A remarkable heart for others

10-year-old competes in Mini-Marathon to raise money for cancer-stricken friend

By John Shaughnessy

It’s a story about the beautiful way that people from different generations and families sometimes touch each other’s lives. It’s also a story about the bond between parents and children—and how they often learn from each other, lean on each other and inspire each other.

At the heart of the story is Abby Allen, a fifth-grade student at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington.

On the morning of May 5, the 10-year-old girl waited among 35,000 people to start the OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon in Indianapolis—the event where she hoped to complete her special, nearly yearlong plan to show her love and support for a family friend fighting for her life against cancer.

Ever since she came up with the idea last summer, Abby wanted to run in the 13.1-mile race to raise funds to help pay for the uninsured, alternative cancer treatments for Michelle Combs, a wife and mother of two girls near Abby’s age.

“I’ve known her for a long, long time,” Abby said. “She’s just one of those people you want to help. She’s always happy. Even when things go wrong, she’s there for you. I thought about if this had happened to my parents or me. I just want her to be safe.”

Finally, the wait was over for Abby. It was time for her to run.

A remarkable heart for others

As Abby started the race, she ran with two of her biggest fans by her side.

One was her father, Jeff Allen. The other was Father Thomas Kovatch, the pastor of her parish.

While both men had run marathons in the past, they had also sustained injuries leading up to this year’s Mini-Marathon. In any other year, they likely would have withdrawn from the race, but they both wanted to be there for Abby.

Indeed, Abby’s father was her inspiration for attempting to run the Mini-Marathon for Michelle. She got the idea last summer when Jeff talked about competing in the Ironman triathlon competition in Cozemul, Mexico, in November of 2011 as a fundraiser for the Combs family.

Racial differences matter less, but minorities still feel disadvantages

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Americans are becoming more comfortable with living and working in proximity to people of races and cultures different from their own, and exposure to diversity may well be the key.

WASHINGTONLETTER

Clarke, D-Mich., cites his multicultural background as a factor in his ability to relate to many kinds of people.

The son of a Bangladeshi immigrant from what was then India and an African-American mother, Clarke grew up with exposure to the ups and downs of various cultures.

“Diversity helps open minds and hearts,” he said at a recent forum sponsored by the National Journal in Washington. Clarke’s father was Muslim, and his mother was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was raised Muslim and later became a Catholic. His Korean-born wife was adopted, and raised by Jewish and Catholic parents.

“This totally affects my outlook,” he said. “But a recent poll shows significantly different attitudes across race and cultural lines about how minorities are faring.

In a poll conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the National Journal, three-quarters of black and Hispanic respondents said, for example, that the country needs to make more changes to give racial minorities equal rights to whites.

While respondents were about evenly split between saying the same thing and that the country has already done what is necessary to achieve equal rights.

The survey also found blacks and Hispanics more optimistic than whites in saying they have made progress with respect to how they are treated and that the two minority groups are more likely to say programs such as food stamps and Medicare offer enough of a safety net for the needy.

Such differences of opinion were illustrated in the lively comments from a panel of members of Congress speaking at the same April 19 event hosted by the National Journal on “How Diversity Shapes the National Agenda,” where the survey was released.

Church leaders reject Obama’s support for same-sex marriage

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic leaders rejected President Barack Obama’s May 9 declaration in a television interview that “personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married.”

“President Obama’s words today are not surprising since they follow upon various actions already taken by his administration that erode or ignore the unique meaning of marriage,” said Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a May 9 statement.

“We cannot be silent in the face of words or actions that would undermine the institution of marriage, the very cornerstone of our society,” Cardinal Dolan added.

“The people of this country, especially our children, deserve better.”

In December 2010, Obama said his views on same-sex marriage were “evolving,” and that he “struggles with this,” adding he would continue thinking about the issue. An Associated Press story on May 10 quoted Obama as saying he wanted to announce his support for such unions “in my own way, on my own terms,” but acknowledged earlier remarks by Vice President Joe Biden prompted his announcement.

On May 6, Biden, a Catholic, said he was “absolutely comfortable” with same-sex couples marrying, adding they should get “the same exact rights” that heterosexual married couples receive.

The Catholic Church upholds the sanctity of traditional marriage as being only between one man and one woman, and also teaches that any sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful.

“I pray for the president every day, and will continue to pray that he and his administration act justly to uphold and protect marriage as the union of one man and one woman,” Cardinal Dolan said.

“May we all work to promote and protect marriage and, by so doing, serve the true good of all persons.”

In a May 9 statement, the Archdiocese of Washington said it “opposes the redefinition of marriage based on the clear understanding that the complementarity of man and woman is intrinsic to the meaning of marriage. The word ‘marriage’ describes the exclusive and lifelong union of one man and one woman open to generating and nurturing children. Other unions exist, but they are not marriage.”

In its statement, the archdiocese said it would “continue to strongly advocate for the federal government’s existing definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman,” adding that it supports efforts undertaken by those who uphold the
Jeff raised about $2,500 in donations as he swam 2.4 miles, biked 112 miles and ran 26.2 miles in the race. Abby wanted to push herself, too, even though she suffers from asthma and doesn’t have the stamina for running.

What she does have is a remarkable heart for others. When she turned 4, she had her first birthday party and asked guests to bring gifts for children who had donated to a charitable organization—from coats for families to donations for an animal shelter. She has cut her long hair twice for Locks of Love, an organization that provides wigs for children who have lost their hair because of medical conditions.

“I just think always we have to remember there are always others out there who are less fortunate,” said Kerri Allen, Abby’s mother. “Our goal in life is to serve others and get to heaven. That’s why we’re here.”

But that’s the way he is for the kids at St. Charles. He’s always there for them. “He’s given Abby so much support,” Kerri said. “He has talked to her about it after Mass. For him to come up here means a lot. But that’s the way he is for the kids at St. Charles. He’s always there for them.”

Father Kovatch has the same admiration for Abby. “The kids at St. Charles warm my heart every day,” he says. “They do so many good things, and they want to give of themselves. Abby took it to another level. She was doing something rather difficult for a 10-year-old.”

At the seven-mile mark, Father Kovatch’s calves tightened up so much that he could no longer run. He encouraged Abby and Jeff to continue without him, telling them the race would go on forever by walking.

Abby and Jeff strode ahead, relying on the training they had done together for months, slowly building Abby’s endurance. Sometimes colds and her asthma affected her training, but she continued to push herself, always thinking of Michelle.

She had that motivation again as she started to struggle at the 13-mile mark. But there was no way she was going to give in. She had seen what her dad had done this year. Abby kept listening to her dad’s encouragement. She kept telling herself to slow down her pace, to ignore the soreness, to focus on finishing. “I just wanted to be here today to support Abby,” Michelle said. “She’s doing so much for me. I wanted to be here for her. She’s an amazing little girl. Don’t let her give food you.”

Abby’s efforts raised about $5,000 in donations for Michelle’s treatments.

Abby has discovered the source of happiness in a young age,” said Father Kovatch, who finished the race. “We are created in the image of God, and we find joy and happiness when we act like God. God doesn’t need anything so he’s a being who gives of himself for others’ benefit. Abby did what she did purely out of a desire to help someone else.

It’s not that the country hasn’t made progress when it comes to how people are treated based on their race, Cleaver said. “But that’s the way he is for the kids at St. Charles. He’s always there for them.”

Standing in the shade of a large tree after the race, Abby relived how it felt to reach the finish line. “I felt relieved, I was very proud of myself and then I fell sore,” she said with a huge smile. Only her heart was bigger. 

