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Catholic press must serve as prophets by spreading the Good News

By Mary Ann Garber

Prophets speak to “the truth of things,” Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, reminded Catholic Media Conference participants during his homily for the opening liturgy on June 20 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis.

“Communicators imbued with the Catholic faith also serve as prophets by their commitment,” he explained. “In the grand scheme of things as Catholic communicators, we join in the prophetic mission of the Church.

“… The call to be heralds and prophets of the Good News through various avenues of communication in the modern world, he told the Catholic journalists. “We all have, in fact, called by name, from within the community, and imbued with the Spirit to speak to the truth of Jesus Christ.” Bishop Coyne said “… the call to be heralds and prophets of the kingdom of God is one that is shared by virtue of our common baptism.

“While this varies according to degree and office, as laity and ordained, each of us is still missioned to a prophetic role to speak the truth of the Catholic Church,” he said.

“Today, as in the past, our community needs to hear that message of truth loud and clear. That is the work that you all do so well.

“Throughout the various means of communications, we join in the prophetic act of speaking to the truth of Christ’s salvific mission to all men and women.”

Citing a formation for journalists for the Archdiocese of Boston and current role as bishop, he offered four points of advice to Catholic journalists that he finds helpful in public communications.

“First, always take the high road to effectively fulfill the prophetic role of being a good Catholic communicator, Bishop Coyne said. “By this, I mean always be polite, never respond in kind, do not make any more enemies than one already has in these matters and, most importantly, don’t send an angry e-mail written completely in capital letters until you’ve slept on it overnight.”

“Second, effective communication also requires always staying on the topic, he said. “Stay on topic. This absolutely applies to answering media questions, but it also applies in the greater scheme of life.

“And what might that topic be for us applicants?” Bishop Coyne asked.

“That God the Father so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son that we may have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).

“In the grand scheme of things as Catholic communicators, isn’t the overall topic the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and what that means for the world?” he asked. “Staying on this topic really does allow us to keep our actions and words directed toward him.

“Third, in the midst of any task, pause and ask, ‘Is this what I am doing up building or tearing down?” he added. “In asking this question, I think St. Paul’s admonition to the Ephesians to ‘say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them” (Eph 5:29).

“That doesn’t mean not speaking the truth about evil or sin, he said, because Jesus was outspoken in his attacks on hypocrisy and sin.

“In that sense, we are building up by tearing down when we tear down evil and replace it with the good,” Bishop Coyne explained. “But my admonition is more to avoid at all times the ‘attack’ mentality that sadly permeates much of our public discourse today. One way in which this plays out positively is trying to communicate as much as we can what it is we are ‘for’ rather than what we are ‘against.’

“Fourth, he said, the teachings and life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, one of the great doctors of the Church, through her ‘little way’ offer wonderful examples for communicators who serve the prophetic mission of the Church.

“I would like to see her become the patron saint of the new social communications because she offers in her little way a way for us to keep our work in focus,” Bishop Coyne said. “In her ‘little way’ she tells us to first live out our days with confidence in God’s love and to recognize that each day is a gift in which one’s life can make a difference by the way we choose to live it.

“Out of this comes the admonition to see every little task or moment in life as an opportunity to make concrete the love of God,” he said. “Think about that in terms of what we do. Every news story, every piece, every blog post, every tweet or e-mail or response to comment boxes can become an opportunity to manifest God’s love if we commit ourselves to loving.”

Bishop Coyne encouraged Catholic communicators ministry, nursing homes and with the homebound.

Deacon Thomas Hill, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and Pregnancy Care Centers of South-Central Indiana.

Deacon Thomas Horn, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh and Edinburgh Correctional Facility.

Deacon James Miller, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at the Richmond Catholic Community parishes of St. Andrew, St. Mary and Holy Family in Richmond, and Richmond nursing homes.

Deacon Ronald Pirau, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, Johnson County Jail, and Doms Ministry for Johnson County and the south side of Indianapolis.

Deacon Jeffrey Powell, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, and with Our Lady of Perpetual Help parishioners at the hospital and nursing homes in Floyd County.

Deacon Richard Renzi, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg and The Bods and Britches Eic. Program.

Deacon Frank Roberts, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at the Richmond Catholic Community parishes of St. Andrew, St. Mary and Holy Family in Richmond, and Richmond nursing homes.

Deacon Michael Sliger, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at St. Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis and as an archdiocesan Metropolitan Tribunal field associate.

Deacon Richard Wagner, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis and Helping Our Own People (HOOP) Outreach to the homeless.

Deacon Russell Woodard, ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 23, 2012, appointed to ministry at St. Anne Parish in New Castle, St. Rose of Lima Parish in Knightstown and the New Castle Correctional Facility in New Castle.

These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.
Deacons will serve the Church well.

two new deacons from Richmond

the dignity that Ron did."

hope that I can serve ... with half

Deacon Roberts said. “I'm quite

Stier's dalmatic on him.

classes in the deacon formation

He died of cancer six weeks after

first class of permanent deacons.

Deacon Ronald Stier, was with him
closely to the altar, they will

the Apostles, and bound more

sacramental ministry of the new

“partners” in their husbands’

ministry.

He also spoke about how the

congregation of the new deacons will be

homely and described them as ‘partners’ in their husbands’

ordination. "But now we are really

fulfilled, [and] we have been blessed.

my mom and dad grow

Joey Garcia, her fiancé, exchange

Church in Indianapolis as she and

Laura Wagner had a second-row

services. At Mass, they will be able

IMMIGRATION

students who are American in all but

law, Washington or the states, is far from

fight over who should make immigration

stronger and it is far from certain what will

solutions, and that Congress must pass

ImmigrationWorks USA

said a statement by ImmigrationWorks USA

“show me your papers”

nation."

as a victory for the state. Nor can an

three out of four provisions of a state’s law

that “will result in the harassment of

even U.S. citizens, and place

immigrants and even U.S. citizens, and place

saying that it “will result in the harassment of

grandmother or little brother can be walking

facts that is attributed to illegal

nation.”

The federal government can put an end

the mother of transitional Deacon

Horn prays during the diaconate

Horn prays during the diaconate

above, St. Michael parishioner

Irene Marcotte of Greenfield, left, the mother of transitional Deacon

Douglas Marcotte, and St. Pius X

parishioner Carol Wagner of

Indianapolis, the wife of permanent

Deacon Richard Wagner, carry

vestments during the procession on June 23 at St. Peter and Paul

Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Right, permanent Deacon Thomas

Horn prays during the diaconate

ordination liturgy on June 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in

Indianapolis.

