, Brazil
March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle

Lenten activities available online
Be sure to visit The Criterion’s Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent

The page consists of links to daily readings, archived Lenten columns by Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features.
Cuban Church has become more public in a rapidly changing culture

HAVANA (CNS)—The Catholic Church that Pope Benedict XVI will visit on March 26-28 is, to put it simply, more.

Since Pope John Paul II’s visit in 1998, the Church is more unified, more public, more likely to work with the government in accomplishing specific goals, more involved in providing assistance to the Cuban people and more comfortable in its place in society. Its bishops, priests and laypeople, while still wary of pushing official tolerance too far, are more confident in teaching the faith in a way they believe can help shape the future of all of Cuba.

Above all, it is more hopeful.

In interviews and casual conversations with Catholic News Service in mid-February, just about everyone—including nonbelievers—in the places that Pope Benedict will visit expressed hope for what his trip might trigger. People said they saw important changes the last time a pope visited Cuba, and they have hopes for what this trip might bring.

They spoke of a Cuban people around the world unified by the Virgin of Charity of El Cobre—who is affectionately called “La Caridad” by the Virgin of Charity of El Cobre—La Caridad as the shrine’s patroness.

“It is a blessing for all Cubans,” said Juan Alberto Alba, whose biography of President Raul Castro lists his religion as “Roman Catholic (formerly atheist).”

But a series of polls done for the Church in 2002-03 as part of preparations for a pastoral plan found that 75 percent of practicing Catholics were unfamiliar with the national ecclesial “encuentro” of 1986 that is considered a turning point for the Cuban Church’s pastoral style.

Gustavo Andujar, cultural director of the Varela Cultural Center, set to fully open in 2010, — is considered a turning point for the Cuban Church’s pastoral style.

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