Michelle had first been diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007; that same cancer had been in remission for six years and that the disease had returned with a vengeance in 2011, spreading to Michelle’s lungs, lymph nodes and skull.

“If I ever felt like my muscles were tightening up or I’d get thirsty, I’d just think of her and how she’s fighting for her life,” Abby said.

The session featured sparring among two Democratic and two Republican senators about immigration reform and how immigration-related concerns affect the country and how the coming elections will be affected by those issues.

Rep. Ray Lankford, a first-term Republican from Idaho, opened his remarks by describing feeling put out by news reports that he had been a “model citizen” for 30 years. “Sometimes colds and her asthma affected her training, but she continued to push herself, always thinking of Michelle.

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Graduations set for 11 Catholic high schools in archdiocese

By John Shaghnessy

As another school year comes to a close, 1,734 students are preparing to graduate from 11 Catholic high schools across the archdiocese. For the graduates and their families, it will be a time of celebration, transitions, and forward thinking forward with a mixture of pride, relief, nostalgia and celebration.

It also is a time to appreciate the impact of a Catholic education as 97 percent of the graduates will enroll in college.

“We’re proud of the Class of 2012,” said Harry Plummer, executive director of the archdiocese’s office of Catholic education and faith formation. “Their academic accomplishments and their service to their communities in which they received their education are well documented and greatly appreciated. We expect to hear great things from them as they enter the next stage in their lives.”

The Catholic high school graduates in the archdiocese join more than 130,000 graduates at Catholic high schools across the country, Plummer noted.

The archdiocese is confided and proud, combining with their willingness to bring the light of faith into our American culture, is a sign of hope in these challenging times,” he said.

Here is a listing of graduation information for the 11 Catholic high schools across the archdiocese:

- **Archangels Church in Indianapolis:**
  - The graduation ceremony will be on June 1 at 7 p.m. at the school. The valedictorian is Laura Wilhelm, the daughter of Frank and Judith Higginbotham of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The salutatorian is Kelsey Blake, the daughter of Todd and Kimberly Berler of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Kathy Mears, assistant superintendent of Catholic schools.

- **Cathedral High School in Indianapolis** has a graduating class of 131 seniors.
  - The graduation ceremony will be on May 19 at 10 a.m. at the school.
  - The valedictorian is Chad Tomlinson, the son of Mark and Kathleen Hendricks of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Father Michael Shenow of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Father Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator.

- **Clowes Memorial Hall in Indianapolis** has a graduating class of 178 seniors.
  - The Baccalaureate Mass will be on May 20 at 2:30 p.m. at the school.
  - There will be a valedictorian named Christopher Strack, the son of Thomas and Jennifer Shrock of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Annette “Mickey” Lentz, chancellor.

- **Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis** has a graduating class of 202 seniors.
  - The Baccalaureate Mass will be on June 3 at 3:10 p.m. at the school.
  - The graduation ceremony will be on June 3 at 4:30 p.m. at Clowes Memorial Hall Butler University in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Summer.

- **Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis** has a graduating class of 124 seniors.

- **Roncalli High School in Indianapolis** has a graduating class of 279 seniors.
  - The Baccalaureate Mass will be on May 26 at 5 p.m. at the school.
  - The graduation ceremony will be on May 26 at 7 p.m. at the school.
  - The valedictorian is Bryant Rainey, the son of Bill Rainey and Joan Rainey of St. The Archangel Parish in Indianapolis.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Mears.

- **Seton Catholic Jr./Sr. High School in Richmond** has a graduating class of 20 seniors.
  - The Baccalaureate Mass will be on June 1 at 6 p.m. at St. Andrew Church in Richmond.
  - The graduation ceremony will be on June 3 at 2 p.m. at the school.
  - The valedictorian is Calvin Dwinnell, the daughter of Jeffrey Cooper and Rebecca Thompson of St. Andrew Parish in Richmond, and Laughter.
  - The archdiocese will be represented by Rob.

MARRIAGE (continued from page 1A)

traditional meaning of marriage.”

One such effort is a petition drive in the state of Maryland to overturn a law passed earlier this year to allow same-sex marriage in the state. Opponents of the law are gathering 121,577 signatures to suspend the law for the amendment while 831,788 support same-sex marriage and 37 percent opposed. Support by Americans overall is at 52 percent, with 44 percent opposed. Religion News Service found overall that all of us are endowed by our Creator (Image 22x29 to 768x392)

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne congratulates Jasmine Oliver during the 2011 graduation ceremony for Father Thomas Seccia Memorial High School graduates in Indianapolis.

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Maryland voters approved the state’s same-sex marriage law in a November 2012 referendum, making it the 11th state to recognize same-sex marriage, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. The law went into effect on January 1, 2013, allowing same-sex couples to marry and dissolve their relationships through divorce. The law also requires public schools to teach about the history of same-sex marriage and the rights of same-sex couples.

The law has faced legal challenges and opposition from various groups, including religious organizations and conservative groups, who argue that it violates their First Amendment rights. Opponents have argued that same-sex marriage is a form of discrimination and that it undermines traditional views of marriage.

The Federal District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in favor of plaintiffs challenging the constitutionality of the state law in 2013, finding that the law violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The case was later overturned by the Supreme Court of the United States, which ruled in favor of same-sex marriage nationwide in 2015.

The state has also faced challenges from other states and federal agencies, with some arguing that it violates federal law and others citing concerns about the potential impact on religious freedom. The Supreme Court’s ruling in 2015 cleared the way for same-sex marriage to be recognized in Maryland and other states, as well as across the country.
Pope Benedict XVI: Great teacher, good steward

L ast month, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated two important anniversaries: his 85th birthday on April 16, and the seventh anniversary of his election as the Bishop of Rome on April 19.

As always, the Holy Father observed these great occasions with quiet dignity and genuine human warmth. Throughout his many years of pastoral service, Pope Benedict has shown himself to be a great teacher and a good steward of the many gifts and responsibilities entrusted to his care.

Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, was born on Holy Saturday in 1927 and baptized the same day. As the pope recalled in his birthday homily, “On the day I was baptized...was Easter Sunday. At that time, it was still customary to hold the Easter Vigil in the morning following the darkness of Easter Saturday, and I heard the Mass.”

“This singular paradox, this anticipation of light in a day of darkness, certainly makes an image of the history of our own times. On the one hand, there is the silence of God and his absence, yet the resurrection of Christ contains an anticipation of God’s ‘yes,’ his ‘yes’.”

We live in an age that searches through the silence of God we hear his words and through the darkness of his absence we wait for the anticipation of the Resurrection in the midst of evolution history indicates the path we must walk and helps us to continue the journey.”

Pope Benedict’s journey through life has been a unique blend of gifts and responsibilities. The son of a policeman who was outspoken in his opposition to Hitler and the Nazis, the young Joseph Ratzinger was introverted, intellectual and deeply religious. He bitterly resented being forced to participate in Hitler’s war, and he ended up abandoning his post in the German army. Only the Allies’ victory and the subsequent breakdown of military power saved him from death, the customary fate of deserters.

Ordained a priest the same day as his older brother, Georg, he pursued a teaching career and participated in the Second Vatican Council as a “peritus” or adviser to the Cardinal Archbishops of Munich-Freising. He became a strong advocate for change, but he insisted that all changes be in continuity with what the Church has always taught as opposed to a radical departure from traditional teaching and practice.

Cardinal Karl Wojtyla, the future Pope John Paul II, befriended the young German, and recognized him to be a great teacher and a good steward of his many gifts and talents. In due time, the Polish pope called then-Cardinal Ratzinger to Rome to serve as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. This new assignment found the cardinal sequestered in his beloved homeland and to serve in a very difficult, but extremely important, position as the steward or guardian of orthodox teaching throughout the Universal Church.