ʻ“I hope they go out there

and change the world.ʻ Deacon Blandford said. “That’s what they’re here for, to be Christ’s

hands in the world. And these guys are really capable of it.”

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www.svdpindy.org

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

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Indianapolis, IN 46218

Or donate online at

www.svdpindy.org

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• Music by “Too Hot Tacos”

Sunday, July 15

11 a.m.-9 p.m.

Chicken Dinner 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Carry-out til 6 p.m.

• Country Store • Raffle & Games • Bingo & Kids’ Area

• Beer Garden & Live Entertainment

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St. John's - Dover

Monday, June 26, 2012
Faith is professed into the Revolution, and the establishment you took in the accomplishment of Bishop Carroll, acknowledging the father of the American Navy—and, Franco, Thaddeus Kosciusko, Barba von Steuben, John Paul Jones—importantly to the Revolutionary War the capital in Washington, donating a of the signers of the U.S. Constitution. 1789, and was one of Congress from 1780 to 1784, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1789, and was one of the signers of the U.S. Constitution. Later, he helped lay out the site of the capital in Washington, donating a quarter of the land for the capital. Catholics who contributed importantly to the Revolutionary War include the Marquis de Lafayette from France, Thaddeus Kosciusko, Baron von Steuben, John Paul Jones—the father of the American Navy—and, here in Indiana, Father Peter Gihubat. When he was elected as president, Washington wrote to Bishop Carroll, acknowledging the role that Catholics played in the fight for independence. “I presume that your fellow citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their Revolution, and the establishment of your Government.” In those words, he spoke of an important assistance which they received from a nation in which the Roman Catholic Faith is professed. “With a view to the help received from France,” he wrote. Washington’s secretary and aide-de-camp was a Catholic as was his master general-major. A portrait of the Blessed Virgin held a prominent place in the leeward apartment of the home in Mount Vernon. 

Be Our Guest

Letter to the Editor

Stop the attacks on the sanctity of human life while we still have the chance

Since late January when President Barack Obama’s Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) first announced they would force religious institutions to provide free access to contraception, abortion-causing drugs and sterilizations, Catholics and other religious leaders have done an admirable job of defending our religious freedom and the sanctity of the unborn. Unfortunately, while the Church was giving a great deal of attention to this unprecedented attack, HHS quietly issued a new regulation. This new mandate represents what is likely the largest expansion of abortion since Roe v. Wade. Here is how it works. On Jan. 1, 2014, when we will all be required to purchase the same coverage, the federal government will begin subsidizing that coverage based on our annual income. Everyone whose income falls below 400 percent of the federal poverty level, or less than $92,000 for a family of four, will have our health care premiums subsidized. The subsidies are not a guarantee of continuous or purchase coverage through our jobs. These subsidies come at an extremely high moral cost for you and me, however, and unborn babies will pay the ultimate price. As soon as the government money starts flowing, HHS will charge a monthly fee to cover so-called “abortion services.” As unbelievable as this abortion funding is, it gets worse. Pro-life legal experts have pointed out that we will all be required to pay the abortion surcharge with every monthly premium. None of us can opt out, and it is illegal for insurance companies to list the surcharge as a separate line item on our monthly bills. As far as HHS is concerned, this is the perfect scheme to force us to pay for all abortions, and most people will not even realize it. One can do to stop these abortion mandates? First, learn all you can. An excellent resource is www.LifeNews.com. This article gives more details about the abortion surcharge. Read more at http://www.lifenews.com/2012/06/05/400-of-the-federal-poverty-level-or-less-than-92-000-for-a-family-of-four-will-have-our-health-care-premiums-subsidized-the-subsidies-are-not-a-guarantee-of-continuous-or-purchase-coverage-through-our-jobs-these-subsidies-come-at-an-extremely-high-moral-cost-for-you-and-me-however-and-unborn-babies-will-pay-the-ultimate-price-as-soon-as-the-government-money-starts-flowing-hhs-will-charge-a-monthly-fee-to-cover-so-called-abortion-services-as-unbelievable-as-this-abortion-funding-is-it-gets-worse-pro-life-legal-experts-have-pointed-out-that-we-will-all-be-required-to-pay-the-abortion-surcharge-with-every-monthly-premium-none-of-us-can-opt-out-and-it-is-illegal-for-insurance-companies-to-list-the-surcharge-as-a-separate-line-item-on-our-monthly-bills-as-far-as-hhs-is-concerned-this-is-the-perfect-scheme-to-force-us-to-pay-for-all-abortions-and-most-people-will-not-even-realize-it.  

Second, contact your representatives in Congress. Ask them to sponsor legislation to repeal Obamacare, and encourage your senators to provide more sensible health care reform.  

Next, cast your vote for pro-life candidates who will protect your religious freedom. Finally, pray for the conversion of pro-abortion leaders in our government. Now is the time to stop these attacks on the sanctity of human life while we still have the chance.
President not a horse race; election hinges on economic interests

WASHINGTON (CNS)—With more than four months until the presidential election, pundits and pollsters are producing a steady stream of predictions about the outcome. Each day’s major news is parsed for how it might affect the race.

Administrative decision to allow some undocumented immigrants to stay? Improves President Barack Obama’s standing with Latinos.

Unemployment numbers for the month show little change? Improves the prospects of the presumptive Republican nominee, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

Or so the pollsters and pundits would have us believe.

Never mind that predictions are meaningless until voters go to the polls on Nov. 6 or start posting their mail-in ballots in October. Especially in a world where news is summed up into tweet-size bits, campaign coverage is dominated by the horse race—who is in front right this minute based on the influences of the day.

But as explained by panels of speakers at two recent forums, the answer to who will be president next year is far more complex than what can fit into a nugget of information.

In this election, most people will focus on how the economy is affecting them personally, said Peter A. Brown, assistant director of Quinnipiac University’s Polling Institute, at a May 31 program sponsored by National Journal Live.

Brown said that “economy” to most people includes factors such as unemployment, debt and the cost of health care. Whatever happens with the Affordable Care Act in light of the Supreme Court’s expected ruling this month, “it’s going to be impossible to know how that’s going to translate into voter preferences,” he said.

In another session, Richard Danzig, chairman of the Center for a New American Security and a former senior adviser to Obama, said although it looks at the moment like there may be about the economy, “it’s going to be important that both candidates talk about their preferred ways of controlling health care costs,” Brown said.

The all-important swing voters, whose election priorities don’t fit neatly with one candidate, “will be the problem,” he said.

In a third session, Margaret Steinfels, co-director of the Fordham University Center on Religion and Culture and former editor of the magazine Commonweal, looked at the coming election as emanating from or, put another way, the political reality that Catholics and evangelicals are a factor.

But ultimately, they also came around to discuss that, as Dionne is fond of saying, “there’s no such thing as a Catholic vote and it will decide the election.”

Dionne cited several recent polls to note that while Catholics and evangelicals will likely vote more for Romney, that Latino Catholics and evangelicals will likely favor Obama, and that the eventual winner will have a majority of votes from Catholics overall, as has been the case in nearly every election for generations.

He and Gerson agreed that the results of the election will depend upon small segments of voters, who will be swayed in their decision by a combination of factors.

Although evangelicals have historically been a Republican base, Gerson said support for Romney is “not where it was for Bush.” Though there is intense dislike for Obama among many evangelical voters, there isn’t comparable support for Romney that will necessarily translate into voter turnout, he said.

“There’s some distrust of Romney on cultural issues,” for example, among conservatives who don’t quite believe Romney will represent their interests on issues such as same-sex marriage, he added.

Steinfels said she is struck by the apparent lack of outreach to religious groups by the Obama campaign, particularly in light of his 2008 campaign’s major work with Catholics and evangelicals.

“I don’t see a White House effort to woo the religious vote,” she noted. “The Republicans aren’t doing it either, but maybe they hope the Catholic bishops will do this for them.”

The U.S. Catholic bishops have taken on a very public battle with the Obama administration over provisions of the Affordable Care Act and how it is being implemented. They also have an ongoing campaign to support traditional marriage, while Obama recently announced that he has come to believe that same-sex marriage should be legal.

And while there has been much discussion in the country about whether Romney’s Mormon religion will be a factor for voters, Dionne noted that Romney did better among Catholics in the primary elections than some Catholic candidates did.

Dionne observed that no matter who wins the election, it will be a very close vote, which holds long-term implications for the whole country.

“It’s hard to see either candidate winning by more than 53 percent of the vote,” he said, “but maybe we’ll see a very divided country still. We should start thinking about how to, at least stop despising each other quite so much.”

What was in the news on June 29, 1962?

The separation of Church and state comes to a head at the Supreme Court

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 June 29, 1962, issue of The Criterion.

• High court strikes down New York school prayer
• The Criterion's 12th Anniversary Sale
• Free Service Call
• Spring Air Conditioner & Heat Pump Sale
• Council's agenda, pontiff urges bishops

Editorial: The decision that shook up, folks. We have a hunch the United States will survive the Supreme Court decision forbidding prayer in the public schools. Our own first reaction to it was to moan and groan, but the more we think about it the more we feel that this decision is what the country has needed for some time. Sort of like a sharp slap in the face that brings a hysterical person back to his senses. … But the great contribution this decision can make to the sanity of the nation is to wake the people up to what the Supreme Court did to the law of this land back in 1947. That’s when Justice Black (in the Everson vs. Board of Education decision) concluded from the metaphor of the wall of separation between Church and State that, contrary to the traditional practice of the nation, not one penny of tax money could be used to promote or benefit religion. From that moment, the public schools became irreligious in theory. …

• Asks special apostolate for family life groups
• Church urged to use TV to ‘introduce’ the Faith
• Orthodox official speaks on reunion
• Preparatory phase closes Study Council’s agenda, pontiff urges bishops

(Read all of these stories from our June 29, 1962, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com)
Recovery Weekend.”
Awhile—Silent Non-Guided Day of
“Come Away and Rest
56th St., Indianapolis.
July 12
Columba Kelly, presenter. Information:
God in Song,” session two, Benedictine Father
St. Meinrad.

Information: 812-357-6585 or
mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu
Dave Maloney, presenter. Information:
marcia.johnson@archindy.org

St. Joseph Parish, 111 S.
Ninth St., Terre Haute. Parish
festival, 5 p.m.–midnight,
games, food, $2 adults.
Children free. Information:
317-823-4821.

St. Roch Parish, Family Life
Center, 3603 S. Meridian St.,
Indianapolis. Single Senior
meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and
over. Information:
317-784-4207.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat
House, 5355 E. 56th St.,
Indianapolis. Discalced
Carmelites Junior Retreat
meeting, noon. Information:
317-545-7681.

St. Benedict Parish, 111 S.
Ninth St., Terre Haute. Parish
festival, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.,
games, food. Information:
7-9 p.m. Information:
317-783-7742.

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N.
14th St., Terre Haute. Parish
mass, 9:30 a.m. Information:
317-823-4821.

St. Ambrose Parish, 5353 E.
56th St., Indianapolis. “Swing Fore Seniors”
go基金raising event on July 20
at Ironwood Golf Club,
10455 East Road, Fishers, Ind.
Registration begins at 10:30 a.m.
Lunch is served at 11:15 a.m.
followed by a shotgun start for the event at
noon then dinner to conclude the fundraiser,
which benefits the St. Augustine Church.
Floyds Knoebel. Parish picnic,
10 a.m.–4 p.m., chicken dinner,
games, splash. Information:
317-923-5419.

Richmond Catholic
Community, 70 N. “A” St.,
Richmond. Charismatic
prayer group, 7 p.m.
Information:
ticknock@yahoo.com

Archbishop Edward
T. O’Meara Catholic Center,
Assembly Hall, 1400 N.
Meridian St., Indianapolis.
Archidiocesan Office of
Family Ministries and
Metropolitan Tribunal,
“Announcements—The Real
Story,” 7-9 p.m. Information:
317-236-1586, 800-382-9836,
ext. 1586, or
dvanvelse@archindy.org

Cathedral School of
Aurum, 5225 S. 56th St.,
Indianapolis. Immaculate
Bibagaza, Rwandan genocide
survivor and author, 7-9 p.m.,
$25 per person. Information:
317-545-7681 or
Fatima@archindy.org

Little Sisters of the Poor to sponsor
“Swing Fore Seniors’ on July 20
The Little Sisters of the Poor, who operate the St. Augustine Home for the
Aged in Indianapolis, are sponsoring
their 14th annual “Swing Fore Seniors”
golf outing fundraising event on
July 20 at Ironwood Golf Club,
10455 East Road, Fishers, Ind.
Registration begins at 10:30 a.m.
Lunch is served at 11:15 a.m.
followed by a shotgun start for the event at
noon then dinner to conclude the fundraiser,
which benefits the St. Augustine Church.
Lunch and dinner are provided by
Ruth’s Chris Steak House.
A single registration is $160.
Regular foursomes are $660. Corporate
tournaments are $920. Other
sponsorships are also available.
For more information, call
Mary Anne Barothe at
7-9 p.m. Information:
317-545-7681 or
marcia.johnson@archindy.org

Little Sisters of the Poor
Church in Bristol, Conn. They are
the parents of five children: Katy Dukes,
Robin Langston, Cheryl Oddi-Smith, Andrea and
Kara Oddi. They also have
nine grandchildren.