As always, Cardinal Ratzinger worked hard and took his stewardship responsibilities seriously. Unfortunately, he did not take himself too seriously, but remained a gentle and humble servant of the Church’s faith. He continued to be a great teacher and pastor throughout his many years as a member of the Roman Curia and, in spite of false caricatures of him as the Grand Inquisitor or “God’srottweiler,” the Cardinal from Bavaria maintained his gentle smile and warm sense of humor.

After Pope John Paul II died, Cardinal Ratzinger was eager to retire, and return to Bavaria to read, write, walk and pray. It was not to be. The cardinal elections meeting in the papal conclave, prompted by the Holy Spirit, chose 78-year-old Joseph Ratzinger—an old man by his own reckoning—to serve as St. Peter’s successor and carry on the work which he began many years earlier at the Second Vatican Council.

During his 85th birthday homily, the Holy Father said, “I am in the final stage of my life journey, and I do not know what awaits me. However, I do know that the light of God exists, that he rose again, that his light is stronger than all darkness, that the goodness of God is stronger than all the evil in this world. This helps me to continue with confidence. This helps us to continue, and I would like to thank everyone who, through their faith, continually makes me aware of God’s ‘yes.”

All of us should thank God for the countless times that Joseph Ratzinger has said “yes” to God’s call. May he continue to be an exemplary teacher and pastor, and a good steward of all God’s gifts!

—Daniel Conway

Letters to the Editor
We must always remember the one non-negotiable issue

I continue to be pleased and energized by the nationwide rallies in opposition to the contrasting assaults on religious freedom reflected in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ health care mandates, including the strong showing recently at the Indiana diocesan rally in the rain.

Perhaps there may finally be a new awakening by Catholic—and other Christian—clergy and laity to the reality of an intrusive federal administration openly hostile to traditional Christian moral values, particularly those reflected in Catholic Church teaching and doctrine.

However, as a layman in the Catholic Church, it is a somber somber and bittersweet thought to reflect on the fact that much of our current moral distress might have been avoided if we Catholics—and other Christian believers—had previously voted in a manner to reflect traditional Catholic/Christian doctrine and teaching on key moral issues.

In 2008, then Barak Obama, the most open—and honest—advocate of all forms of abortion and contraception to ever run for the highest office in the land, would probably not have been elected without the strong pro-life support of self-proclaimed Catholic/Christian leaders.

While this may seem to be an overly harsh assessment with too much “single issue” focus, I do feel that the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death cannot remain a non-negotiable moral position. With God’s help, it may still not be too late to effect a course correction for a ship that is clearly headed in the morally wrong direction.

David A. Nealy
Greenwood, Ind.

A heartfelt “thank you” to all our Church’s wonderful shepherds

I would like to say how much I enjoyed Ken Doyle’s answers in all of his “Question Corner” columns. Besides the intellectual part of the arguments, Ken’s sensitivity to whom he is responding is always thoughtful and is wonderful.

I am a retired person who, when I worked, put in a lot of hours and didn’t have much time to help the Church.

As a Protestant minister, I remember that when I would visit and wanted to spend time with him I had to go with him as he did the work of his church.

Just as a priest’s job is 24 hours a day, seven days a week, his was too. I also made the same comment about him only working on Sunday, but I always added about it taking four gentlemen to bring the money to him. I am sorry, Jim.

As both an extraordinary minister of Holy communion to the homebound and a consolation minister, I now work a lot with people with needs.

As both, I have lost count of the number of times a person has said, “When a loved one died, I called Father at 2 a.m. and he came right over.”

I am sure Father didn’t get to bed before 10 p.m. because he was so busy. I was or was working with a group, and he, too, had to get up early for the next day.

My hope and prayer is that, with God’s help, it may still not be too late to effect a course correction for a ship that is clearly headed in the morally wrong direction.

David A. Nealy
Greenwood, Ind.

Letters from readers are welcome and will be printed as space permits. Readers may write to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “encourage exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Communion et Progression 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and community standards (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will only be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to: “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Peer mentor program helps youths respect themselves and others

By Mary Ann Garber

Chastity and prayer exemplify the “heart and soul” of the Christian life, Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, told several hundred Catholic high school students during the archdiocesan Abstinence Luncheon April 23 at the Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

Practicing chastity is “the right use of the gift of sexuality that God has given us,” Bishop Coyne told the teenagers who present abstinence education programs to Catholic middle school and parish religious education students.

“It is a matter of embracing the Christian life deeply in a way that is imaged in how we use our bodies and how we see ourselves in relation to other people,” he said. “Catholics understand that the gift of sexuality finds its greatest and most complete expression in the relationship between a husband and a wife which is open to the reality and possibility of children.”

Bishop Coyne also encouraged the teenagers to be faithful to daily prayer.

“When your prayer life falls by the wayside, other things start to tumble like dominoes,” he said. “Take the time to pray every day. … Prayer orders your life and how you see yourself in relation to other people.”

Embrace Christ in your life as your Lord and Savior, he said, as well as the Catholic faith with its beautiful sacraments.

“My prayer for you is that your daily life will be an expression not just of a chaste life,” Bishop Coyne said, “but of a loving life, a Christian life.”

Matt Faley, coordinator of young adult ministries for the archdiocese, thanked the teenagers for being great witnesses to younger students as chastity peer mentors.

“Several mentor programs will be called to the sacrament of holy matrimony, she said, and others will receive a call from God inviting them to seek his will and discern vocations to the priesthood or religious life.

“Develop an interior disposition that is open to respond to God,” Jamison said, “whenever and however he answers.”

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“Develop an interior disposition that is open to respond to God,” Jamison said, “whenever and however he answers.”

Cardinal Ritter High School senior Larry Mukona, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, has been involved in the A Promise to Keep program since he was mentored in the sixth-grade.

“A Promise to Keep has been a pivotal part of my life ever since,” Larry explained. “… It helped to strengthen my conscience and to teach me how to do the right choices, but [also] to pick the right friends. … Being yourself and holding onto to your own values is key, but the next step must be taken.

“Some of the lessons I have learned are: to talk, learn and grow in their love for God. … I made a decision to love myself as God loves me,” Josie explained. “I want that bond with God and my future husband, something so beautiful and pure. Something nobody could take from me.”

What was in the news on May 18, 1962? A proposal to radically alter the calendar and bring an end to movable feasts like Easter

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 May 18, 1962, issue of The Criterion.

• Proposed calendar revision seen as East-West unity

**VATICAN CITY**—A reform of the Gregorian Calendar, submitted to the Central Preparatory Commission for the agenda of the coming ecumenical council, may bring East and West together for the first time in centuries in their celebration of many Christian feasts. This reform, if adopted, would mean that Easter would fall on a fixed date every year. It would also mean that every day of the year would fall on the same day of the week every year. The project for the calendar reform was presented on May 12 by Cardinal Antônio Cicognani, acting as his capacity as president of the Preparatory Commission for the Oriental Churches. If accepted, it would radically change the Gregorian Calendar which went into use in 1582 with the bull Inter Gravissimas of Pope Gregory XIII. … Suggestions in this respect were submitted to the League of Nations in 1923 and 1931, and to the United Nations in 1949 and 1950. One of the recent proposals provides for the division of the year into three four-month periods of 13 weeks each, that is of 91 days, with each period beginning on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. … In order not to break the balance, the last day of the year would be considered a repetition of Sunday, Dec. 30, and it would not be included in the ordinary count but would become a kind of blank day without a date.