Church of the Holy Family
in south Bend, Ind. They are
the parents of the late Frank and Judith
Gerzenick.

Church in South Bend, Ind. They are
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Robin Langston, Cheryl Oddi-Smith, Andrea and
Kara Oddi. They also have
nine grandchildren.
Two future priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis were ordained transitional deacons during the same June 23 liturgy at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis among which 16 men were ordained permanent deacons.

Deacon Douglas Marcotte, a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, and Deacon Martin Rodriguez, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, expect to be ordained to the priesthood in June 2013. Deacon Rodriguez’s mother, was moved when she saw Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, ritually lay hands on her son’s head.

“I was just thinking about how Jesus was there with all of us,” she said. “Doug had finally arrived. He had made it to that point of becoming a deacon. Next year, he’ll become a priest.”

Deacon Marcotte was pleased to be ordained alongside 16 permanent deacons.

“Their presence is an impressive witness to us married men,” Deacon Rodriguez said. “It is also exciting to think that someday soon it is very likely that I will be serving side by side with them in our parishes.”

Deacon Rodriguez said he was surprised by how calm he was during the liturgy. “I definitely feel the support of the entire community,” he said. “I was just thinking about how Jesus was with us the entire day, how good God has been to me throughout my life.”

Deacon Rodriguez said he was surprised by how calm he was during the liturgy. “I definitely feel the support of the entire community,” he said. “I kept thinking about how Jesus was with us the entire day, how good God has been to me throughout my life.”

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Deacon Rodriguez was impressed by the permanent deacons’ choice to be doubly committed in their lives of faith. “They have already made a commitment as married men,” Deacon Rodriguez said. “And now they’re making another commitment to serve the Church, which is impressive. It serves as a witness to us as married men.”

At the same time, permanent Deacon Richard Cooper of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville said being ordained alongside two future priests put his own ministry in a broader context.

“It is not just about us,” Deacon Cooper said. “It’s about Christ’s work. We’re all a part of his work. That’s what we’re here to do. It’s nice to share that with them. And some day, we may serve with them.”

(For more information on ordinations to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.HearGodCall.com)
Permanent deacon candidate Russell Woodard, parish life coordinator of St. Ann Parish in New Castle and St. Rose Parish in Knightstown, smiles as he listens to Bishop Christopher J. Coyne's homily during the diaconate ordination Mass on June 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

Permanent Deacon Kerry Blandford, director of deacon formation, and permanent Deacon Michael East, director of deacon formation.

Permanent Deacon Frank Roberts shares a happy moment with Donna Stier after the June 23 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

Permanent deacon candidates and their wives and transitional deacon candidates and their parents lead a procession into a filled SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis at the start of the June 23 Mass during which the candidates were ordained.

The wedding bands of several permanent deacon candidates are shown while they listen to Bishop Christopher J. Coyne's homily during the June 23 ordination Mass.

Permanent Deacon Richard Wagner of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis smiles while Fathers Gerald Kirkhoff, left, and James Farrell place a dalmatic on him during the June 23 ordination Mass.

The 16 newest archdiocesan permanent deacons pose on June 23 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis after the ordination Mass. Shown with them are Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator; Benedictine Father Bede Claus, former archdiocesan director of deacons and deacon formation; permanent Deacon Kerry Blandford, director of deacon formation, and permanent Deacon Michael East, director of deacon formation.

The wedding bands of several permanent deacon candidates are shown while they listen to Bishop Christopher J. Coyne's homily during the June 23 ordination Mass.

Permanent Deacon Richard Wagner of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis smiles while Fathers Gerald Kirkhoff, left, and James Farrell place a dalmatic on him during the June 23 ordination Mass.
When Jessica Reed thinks about God, she feels happy and is reminded of her wonderful friends in the archdiocesan Special Religious Development Program (SPRED), who have helped her learn about her Catholic faith and grow closer to Jesus as a young adult with a disability.

The SPRED participant and member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis likes to pray and wants people to know about her love for the Lord.

During the 14th annual archdiocesan SPRED liturgy on June 10 at St. Lawrence Church in Indianapolis, she was excited to receive the sacrament of confirmation, which is possible for her and for us to see her be initiated as a member of the Church.

Leia's mother, Melanie Stone, lovingly held her face as Msgr. Joseph Schaedel anointed her with holy chrism oil in the sacrament of confirmation.

Later in the liturgy, her mother helped her again as Deacon Thomas Ward placed a small piece of the Body of Christ on her tongue.

“Leia consumes very little orally so we arranged in advance for her to receive a fractional piece of the Host that had been intinctured in the Blood of Christ,” Deacon Ward said. “I had the exorbitant blessing of being able to help her consume the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the first time on the feast of Corpus Christi. What a monumental thing to do, and how lucky I am.

“Parishes that have the wherewithal to support a SPRED program are demonstrating their spirituality,” he said. “It is an awesome obligation and an honor, but it takes a lot of support from the people who are involved in it, and it’s not something that is easy to do. It requires a lot of training for the [volunteer] catechists and the leaders, and also a profound commitment. What I have observed is that the catechists bond so tightly with their SPRED friends. It’s amazing to see that bonding.”

Msgr. Schaedel, the principal celebrant and pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, has supported the SPRED ministry for many years as has Father Thomas Schliessmann, who consecrated the Mass and is pastor of St. Lawrence Parish.

During his homily, Msgr. Schaedel held up a cell phone to illustrate his message that God wants to talk with us in prayer and stay close to us through the Eucharist.

“I can call people that are far away that I can’t see,” he said. “…Jesus, when he left Earth, gave us a way that he could stay in touch with us—holy Communion. … It’s a miracle that Jesus keeps in touch with us through the holy Eucharist, and that’s the feast we celebrate today.

Every time that we celebrate the Eucharist at the altar, Msgr. Schaedel explained, “somehow, some way, invisibly, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus comes and he is present to us. When we receive him in holy Communion, we can all talk to him privately at one time. … He hears us and we hear him if we listen quietly. That’s the great gift—the Body and Blood of Jesus—given to us in the holy Eucharist so we can stay in touch.”

Kara Favata, assistant director of special religious education for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, said after the liturgy that it’s an honor to help with the Church’s ministry to people with disabilities.

“They are very devout,” she said, “and it’s a blessing … to be able to be a part of their lives. They show us the meaning of Communion.” ♦

Deacon Thomas Ward poses for pictures with Leia Stone, a St. Simon the Apostle parishioner and SPRED participant, after the archdiocesan Special Religious Development Mass on June 10 at St. Lawrence Church in Indianapolis. Leia also received first Communion by intinction during the 14th annual archdiocesan Special Religious Development Mass.

By Mary Ann Garber

St. Simon the Apostle parishioner and SPRED participant Jessica Reed of Indianapolis and S.P.R.E.D. participant Leia Stone of Indianapolis during the sacrament of confirmation on June 10 at St. Lawrence Church in Indianapolis. Leia also received first Communion by intinction during the 14th annual archdiocesan Special Religious Development Mass.

The SPRED liturgy helps participants grow closer to God

A SPRED participant from St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, Leia Stone, was excited to be initiated into the sacraments was an emotional time for her and for us to see her be initiated as a member of the Church.

“Leia consumes very little orally so we arranged in advance for her to receive a fractional piece of the Host that had been intinctured in the Blood of Christ,” Deacon Ward said. “I had the exorbitant blessing of being able to help her consume the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the first time on the feast of Corpus Christi. What a monumental thing to do, and how lucky I am.

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Within the context of the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, take time to “Be still...” (Psalm 46:10)

Join us for a 3, 4, or 5-day directed silent retreat...

Deacon Daniel Collier also assisted with the liturgy.

Deacon Daniel Collier also assisted with the liturgy.
Happiness is ultimately found in doing God’s will

By Dan Luby

Bedrock to Christian faith is the conviction that to be human is to be built for happiness. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, arguably the two most influential theologians in the history of the Church, agree that a desire for happiness is hard-wired into human character. But contemporary psychological researchers like Dr. June Gruber at Yale University are getting a lot of attention lately with claims that happiness has a “dark side.”

This observation, rooted in social scientific studies on “positive feelings” and “personal success,” centers on the conviction that we can be “too happy,” and that too sharp a focus on “the pursuit of happiness” actually gets in the way of the very happiness that we seek. Gruber and her colleagues note that the search for happiness as an end in itself is almost always self-defeating. They speak of it in terms of elevated affective expectations that cannot always be met and lead to more acute disappointment, even more intense pursuit of happiness, loftier expectations, sharper sense of loss, etc. Such a spiral of failed hopes can lead to depression, even despair.

Researchers also note that a focus on happiness, understood as positive feelings of contentment and satisfaction, can lead to social isolation. Preoccupation with our needs and happiness crowds out concerns for the needs and happiness of others.

The prescription for an overzealous pursuit of happiness, as these studies see it, is moderation. Scaling back expectations, monitoring our own happiness less intently, and giving up a little self-satisfaction for the satisfaction of friends and family are some of the ways that people can avoid the pitfalls of “too much happiness.”

Underneath this common-sense approach, Christian discipleship offers a deeper vision that sheds light on the issue of our contemporary understanding of happiness. At the heart of the human dilemma is not an excess of happiness—not too much of happiness.

The happiness—also called “beatitude” or “blessedness”—that Jesus offers is more than simply the absence of conflict. It is more than mere comfort, more than an abundance of pleasure or positive feelings. Jesus’ vision is one that recognizes the transience of such passing satisfactions—as good as they may be in themselves. The vision of happiness he offers is a paradoxical one, identified with poverty and grief, with the bestowal of mercy and the yearning for justice, with meekness and peace and purity of heart. It is a happiness rooted, not in passing circumstances and sensations, but in communion with Jesus and his Father and their Spirit. It is a happiness that consists of living according to the purpose for which we were made. The Gospel that Jesus proclaims and embodies in his person is summed up in his image of the “kingdom of God.” It is a reality in which God’s will—God’s deepest desires and fondest hopes for the universe—is fulfilled. The kingdom is that condition in which what God wants is finally and fully accomplished.

Our purpose—as human beings and as friends and disciples of Jesus—is to recognize and embrace more passionately God’s vision for the world. Our purpose is to participate in Jesus’ mission to bring about the kingdom. When we seek happiness on our own, as if we could be happy apart from our communion with God and with those God loves, we are attempting to “repurpose” ourselves. When we make our own satisfaction and comfort the end for which we hope, we may be reinscribing ourselves in novel, even creative ways, but such reframing of reality will not bring us happiness, now or later.

The good news is that the happiness Jesus promises is already ours as a gift. God already loves us. His kingdom of peace and mercy, of healing and reconciliation and joyous communion, is not yet fully visible, but we can count on its ultimate completion and appearance. The good news is that we can rejoice now—even in the midst of sorrow and obscurity—because, as Jesus reassures us, “the kingdom of God is among you” (Lk 17:21).

As with what we are pursuing when we pursue happiness. This is where the pop culture image of “repossessing,” converting something for use in another format or product, might shed some light. At the beginning of the section of St. Matthew’s Gospel known as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes clear that the happiness to which we are called by God does not match customary expectations of happiness.

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(Dan Luby is Tschope Chair of Homiletics at the School of Ministry of the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas.)

By Rhina Guidos

What makes people happy? The answer depends on the person.

But on the side of an abandoned building in New Orleans, artist Candy Chang may have found a forum for those answers.

She saw the space as the perfect place to display a work of art. But it didn’t involve the murals typically found in cities.

With chalkboard paint, she stenciled in the sentence: Before I die I want to... The space was left for passers-by to write in chalk whatever they wanted to express.

The popularity of the project has now sprung similar walls around the world, including cities such as Amsterdam, Queretaro, Mexico and London. They are cropping up, too, in cities around the United States.

The responses are a fascinating gathering of people’s hopes and dreams. It also is a wide, varied view of what so many believe can bring them happiness.

Looking at the responses in photos of the different walls, it’s easy to note patterns peculiar to cities.

In Chicago, people want to meet certain celebrities before they die, from basketball star LeBron James to singer Rihanna.

In Minneapolis, happiness is literally more down to earth as someone scribbled in “to have a farm.”