• Chancery announces 21 clergy assignments

• NC experts hits charges on textbooks

• High school graduates total more

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• NC experts hits charges on textbooks

• High school graduates total more
May 17-19
St. Roch Parish, 3660 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. “Mayfest,” games, rides, buffet dinners, music, Thursday, 5:30 p.m. Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m. Information: 317-784-1763.

May 18

May 18-20
St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Charismatic Mass, praise and worship, 7 p.m., Mass, 7:30 a.m. Information: 317-846-0705.

May 20-21

May 19
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3195 W. 60th St., Indianapolis. Helpers of God’s Precious Infants, pro-life Mass, Father Eric Johnson, celebrant, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9366, ext. 1569.

May 19-20

Information: 765-865-9694 or www.holyfamilyconference.org.

May 20

Holy Cross Parish, 125 N. Oriental St., Indianapolis. “Neighborhood Health Fair,” 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Information: 317-617-2620, ext. 446.

Holy Trinity Parish, Rockhold Hall, 1502 N. Holmes Ave., Indianapolis. Eucharie party, 1:30 p.m., $4 per person. St. Paul Parish, Parish Hall, 9788 N. Deerborn Road, Guilford. Ladies Sodality, breakfast bar buffet, 7:30 a.m. noon, free-will donation. Information: 812-623-2349.

Richmond Catholic Community, 701 N. “A” St., Richmond. “Charismatic prayer group,” 7 p.m. Information: dickercoop@gmail.com.

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church, 3033 Martin Road, Indianapolis. Floyds Knobs. New Albany Deanery, high school mass, 6 p.m., followed by “build a burger” and games. Information: 812-945-2000 or leefalda@lumc.edu.

St. Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, Monte Cassino pilgrimage, “Who is Mary,” Benedictine Father Cyprian Davis, presenter, 10 a.m., $10 per person. Information: 812-923-5785.


May 30
St. Joann of Arc Parish, 7100 E. 60th St., Indianapolis. “Pentecost Sunday Celebration,” picnic, following 10 a.m. Mass, bring covered dish. Information: 317-694-5454 or Karen Alley@ocemiller.com.

June 6
Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Church, 1404 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Sole Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-370-1189.

Retreats and Programs

May 18-20
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Reading the Book of Deuteronomy.” Benedictine Father Eugene Henzel, presenter. Information: 812-357-6585 or marc ello@stmeinrad.edu.

May 19
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Women’s Day—Women of Life,” Franciscan Sisters, Olga Winckler, Norma Rocklage and Patty Campbell, present, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $45 per person includes breakfast and lunch. Information: 812-933-6347 or frcenter@archindy.org.


May 20
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Pre-Cana Conference, marriage preparation program, 1:15-6 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.judement@archindy.org.

May 22
Church, 3354 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m. Information: 317-297-0001.

May 23
St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Little Sisters of the Poor, “Mini-500 Race,” 2 p.m. Information: 317-872-6420.

May 26
St. John the Baptist Parish, Starlight, mailing address, 8310 St. John Road, Floyds Knobs. “Strawberry Festival,” 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. make your own strawberry shortcake, chicken dinner, street dance, 7:30 p.m.-1 a.m. Information: 812-923-5785.

May 27

May 30

Jack Sahn, director, an eighth-grader at Lumen Christi Catholic School in Indianapolis, helps carry a platform holding a statue of Mary during a May 4 Marian procession in the neighborhood surrounding Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, students at the school, which is located at Holy Rosary Parish, prayed the rosary during the procession.

Cecilia Lesch, left, and Emma Cline, eighth-graders at Lumen Christi Catholic School in Indianapolis, process with a crown and flowers during a May crowning ceremony on May 4 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. Also assisting in the ceremony were altar servers Simon Smith, third from left, a Lumen Christi eighth-grader, and Michael Lesch, a Lumen Christi seventh-grader.

Franciscan brother to perform organ recital at Indianapolis parish

Franciscan Brother Gary Jerha, pastoral associate of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 1530 Union St., in Indianapolis, will perform an organ recital at 2 p.m. on May 20.

The recital will take place in the historic church of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community, which is known for the beauty of its German Gothic architecture, ornate stained-glass windows and hand-carved woodwork.

Brother Gary, who earned a master’s degree in organ at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Ill., will play pieces by J.S. Bach and Marcel Dupré.

For more information, call the parish at 317-638-5551 or send an e-mail to shparish@stchapel.org.

Mary’s month

Events Calendar
Dear Peg,

I’ve been praying and reading Scripture a lot lately. It’s always a wonderful part of my day. There’s something I am struggling with though. It is called the “Great Commission.” It seems so important since it was the last thing Jesus said to his disciples before he ascended to Heaven. Here it is:

“Then Jesus approached and said to them, ‘All power in heaven and on Earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age’” (Mt 28:16-20).

I’m a regular parishioner in the archdiocese. How am I supposed to do this?

Thanks,
Enthused but Perplexed,

Dear Enthused but Perplexed,

Thank you so much for your letter. I can see that you are a person eager to grow and share your faith. The Great Commission is almost a set of “marching orders” from Jesus. You might consider this abbreviated version—we must “go everywhere, baptize everyone and teach them everything.” But how?

• Go everywhere—Start with your corner of the world around your parish. Parishes have boundaries, and we are responsible in a special way for the people who live within them. Learn who lives there, what their needs are—both spiritual and temporal—and invite them.

• Baptize everyone—Jesus certainly was not advocating forcing anyone to be baptized. However, we should be trying to invite everyone to baptism. Try to find out if there are people in your area who have never come to know Christ or who have been baptized, but no longer come to worship him or celebrate the sacraments. Reach out to people who once understood their baptismal call, but have since forgotten.

• Teach them everything—After coming to know Christ, we need to continually deepen that relationship with him through our spiritual activities and knowledge of sacred Scripture and sacred tradition. Seek and help other people to find solid Catholic resources. Listen intently and open yourself to God’s will, especially when receiving the sacraments. Encourage others, too. Focus on being able to explain your faith by learning more about it.

Remember that Jesus didn’t give these instructions to an individual. He gave them to all the Apostles and his Church as a community. So that is where you must begin—in your community, your parish.

This Evangelization Supplement is all about how to gather a team in your parish, and has some real-life examples of how this was done in parishes. Read more in the articles, but basically a parish evangelization team should:

• Establish good communication with your pastor and those interested in evangelization in your parish,
• Gather people interested in evangelization, pray together and be formed for the ministry,
• Set goals for the evangelization team with at least one for each of the groups included in the “new evangelization”—the unchurched, alienated or faded Catholics, and everyone in the pews.

If you are discerning whether God is inviting you to enter into this parish ministry, you might consider the fictional “classified ad” for a parish evangelization team member also in this supplement.

Whether or not you prayerfully discern that this is something you want to do, it is important that we all pray for the evangelization efforts of our parish, the Church in the U.S. and the worldwide Church. And most importantly, remember that God is with us always until the end of the age.

In faith,
Peg

(Peg McEvoy is the archdiocesan associate director for evangelization and family catechesis. For questions about and/or help starting a parish evangelization team, contact McEvoy at pmcevoy@archindy.org.)

Good communication in parishes fosters evangelization

By John Shaughnessy

It was a time to rejoice. For months, Father Ryan McCarthy had led a special faith formation program at St. Michael Parish in Brookville, hoping it would deepen the faith of families.

“We invited families to come in once a month to talk about their faith and share their faith. And we gave them information to talk about at home,” says Father McCarthy, pastor of St. Michael. “It’s been very, very successful. In fact, two of the families had fallen away from the Church so it’s encouraging to see them come back to the faith.