Washington, D.C.’s wall also showed its flavor when someone wrote, “Before I die, I want to be chief of staff.”

The Washington Post, in a May 9 story, noted a comment from passer-by Laconte Saunders about what he thought was missing from the wall.

“There’s one thing that no one’s saying,” the newspaper reported Saunders as suggesting. “Accept Jesus Christ as their Savior—that’s the most important thing.”

Yet, the Minneapolis wall had answers such as “see the Gospel spread” and “witness someone fall in love with Christ.”

Minneapolis had one of the longest answers, which was “marry a God-fearing woman and have at least one boy named Sven and one girl named something that starts with a P.”

“Before I die I want a peaceful Mexico,” someone scribbled on the wall at Paseo de Amantes in Queretaro, where the same request was repeated several times along with the chilling “Before I die, I want to kill my father’s brothers.”

By far, the most popular responses included the need to love and be loved, to have money, lots of it, to travel and to have children.

Chang, the artist who started it all, said she never believed the wall would have such an impact.

On her website, www.candychang.com, she wrote about the project and said it has helped her understand others in new ways.

“By having more ways to share our hopes, fears and stories in public space, the people around us can not only help us make better places, they can help us lead better lives,” she wrote.

(Rhina Guidos is an associate editor at Catholic News Service.)

Wall art shows broad vision of happiness around the world

The most popular responses on artist Candy Chang’s wall art include the need to love and be loved.
Faith and Family

In his bedroom, the elders of Israel asked forces battled Ishbaal's men. David also lived in Hebron while his father, Jesse, was alive. David became king of the Judahites when he was 30 years old and reigned for 7½ years. He lived in Hebron for the first 3½ years of his reign. After that, he moved to Jerusalem. During this time, he had any daughters, they are not mentioned. When the Israelites started to move the Ark to the home of Obededom, it began to rain on the Ark. The elders of Israel asked David to bring the Ark to the home of Obededom. David became king of the Israelites after Saul's death. Saul's son, Ishbaal, succeeded him. Only the tribe of Judah recognized David as king. David did not become the king of Israel immediately. He was anointed as king by Samuel, but he did not become king until his father, Jesse, was alive. When David heard that the Ark had arrived, he and his men danced with abandon clothed in a linen garment. Jesus is the Son of David. This promise will become the basis for messianic expectations by the Jewish people. The criterion for messianic expectations by the Jewish people was that the Messiah would be a descendant of David. For a normally healthy person, 48 hours of gut-wrenching illness provides a time to assess the blessings of good health. Often taken for granted, health suddenly becomes a valued commodity at 2:30 in the morning when you are sick and trying not to wake up any family members. When I looked at my calendar, I realized I had a free afternoon. I went to an encounter with some delicious but suspect blackberries, in which I overindulged, I am now suddenly brought her intense sorrow and unyielding pain into greater perspective. When I closed my eyes, I suddenly called to mind that my self-pity, I suddenly called to mind that I have a healing touch, but the devotion to Christ helps us to re-create brokenness in our lives. Christ helps us to re-create brokenness in our lives.

As Catholics, we survived an era when we were weighed down by guilt. We joke about “Catholic guilt,” but a constant sense of sin in our lives leaves little room for what’s primary—the great, forgiving love of the Father. For information about religious liberty that you can pass on to your children, log on to www.archindy.org/fortnight. Now I’m telling those same stories to my young son. I am teaching them about the meaning of religious liberty for their lives, the life of the Church and the life of society. For information about religious liberty that you can pass on to your children, log on to www.archindy.org/fortnight. Now I’m telling those same stories to my young son. I am teaching them about the meaning of religious liberty for their lives, the life of the Church and the life of society. For information about religious liberty that you can pass on to your children, log on to www.archindy.org/fortnight. Now I’m telling those same stories to my young son. I am teaching them about the meaning of religious liberty for their lives, the life of the Church and the life of society.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, July 1, 2012

- 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15
- Mark 5:21-43

When the Book of Wisdom, the source of the first reading, was written the plight of God’s people was not good.

Many people had left the Holy Land. Going everywhere, they retained their ethnic and religious identity, and often therefore made themselves seem quite different. The author of Wisdom took pains to insist that God does not design the hardships that come upon people. Human sin creates evil.

God’s justice and goodness always will prevail. It may take time for goodness to triumph, just as it takes a ship time to right itself when struck by the strong waves of a turbulent sea. But right will prevail because God’s justice will prevail.

St. Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians supplies the second reading. It gives a simple truth. Humans, even committed Christians, are inclined to forget. Christians can forget that God is supreme, merciful and good. They can forget to obey God. In self-centeredness, they can forget others in need.

For its last reading, the Church offers two miracle narratives from the Gospel of St. Mark. In the first story, a synagogue official, Jairus, comes to Jesus, saying that his daughter is critically ill. Jairus fears that her daughter will die.

As a synagogue official, he most likely was a religious man. As always in the New Testament, they even committed Christians, are inclined to forget. Christians can forget that God is supreme, merciful and good. They can forget to obey God. In self-centeredness, they can forget others in need.

In his humility and religious devotion, Jairus was brought back to life could not be as a proof of the Lord’s power, but as a reward for deep faith. The crowd present as the daughter of Jairus was brought back to life could not accept the reality of it all because the people had no faith. Absence of faith is not freedom from illnesses. It produces distortion and blindness.

Reflection

These three readings remind us that human reasoning can be flawed. In the first reading, attention obliquely is drawn to the fact that some people willingly hurt others on a modest scale or on a great scale. Even good people can fail to see that hardships come not from God, but from the evil acts of people.

Paul, in the second reading, reminds us that our priorities easily can be confused. He challenges that most basic of human fears, the fear of being materially insufficient.

He calls Christians to imitate the trust of Christ and the love of Christ, and to see all in the light of what truly is important.

Finally, St. Mark’s Gospel tells us that sickness and anxiety are part of human life. Jesus possesses the key to eternal life.

Having a strong faith enables us to recognize what life actually is all about.

Everyone sees her recovery. It was not imaginary, but the crowd of neighbors watching it all cannot believe what has happened.

In the second story, a woman with chronic hemorrhages approaches Jesus. Discreetly, the Gospel does not precisely describe the hemorrhage, but if it was gynecological in nature, as likely it was, she was by this fact ritually unclean. This factor set her apart outside the community.

Under the same rules, anyone whom she touched also was unclean. However, she touched the garment of Jesus, and he allowed it. He excluded no one. Jesus realizes her faith. He tells her that faith has cured her. Then the woman’s hemorrhage stops.

Common to the two stories is personal faith—that of Jairus and that of the woman. In each case, the miracle occurs not as a proof of the Lord’s power, but as a reward for deep faith.

The crowd present as the daughter of Jairus was brought back to life could not accept the reality of it all because the people had no faith. Absence of faith is not freedom from illnesses. It produces distortion and blindness.

The Church does not endorse or oppose any of the candidates for political office

Q

A

The bishops highlight the serious responsibilities of each citizen to participate in a democracy by exercising the right to vote. Then, having set forth some of the issues to consider, the Church offers a model to the voter to apply those principles and decide which candidates are most likely to advance the goals of Catholic social teaching.

Some Catholics would doubtless find it easier if the Church lifted their burden and issued a clear-cut scorecard or rating on each candidate for public office. But the Church does not, and will not do that. Instead, it is left to each voter to decide how to vote, having weighed the issues, and the Church recognizes that prudential judgments can differ.

Question Corner/

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church does not endorse or oppose any of the candidates for political office

A

In a new introduction to “Faithful Citizenship,” written in 2011, the bishops offered the following consideration of voters a wide range of current moral issues on which to evaluate a candidate’s platform. Among them are the treatment of the unborn and of others who are weak or unwanted; government regulations that would require Catholic institutions to violate their consciences; marriage as a permanent and faithful union between one man and one woman; and an immigration system that has deepened poverty and increased global unemployment; a “broken” immigration system that must learn to protect the dignity of refugees and immigrants, and to keep families together; and wars, terror and violence that raise serious moral questions, especially in the Middle East.

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(For questions for this column may be sent by e-mail to Father Kenneth Doyle at kthedouglas@archindy.org or by mail to 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.)

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

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God,” The Criterion, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.


RUDZATS, Anna (Pilks), 87, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, May 30. Aunt of several.

RUDZATS, Vitalija, 92, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, April 24. Husband of Anna (Pilks) Rudauskas. Uncle of several.

Fulker, Mary I., 91, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, April 27. Sister of John (McCallister) Donner, June 14. Brother of Betty Bledsoe, Joan Fall and John Song. Uncle of several.

ZURAWSKI, Philip Zbigniew, 69, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, June 21. Husband of Elizabeth Zurawski. Father of Agatha and Maciej Zurawski. †

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first Catholic archbishop, John Carroll of Baltimore.

Archbishop Lori celebrated the Mass with Cardinal Edwin F. O’Brien, grand master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre and former archbishop of Baltimore; Baltimore Auxiliary Bishops Mitchell T. Rozanski and Denis J. Madden; and about 65 priests.

In a homily that received a standing ovation, Archbishop Lori described the integrity that St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher demonstrated as the king asked them to violate their personal conscience, cut the men symbols of two “insanely linked” aspects of religious freedom—the freedom of institutions and the freedom of individuals and the freedom of institutions.

The two men were martyred separately in 1535 for refusing to swear an oath supporting the Act of Supremacy, which stripped papal authority and acknowledged the king of England as head of the Church in that country.

Archbishop Lori presented St. Thomas More—a devout Catholic, husband, father and lawyer—as a symbol of the individual’s religious freedom, and St. John Fisher—bishop of Rochester in Kent—as a symbol of the religious freedom of institutions, many of which were destroyed or forced to break ties with the Catholic Church in the wake of England’s upheaval.

“If we fail to defend the rights of individuals, the freedom of institutions will be at risk, and if we fail to defend the rights of our institutions, individual liberty will be at risk,” he said. “More needs Fisher, and Fisher needs More.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called for the fortnight in March in their Ad Hoc Committee for the New Evangelization.

The statement outlined several instances of “religious liberty under attack.” Foremost among the U.S. bishops’ concerns is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Servicesmandate that employers, including most religious ones, provide insurance coverage for contraception, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs, which Catholic teaching considers “morally objectionable.”

The mandate goes into effect on Aug. 15, 2013, he will meet with seminarians and religious order superiors, and the pope will celebrate Mass with Cardinal Edwin J. O’Brien, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and St. John Vianney—a devout priest, stood outside the basilica holding a banner that read, “Bishops: We need pastors, not politicians.”

U.S. dioceses have planned a variety of events to coincide with the fortnight, which will culminate in a 12:10 p.m. Mass on July 4 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore on June 21. The two-week period will emphasize Church teaching on religious freedom.

A member of a clergy holds a program during the opening Mass for the U.S. Bishops’ “Fortnight for Freedom” campaign at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore on June 21. The two-week period will emphasize Church teaching on religious freedom.

The archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator: Call Dale for free estimates!

THE CATHOLIC HOSPITALDANDT

CNS photo/Tom McCarthy Jr.

A member of the clergy holds a banner that read, “If you are a victim of sexual misconduct or the family of someone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct, we want to help you.”

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The archbishop said the pope decided it was right to mark the 600th anniversaries of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with a year dedicated to unifying Catholics to study, profess and demonstrate their faith.

The Vatican launched a website—www.unirelief.org—containing information about the Year of Faith and the calendar of special events that Pope Benedict will celebrate during the year.

Many of the pope’s traditional events, like the Jan. 25 celebration marking the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Feb. 2 prayer with religious, will be incorporated into the Year of Faith.

But other events have been added, including a celebration on April 28 during which the pope will confirm a group of young people, and meet with others who recently have been or are about to be confirmed in their home countries.

On June 2, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ in most countries, the pope will lead the solemn adoration of the Eucharist, held outside St. Peter’s Basilica and presided over by the Cardinals in a 12:10 p.m. Mass on July 4 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Sacrament at exactly the same hour, Archbishop Fisichella said.

Two weeks later, on June 16, Pope Benedict will preside over a celebration of the Church’s witness to the dignity and value of every human life, the archbishop said. And July 7, 2013, he will meet with seminarians and religious order novices, who will make a pilgrimage to Rome to demonstrate “the joy of their decision to follow the Lord in serving his Church.”

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With a hymn and prayer, Italian Archbishop Rino Fisichella presented the Vatican’s initial calendar of events for the Year of Faith, which begins with a Mass on Oct. 11 at St. Peter’s Square.

Archbishop Fisichella of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, said the pope has invited as co-conspirators bishops and theologians who, like the pontiff, served as members or experts at the 1962-65 Second Vatican Council.