That kind of success is one of the main goals in the Church’s and the archdiocese’s effort to promote the “new evangelization.”

“Evangelization is an effort to have Catholics deepen their faith, to bring back Catholics who have fallen away from the faith and to reach out to non-Catholics to join the Church. It’s a commitment that begins at the parish level, archdiocesan officials say. It’s also an approach that requires a good working relationship and continuous communication between a pastor and parish members. "One of the important questions is, ‘How can we as parishioners help the pastor take the Gospel everywhere we possibly can?’” says Peg McEvoy, associate director of evangelization and family catechesis for the archdiocese. “Sometimes it’s hard in our everyday lives to figure out how to share our joy in Christ in a more organized way.”

In helping parishes develop evangelization programs, McEvoy offers guidelines to create open lines of communication between a pastor and parish members—starting with the people in the pews.

“First, literally sit down with your pastor,” McEvoy says. “You want to share your reasons for wanting to become involved in the evangelization ministry, and you want to ask for ideas from the pastor. After you have discussed where this effort needs to go next, stay in touch with the pastor. An evangelization team will need some guidance at some point.

“And share the good news of what’s happening with the pastor. So many times, pastors hear complaints. A pastor needs to hear the good news, too. It’s also a good way to practice witnessing. It encourages us to get in touch with witnessing the good things that are happening with our faith.”

McEvoy also has tips for pastors as their parishioners begin to become involved in new evangelization efforts.

“My greatest recommendation to our pastors is to let themselves be excited about this,” she says. “Make sure the evangelization group is staying in touch. And really look for those moments in your own parish where you can see the mission of our discipleship being lived out. And take joy in that. There are people who are getting so excited about what’s coming from the Vatican, the bishops and the archdiocese about this. That’s a good thing.”

Roger Reuss has felt that excitement as a member of the evangelization effort at St. Michael Parish in Brookville.

“All Catholics need to be called as leaders,” Reuss says. “We can’t sit back. I’ve seen people in different denominations who try to evangelize by telling people that they’re sinners. As Catholics, we need to evangelize in a more caring and understanding way. We have to reach out to Catholics and non-Catholics in our daily lives. We need to show that Catholics are there for others and have respect for others. We need to get back to that presence.”

Reuss sees his involvement in the evangelization effort as a way to deepen his own faith, too.

“There are always times in life for most people when you push God away,” says the 47-year-old husband and father. “But then you feel you need to come back to him. I feel that way often. It’s a life journey.”

Father McCarthy embraces the value of Reuss and other parish members committing to the new evangelization plan from the archdiocese.

“It’s important for each of us to recognize that we have a responsibility to reach out to others. By emphasizing evangelization, we will at least be strengthening our own faith. And, hopefully, we’ll be able to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, and build up a stronger and more faithful society as well.”

He realizes both the challenges and the possibilities of the new evangelization plan at the parish level.

“We’re missing faces on Sundays,” Father McCarthy says. “We’re looking at ways to re-energize our Catholic faith on a deeper level. We’re inviting people back and putting a big emphasis on a family perspective because the family is the smallest unit of the Church.”

That’s why it was a time to rejoice for him and the parish when two families did return to the faith.

McEvoy also sees a reason to hope for the success of the archdiocese’s Evangelization Commission—as long as pastors and parish members communicate and work together.

“There’s not a model for this out there, but we’re on the right track,” she says. “It’s completely parish-based, helping parishes build this from the ground up. There will be an evangelization team in every parish or at least every cluster of parishes. So we know the Gospel is being proclaimed not only in Mass, which is critical, but also outside of Mass and into the community.”

Modest goals can help parishes carry out a big mission

By Sean Gallagher

At first glance, evangelization can seem like a daunting task.

After all, Christ told his disciples just prior to his Ascension to “go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15).

Does that include gerbils and dogs? It did, at least as far as blessings go, for Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany last fall when the southern Indiana faith community sponsored a pet blessing close to the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals.

People living in the neighborhood surrounding the New Albany Deanery faith community were invited to the event.

“We went to each and every critter, whatever they were, from the gerbils on up to the big dogs,” said deacon candidate Jeff Powell, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. “We had threats of a horse, but it never materialized.”

According to Powell, Father Eric Augenstein, the parish’s pastor, blessed about 65 pets.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help may not have proclaimed the Gospel to every creature. But it was a good start.

“It was a very powerful way and a very easy way to get people to come and hear what you’re about,” said Powell. “People love their animals.”

Our Lady of Perpetual Help’s Committee on Evangelization organized the pet blessing. Its members, led by Powell, saw it as a modest means of reaching out beyond the parish to share the joy that they and their fellow parishioners experience by being disciples of Christ.

Later that same month, the committee organized booths manned by parishioners at New Albany’s annual “Harvest Homecoming” festival.

One booth promoted Our Lady of Perpetual Help School. People who staffed the other booths handed out rosaries and prayer cards to visitors. They also had many conversations about the Catholic faith with festival attendees.

“I had one 30-minute conversation about the sacraments with a man who’d never been baptized,” Powell said. “I think we were all surprised with the openness of people and the interest in them to talk.”

“It challenged some of our people to consider being welcomed into the full communion of the Church, says Peg McEvoy, archdiocesan associate director of evangelization and family catechesis. “One of the important questions is, ‘How can we as parishioners help the pastor take the Gospel everywhere we possibly can?’”

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WANTED

Parish Evangelization Team Member

You will be part of a team responsible for sharing the faith with people who do not have a faith in Jesus, people who have faded in their faith in Jesus and the practice of their Catholic faith, and Catholics in the parish who wish to deepen their faith. You will serve on a multifaceted parish team with other incredible people who share your enthusiasm and desire to share the faith. This team may take many different forms—a parish council, a commission or committee, or a separate evangelization team. You will utilize old-fashioned face-to-face and voice-to-voice methods of communication as well as other forms.

Key Objectives/Deliverables:

- Welcoming parish atmosphere
- Renewed spirit of faith in the parish
- Enhanced outreach to the community in your immediate area
- Awareness of and enhanced outreach to the poor
- New and returning faces in the pews

Requirements:

- Faith
- Hope
- Love

Additional skills/preferences:

- Enthusiasm about her/his faith
- Active participation in the sacramental life of the Church
- Ability to communicate to others with Christian love
- Commitment to prayer and lifelong faith formation
- Ability to work within a team setting
- Devotion to Our Lord’s Great Commission
- Willingness to learn more about Catholic evangelization

If you are interested in this position, please contact your pastor.
By Mary Ann Garber

Peg McEvoy, associate director of evangelization and family catechesis for the archdiocese, said that it is important for parish groups focused on evangelization to set reasonable goals and concrete action plans to achieve them.

McEvoy also said that expanding pre-existing activities in a parish or the broader community to include evangelization helps remind parishioners that it is the mission of all groups within a parish and not just the responsibility of the pastor or a particular committee.

Blessed John Paul II reminded us that the Church exists to evangelize, McEvoy said, “and to take that down to the local level is to say that our parishes exist to evangelize. Having a group in a parish to encourage evangelization more broadly is one thing. Getting the parish as a whole to see themselves as evangelists is another.

So says Susan Isaacs, coordinator of adult faith formation at St. Mary Parish in Lanesville.

“You’ve got to have the motivation to share your faith,” Isaacs said.

And from her experience, that motivation often comes through learning more about the faith. “I’ve seen that in my own life and in the life of family and friends,” Isaacs said. “The more we learn, the more we tend to think about the Church stuff with each other; the more we tend to see the role of the Church or of Catholic thought in everyday situations.

That just makes it easier to talk about it at work or wherever in relationship to the news or whatever is going on.”

Isaacs said that adult faith formation offerings in parishes that connect the faith with what is happening in the world right now would be helpful.

“I think it’s most important to be able to discuss things that are in the news rather than picking something that could seem really obscure,” she said.

“Do you think you might take the HHS mandate and learn why the Church never lays down laws without having really defined reasons behind them. She is there to protect us. … The teachings of the Church are profound when it comes to issues such as [respect for] life and how we are supposed to proceed in our daily activities. I think that’s where evangelization really takes place.

“It’s easier to talk about Jesus if we see him as our friend, not someone beyond us, but someone with us all the time,” he said. “We don’t have to go searching for it. We’re always with Christ. He’s right there helping us open our hearts and listen. It’s also easier to talk about God with other people when you look at them and see Jesus in them, and can invite them to the Church in that way.”

Lauren McCombs, foreground center, poses with rosaries draped on her arm on Oct. 9, 2011, in a booth sponsored by Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany that was part of the southern Indiana city’s annual “Harvest Homecoming” festival. McCombs is a second-grader at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School.

Standing in the background is Ceci Rush, a fourth-grader at the school.

Members of St. Louis Parish in Batesville pray at a 2007 Mass in their parish’s church to celebrate the canonization of St. Theodora Guerin. Members of the Batesville Deanery faith community and of other parishes, like St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, foster evangelization through welcoming newcomers and learning more about the Catholic faith.
Christ is at the heart of all that happens in a church

By David Gibson

A lot can happen when you open a church’s door. Some years ago, when our family was preparing for one daughter’s wedding, I had a chance to visit New Orleans’ St. Louis Cathedral. When I arrived, I was met by Design 2000 outside announcers that preparations for a wedding were under way and the church temporarily was closed. I opened the door, nonetheless, and asked an attendant if I might look around from the back. Immediately, my eye was focused near the altar. What I noticed, though, was not what is most important about an altar.

Preoccupied by mounting wedding costs, I seized upon the sight of two bouquets of wedding flowers in this grand setting. I promptly reported this amazing discovery back home.

If two bouquets were sufficient in a great cathedral, I thought that member surely would be sufficient in our parish.

People move through the doors of a church in two directions. They enter and depart through these doorways.

A church, after all, is a gathering place for God’s people. They gather around the altar, which is called the focal point—and not just because of the flowers.

It is vital that these people gather here—this rich assembly of men, women and children so diverse in their daily occupations, races, languages, histories and commitments, but united in faith.

The ordained ministers, religious order members and laity who form such a community have so much worth sharing with each other.

However, a church not only gathers people in, it also sends them out through its doorways into the worlds they inhabit most of the time.

When a church’s doors open outward, they not only facilitate a rush to the parking lot. They signify that the life of faith extends far beyond the church’s walls.

Faith is meant to be put into action in homes, businesses, work sites and schools. Faith and life are not divided.

Thus, during the dismissal rite at the conclusion of Mass, It is present, too, when any sacrament is celebrated. These people form a Christ-like community in which when they depart through a church’s doors, these baptized people are mandated to recognize the dignity of all others, also made in God’s image. This was a key point in Cardinal Mahony’s homily for the dedication of the new Los Angeles cathedral.

“The great cathedrals have been shaped by the craft and loving skills of countless artisans,” the cardinal said. In this cathedral church, he added, an effort would be made “to become different kinds of artisans, of peace and good will, forging links among diverse groups.”

“Anyone who comes here should continue on their journey with a replenished spirit of respect for all other peoples,” Cardinal Mahony said.

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

Church architecture can lead to a rich encounter with God

By Nancy de Flon

It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the best-known and most beloved cultural icons of Germany. But most important, it is an awesome architectural masterpiece suffused with the sacred.

The Cologne Cathedral rises from a busy section of the Rhine’s premiere city, next to the main railroad station, and surrounded by restaurants, stores and other commercial enterprises. But enter through its majestic portals, and you are immediately transported to a special vane of holiness.

The site has a long history of association with humanity’s ceaseless search for mystery. In pagan times, a Roman temple stood here. When the emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in the fourth century, a great era of building Christian churches began, and the earliest Christian house of worship in Cologne dates from this period.

Construction work on the cathedral began in 1248 during the flourishing of the Gothic period of architecture. This was an era of the great mystics as well as a period when popular piety flourished, an era when spirituality was characterized by striving to ascend to union with God.

Gothic architecture expressed this in two ways—with verticality and light.Verticality means that the building’s height is great not only in itself, but also in proportion to its width.

Europe was then enjoying a period of relatively warm climate so, during this great age of cathedral building, the architects were able to abandon the thick, sturdy stone walls of previous ages in favor of techniques that facilitated construction of these tall, graceful buildings.

The extreme verticality of the Cologne Cathedral is obvious even from the outside. The famous twin spires rise 515 feet above the city center so that, as with Gothic cathedrals in general, they can be seen for miles around like sacred skyscrapers signaling to the traveler that here is a place of holiness.

But when you enter the cathedral, the vertical effect is enhanced further. Stand in the back looking down the nave, and your eye is drawn not only down the long aisle toward the altar where the sacred mysteries are enacted, but also upward toward no specific fixed point.

This awesome effect is created by the seemingly endless series of arches, which suggest the infinite nature of God toward whom the viewer aspires.

The warm light and the new building techniques also enabled a significant increase in the amount of window space in proportion to the building as a whole.

Beautiful, elongated stained-glass windows appeared that not only enhanced the effect of verticality, but also created a holy space suffused with light—a rich symbol of God toward whom the medieval Christian was aspiring.

For a period of time when I was living in Europe, the Cologne Cathedral was my spiritual “home away from home.” I loved walking about this exalted, holy space surrounded by the communion of saints, the people of the past who are part of the history of this majestic, indomitable cathedral that survived Allied attacks during World War II.

If you have the opportunity, visit it. I promise a singularly blessed experience.

(Nancy de Flon is an editor at Paulist Press and the author of The Joy of Praying the Psalms.)
Faithful Lines
Shirley Vogler Meister

A view of a pro-life ministry from World War II

As a child growing up during World War II, I knew a little about the war through newsreels, movies, reports on the radio and from my dad, who was stationed at a military plant. But there was one part of the war I didn’t understand much about until near the end when concentration camps were finally shut down. I had not thought about those years for a long time until recently when I received an essay assignment that brought back memories of one of the greatest horrors of that time. It was an e-mail about Jesus saving children who were being gassed to death. I took dangerous steps to help others during World War II. She had permission to work in the Warsaw Ghetto as a plumbing and sewer specialist.

Being German, she knew what the Nazi perpetrators were doing to the Jews. She reunited the parents of those who survived, and she reunited the families of those who were murdered.

She signed a contract to teach Catholic school in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., but her contract was renewed. Herx’s behalf.

She brought her dog to her car, and trained him to bark loudly when Nazi soldiers her her and of the ghetto. The barking covered the cries of the children. During this time, she smuggled out 2,500 children and infants.

When she was eventually caught, the Nazi’s broke Sender’s legs and arms, beating her severely, but she survived.

She kept lists of the children’s names. She smuggled infants out in the bottom of the box that she carried, and used bathtub bags for older children to help them escape. She kept their names hidden in a jar buried in her backyard.

In a jar buried in her backyard.

The e-mail that I received from my friend was a memorial chain in honor of the millions of Jews, Christians, Russians and Catholic priests who were murdered, massacred, burned, starved and humiliated. Many have never been able to recover from the events, and those who did not have proper burial. May that ministry thrive. May we also honor the legacy of a woman who was willing to sacrifice her life for the lives of children.

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

Our vocation gives flesh to the faith

When we hear the word “vocation,” we often think of particular states in life, such as marriage, single life or religious life. However, this is not true, each of these vocations must be understood as particular ways of living out our common, everyday call to holiness. If these vocations are to be our common call to love and service, then the idea of vocation begins to run much deeper. We can hear God call at every moment, constantly speaking his word of life to us, if our hearts are open to listening.

This work of discernment is one of the places where vocation and evangelization come together. Whether vocation or evangelization is part of your vocational call.

Evangelization, however, also involves the more indirect, non-vocational call. Such fidelity to the word of God is attractive. It draws others to contemplate the ways in which Christ might be calling them.

Evangelization is never really an abstract or purer general thing. It is a work that always seeks to reach out to real persons in concrete circumstances and to share God’s word of life. It is also called people to concrete response.

Part of the work of evangelization involves understanding the reasons to nurture their gifts, to nurture those gifts, to offer the others in the service of Christ and his Church. It involves discerning whether we are being called to encourage married couples to the generous and suffering will participate in Christ’s Body of the Church, the Church.

Because of this, the health and well-being of all vocations in the Church is a concern for all of us.

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Feast of the Ascension of the Lord
Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 20, 2012

- Ephesians 1:17-23
- Mark 16:15-20

The date for the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord varies from place to place.

In some dioceses, this feast was celebrated on Thursday, May 17. In those places, the liturgy for this weekend will be that of the Seventh Sunday of Easter.

In other dioceses, the feast is celebrated this weekend. These reflections address the readings for the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord, not for the Seventh Sunday of Easter.

In the opening reading, from the first verses of the Acts of the Apostles, the author speaks first to Theophilus.

Scholars debate the identity of Theophilus. Some scholars believe that it is the actual proper name of a person in the early Church. Other scholars, noting that the name is the Greek translation for “friend of God,” think that it was not a proper name, but rather something of a title or endearment.

Regardless, the use of this name or title reveals the link between the Gospel of St. Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Both books in the New Testament are addressed to Theophilus.


The story, however, as reflected in the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of St. Mark, does not end with its affirmation of the place of Jesus as the Son of God and Savior, visibly seen during the Lord’s public ministry in the Roman province of Palestine in the first century A.D. For us Christians today, as for all Christians who have lived since the events recorded in these Scriptures, the story has strong personal implications.

The Lord, crucified on Calvary and risen from the dead, is still with you and me. He is in the world—living, healing and saving. He lives through the Apostles and their successors. Through them, we hear the Lord. Through them, we meet the Lord. Jesus is Lord! He is God. He lives!

Reflection

This Sunday, the Church celebrates the Ascension of the Lord. This great event of the Ascension, so well described in the Scriptures, is a sign of the Lord’s divine identity as much as the Resurrection, and certainly as much as the miracles.

In every sense, they will represent Jesus. The Gospel concludes that the Apostles went far and wide, and the Lord “worked through them.”

Go Ask Your Father?
Fr. Francis Hoffman

Children should be baptized only with parents’ consent

Q would like to know if what I did is considered a valid baptism. My grandson, who was very ill at the time with a potentially fatal condition (now in remission), was 2 years old and still not baptized. I was fearful that she could die without being baptized. When she was born and I was told about her condition, I immediately called to speak with a priest about having her baptized. I was told that since her parents are not agreeable, it could not be done.

While caring for her, I proceeded to baptize her, without holy water, but with the words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” I made the Sign of the Cross on her forehead, lips and chest. Was I wrong to do this? Is she considered to be validly baptized? She is now 6 years old, still in remission—thanks be to God, though next month she will be having a brain scan or MRI to rule out some new problems.

My daughter and grandchild are attending a Methodist church though she was raised Catholic. When my daughter mentioned to me that she had intentions of having her baptized, I was told that since her parents are not agreeable, it could not be done.

A marriage is either valid or not valid, but the declaration of that validity is the sole competence of the court—known in canon law as a tribunal—that has jurisdiction. Something similar happens in civil law, and no one finds that strange.

A marriage is either valid or not valid, but the declaration of that validity is the sole competence of the court—known in canon law as a tribunal—that has jurisdiction. Something similar happens in civil law, and no one finds that strange.

Q Do valid annulments depend on the jurisdiction of the annulment court? It would seem that the marriage is either valid or not valid, and a pronouncement does not make it valid or invalid. Does the validity depend on the court having jurisdiction?

A tribunal determines that it is not competent to hear the case, it will refuse the case. After all, tribunals aren’t looking for extra cases!

Q My daughter and I have been married for 29 years. Last week, my daughter mentioned to me that she had intentions of having her baptized, I was told that since her parents are not agreeable, it could not be done.

Please help us understand if this would be valid. We are told that my daughter is 6 years old and still in remission—thanks be to God, though next month she will be having a brain scan or MRI to rule out some new problems.

A tribunal determines that it is not competent to hear the case, it will refuse the case.

If a tribunal determines that it is not competent to hear the case, it will refuse the case. After all, tribunals aren’t looking for extra cases!

Q If my daughter truly doubts the child has actually been baptized, go ahead and ask your daughter to have the girl baptized in the Catholic Church. If she is not in favor of that, ask her to have the girl baptized in the Methodist Church she now attends because we recognize that baptism as valid.

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The Ordinary

It’s in the ordinary
Where we meet Christ, the Lord,
Where we see his face
In everyone we meet,
Where we reach out to serve,
Not counting the cost.
By Sandy Bierly

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. A stained glass window of Jesus wearing a crown is seen at St. Joseph’s Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y.)
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Catholic Faith Calls You to Be

Do you long for a place where you can go to be still,
da place to reflect, rest, renew?

The Ascension
Christ’s ascent to heaven is depicted in a stained-glass
window at St. Therese of Lisieux Church in Montauk, N.Y. The
feast of the Ascension, observed in the archdiocese on
May 20 this year, celebrates the Christ’s mission of
Earth and his entry into heaven.

Take stroke seriously. Learn the signs and risk factors.

Stroke is one of the biggest killers of Americans. And nobody is more at risk than
African-Americans, who are twice as likely to die from a stroke than Caucasians.
The Preventive Medicine Institute is ranked among the top 5 percent in the nation
Some of the risk factors for stroke include high blood pressure, obesity and
diabetes. The signs of stroke vary, but they often include sudden numbness in
the face, arms or legs (especially on one side of the body), sudden confusion and
sudden severe headache.

Learn all the signs of stroke and take a free stroke risk assessment at
KnowYourSigns.org. It only takes about a minute, and it could save your life.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

Do you long for a place where you can go to be still,
a place with a calming and quiet atmosphere,
a place to reflect, rest, renew?

Are you looking for more time away from the
intractions in life to pray, to listen, to be still?

Come to Fatima.

We provide the atmosphere
You provide the willingness to open your heart,
to recognize how God is working in your life.
Let God lead you to a deeper connection
in your dialogue with God.

Join us. You will be very glad you did!

The following silent days will be offered this summer:
June 22 to July 12
8:00 am — 4:00 pm
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**Meet our future deacons**

**Thomas Horn**
- **Age:** 52
- **Wife:** Mary Virginia
- **Parish:** St. Mark the Evangelist
- **Occupation:** Religious studies teacher at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis

Who are the important role models in your life of faith?
- It is certainly all of them with my parents, and has been actively fostered by my uncle, Father Earl Simone. My spiritual director, Father Stephen Bunet, has also become an integral part of spiritual and faith development.

Why do you feel that God is calling you to become a deacon?
- The more time I spend in prayer, the more I am aware of the power and presence of Christ each day. Consequently, the more I seek God and want to pray. Through daily conversations with our Lord and the support of my spiritual director, fellow parishioners, friends and family, my call to the diaconate continues to be affirmed.

How will you be called to a deacon and what will your impact on your life and faith?
- I have been called to a life of discipleship, and I appreciate the support and encouragement of the St. Mark parish staff as well as my students, and so many of my friends and family.

**Steven House**
- **Age:** 64
- **Wife:** Rochelle
- **Parish:** St. Bartholomew
- **Occupation:** Psychologist

Who are the important role models in your life of faith?
- My wife is a deeply faith-filled person. Others include Bob Pfleger, Bill Colclasure, deacon candidate Tony Hilt, Benedictine Father Bede Cisco, and Fathers Clem Davis and Joseph MacNally.

What are your favorite Scripture verses, saints, prayers and devotions?
- My favorite Scripture verses are Philippians 4:4-9, Psalm 51: 12 and Luke 1:68-79. Among my favorite prayers is the “Prayer of St. Francis.” And the Stations of the Cross and eucharistic adoration are favorite devotions of mine.

Deacons often minister to others in the workplace. How have you experienced that already, and what do you anticipate doing in the future?
- I see people in therapy in my work. While I respect clients fully, I offer my religious faith when appropriate. I feel that I do my work because of God’s desire for us to love one another and to serve each other. I have been enriched by the powerful courage I see daily in my clients.

Why do you feel that God is calling you to become a deacon?
- I feel that I was called to the diaconate to do something with my experience and my openness to God. I am unworthy as any other minister will admit, but, as St. Paul says, my weakness is my strength.

How will being ordained a deacon have an impact on your life and family?
- Deacon formation has strengthened the relationships I have with my wife. I intend to continue. Church has always been a major area of our life together, and the diaconate has expanded and enriched this. My three kids are all married and live in the area, which will not impact our relationships that much. However, my daughter and daughter-in-law are both pregnant, so I look forward to the opportunity to baptize some babies. That will be special.

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**New Arizona law cuts off all state funds to abortion providers**

PHOENIX (CNS)—Gov. Jan Brewer signed on May 4 that prevents the state of Arizona or any local government from using taxpayer dollars to contract with organizations that offer abortion as part of their services.

Brewer signed the measure at a reception held in Scottsdale by the Susan B. Anthony List, an organization that works to elect pro-life candidates to public office.

Although state law already prohibits the use of public moneys for abortion, the new law closes loopholes that were allowing some funds to trickle through to abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood.

Ron Johnson, executive director of the Arizona Catholic Conference, was pleased with Brewer’s signature on the bill.

The conference is the public policy arm of the Tucson and Phoenix dioceses, the Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Eparchy of Arizona and the Diocese of Gallup, N.M., which includes northeastern Arizona.

“I am absolutely thrilled that the governor signed House Bill 2800,” Johnson said. “Abortion providers can be very creative in how they use funds and arrange funds, and we wanted to make absolutely sure to close any loopholes.”

Brewer’s signature on H.B. 2800 was the culmination of what Johnson called a “tremendously successful, five-star, pro-life legislative session.”

In April, the governor signed H.B. 2006, a bill that outlawed abortions after 20 weeks, and S.B. 1009, which keeps abortion providers out of major public charter schools.

Rep. Justin Olson, the Republican sponsor of H.B. 2800, and Jenny Peron, one of the founders of the East Valley Pro-Life Alliance, both attended the Susan B. Anthony List reception to witness Brewer sign the measure.

“It was awesome,” Peron said. “We are so happy to be one of nine states that have done this. For the state of Arizona to defund Planned Parenthood is a big step.”

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Interreligious dialogue is crucial for humanity, pope tells Jewish group

By Sean Gallagher

The North American Martyrs, the soccer squad of the Pontifical North American College in Rome, won its first Clericus Cup on May 12 by a 3-0 score against the team fielded by the Pontifical Gregorian University, also in Rome. The Clericus Cup is a soccer tournament held in Rome annually in which teams of the various seminaries there compete against each other.

Seminarian Martin Rodriguez, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, has been a member of the North American College’s team for the past three years. “It feels awesome,” said Rodriguez about winning the Clericus Cup. “It takes a lot of work, commitment and dedication to be part of a competitive league, and to be in formation for the priesthood at the same time.”

“There are many demands but, at the end of the day, when you see your efforts and sacrifices pay off, it is the greatest feeling in the world, especially when all those sacrifices bring happiness to an entire community,” Rodriguez said that many of the North American College seminarians attended their team’s matches to cheer for them. Some showed up in superhero costumes as Superman, Batman or the Incredible Hulk.

“We definitely have the best cheering section in the entire cup,” Rodriguez said. “Their support was helpful because we knew that we were not on the field alone.”

In their semifinal match, the North American Martyrs defeated archrival Redemptoris Mater, which had blocked their way to a championship the previous two years.

“In the past years against them, we always lost by one goal,” Rodriguez said. “We knew that they were a very good team, but this year we also had very good players to compete with them. When we finally defeated them, it was like a psychological block was removed.”

Rodriguez, who is a reserve forward and midfielder on the team, is scheduled to be ordained a transitional deacon on June 23 at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. He said that being a part of the Clericus Cup has contributed to his priestly formation, especially in helping him to appreciate more the role of personal sacrifice in ordained ministry.

“We had in our minds that we were running for each other, offering up our pain and sweat for our brothers on the team,” Rodriguez said. “When I felt that my legs were about to collapse, I thought about my teammates who were injured and needed me to step up for them.”

The other members of the North American Martyrs are affiliated with dioceses across the country and one diocese in Australia. Rodriguez looks forward to building on his already strong relationships with them.

“After I leave the North American College, I am going to have friends all over the United States, and it makes me feel that I’ll have a home everywhere [that] I go,” he said. “In addition, having friends in different dioceses can help me to interchange ideas about ministry. It’s no longer just how does my priest friend do ministry next door, but how other guys in other dioceses do ministry. This can bring a lot of benefits for my ministry in the near future.”

Rodriguez won’t leave the North American College, however, until after the 2012-13 academic year. At this point, he wants to win another Clericus Cup.

“I love playing soccer, and I am looking forward to defending the cup next year,” Rodriguez said. “We definitely want this to be the beginning of a dynasty.”

Interreligious dialogue is crucial for humanity, pope tells Jewish group

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Reaffirming the Second Vatican Council’s teaching on Christianity’s special relationship with Judaism, Pope Benedict XVI said Catholic-Jewish dialogue is “crucial for the future of our human family.”

“In a world increasingly threatened by the loss of spiritual and moral values, which are those that can guarantee respect for human dignity and lasting peace,” dialogue, friendship and collaboration can “give prophetic witness to the power of the truth of God, justice and reconciling love for the good of all mankind,” the pope said.

Meeting on May 10 with a delegation from the Latin American Jewish Congress, the pope also spoke about the 50th anniversary in October of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

He said “Nostra Aetate,” the council’s declaration on the Church’s relationship with non-Christian religions, “remains the basis and guide in our efforts to promote greater understanding, respect and cooperation between our two communities.”

The document, he said, “not only took a clear stand against all forms of anti-Semitism, but also laid the foundations for a new theological evaluation of the relationship between the Church and Judaism, and expressed confidence that the appreciation of the spiritual heritage shared by Jews and Christians would lead to greater understanding and mutual respect.”

Thanking God for improved Catholic-Jewish relations around the world, Pope Benedict said the communities must continue their commitment to dialogue because “much remains to be done in overcoming the burdens of the past, in promoting better relations between our two communities, and in responding to the challenges facing more and more believers in the world today.”

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