The archbishop said he hoped about 35 “council fathers” would be able to join the presidents of national bishops’ conferences and bishops participating in the world Synod of Bishops in concluding the opening Mass.

During a news conference at the Vatican on June 21, Arch Bishop Fisichella unveiled the sheet music for the official hymn for the Year of Faith, “I’ll spare you my musical interpretation,” he told reporters.

“I hope that this initiative will help encourage Catholics to study, profess and demonstrate their faith,” the archbishop said. Archbishop Fisichella also announced that the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments had just approved prayer texts in Latin and Italian for the “Mass for the New Evangelization.”

The archbishop’s office is translating the Latin text into English, Spanish and other languages, and hopes to have the congregation’s approval of the translations by the time the Year of Faith opens, he said.

Pope Benedict called the Year of Faith to strengthen Catholics who go to Church, reach out to those who have left but still yearn for God in their lives, offer a response to those who are searching for meaning, and help those who think they do not need God, he said.

“We are not hiding the fact that there is a crisis of faith, but it is only when one becomes completely aware of a crisis that one can find ways to remedy it,” the archbishop said.

He said the pope decided it was right to mark the 600th anniversaries of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with a year dedicated to unifying Catholics to study, profess and demonstrate their faith.

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Many of the pope’s traditional events, like the Jan. 25
Archbishop describes external and internal threats to religious liberty

By Sean Gallagher

On the eve of the start of the “Fortnight for Freedom,” the U.S. bishops’ effort to galvanize Catholics across the country to pray for religious liberty, Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput gave a major address on the topic during the 2012 Catholic Media Conference on June 20 in Indianapolis.

Arguing that “religious freedom is a cornerstone of the American experience,” Archbishop Chaput said the American founders “saw religious faith as vital to the life of a free people. “Liberty and happiness grow organically out of virtue,” he said. “And virtue needs a grounding in religious belief.”

Religious liberty, however, is “more than freedom of worship,” Archbishop Chaput continued.

“It begins in worship, but it also demands preaching, teaching, and service,” he said. “It’s always personal, but never private.”

This liberty seen as so vital to the nation’s founders, Archbishop Chaput said, is now facing threats that are “immediate, serious, and real,” and are often linked to a hostility toward religion in the sexual morality and life issues.

Citing an article written by University of Notre Dame law professor Garry Bradley, Archbishop Chaput said critics of these teachings see them merely as “subjective beliefs that can berationally defended…and should be treated as a form of prejudice.”

The result, he said, is the “loss of two millennia of moral tradition and religious belief becomes a species of bias.”

“Opposing same-sex marriage”, he said, “is a matter of religiously damaged homophobism.”

In the face of such opposition to Church teaching, Archbishop Chaput saidGPS Catholic organizations need to work hard to preserve their religious liberty.

“In practice, nothing guarantees our freedoms except our willinheit to fight for them,” he said. “That means fighting political and judicial battles without tiring and without apologies.”

However, Archbishop Chaput suggested that threats to religious liberty can also be found within the Church in the United States.

“Religious liberty is an empty shell if the spiritual core of a people is weak,” he said. “Or to put it another way: if we don’t believe in God, religious liberty isn’t a value. The worst enemies of religious freedom aren’t ‘out there’ among the legions of critics who hate Christ or the Gospel or the Church or all three. The worst enemies are within us—all of us, clergy, religious and lay—when we live our faith with tepidness, routine and hypocrisy.”

Instead, Archbishop Chaput challenged his listeners that the vocation of all Catholics is to “a life of honesty, heroism and sacrifice.”

However, he said that “in our eagerness to escape to, to tameturn our mold of our willful ideas, we’ve failed not only to convert our culture, but also to pass along the faith to many of our own children.”

Archbishop Chaput said the “Fortnight for Freedom” can be a conversion moment for Catholics to return to their challenging vocation in the midst of the struggle for religious liberty.

“If we don’t press now and vigorously for our religious liberty in the public arena, we will lose it,” he said. “Not overnight, but not with a thunderclap, but step by step, inexorably.”

In an interview before his speech, Archbishop Chaput said that although U.S. bishops and other Catholic leaders of universities, hospitals and charitable agencies have played prominent roles in defending religious liberty in recent months, “the job is not complete and there is need to step up to make this struggle successful.”

“The role of the bishop is to facilitate Catholics to be good Catholics,” he said. “But the place of good Catholics is in your home, your place of business, in your local community.”

“So, the example of laypeople is much more important than the work of bishops when it comes to religious liberty. And it’s much more credible in the eyes of those who oppose us because they see the laity as fellow citizens. They see the clergy as somehow extraneous from another planet. We’ll succeed or fail depending on the leadership of the laity.”

The first step for lay Catholics in taking up a leadership role in defending religious liberty, Archbishop Chaput said, “is for them to take the issue seriously.”

“If they don’t take it seriously, we won’t succeed because the enemy of religious freedom does take its opposition seriously,” he said.

Archbishop Chaput also commented on the Catholic Health Association’s recent reversal of its previous support for President Barack Obama’s accommodation for employers opposed in conscience to the HHS mandate that requires that abortion-inducing drugs, sterilizations and contraceptives be provided at no cost to their employees.

“I’m very happy that they finally saw the light and came on board,” he said. “Because I think their hesitancy to embrace the position of the bishops did damage to us in terms of unity on this issue.”

Indianapolis (CNS) — The debate over the federal abortifacient, sterilization and contraceptive mandate and the fight for religious freedom is not about “a particular policy choice,” but is “a debate over the role of religion in American society and the freedom and integrity of the Catholic Church’s mission,” the head of the Knights of Columbus said on June 22.

“It’s not an ordinary national debate. There’s a great deal at stake here,” Supreme Knight Carl Anderson told Catholic News Service in an interview in Indianapolis. It is an attempt “to redefine the role of religion in America,” he added.

Anderson was at the Catholic Media Conference, the annual joint convention of the Catholic Press Association and the Catholic Academy for Communications Arts Professionals. He spoke at the closing banquet of the June 20-22 media gathering.

The Knights of Columbus, he explained, was founded in 1882 on the model of the Knights of St. John.

Pointing to the “tremendous contribution” of Catholic schools, charities, and hospitals to the health care facilities in the United States, he said the two-week observance is not just about freedom of worship, but “the free exercise of a faith-based charity” which is one of the things he think differentiates American society from other countries.

The “personal dimension of Christian charity is so important” because it creates “a solidarity which really is foundational to a humane society,” and can “really transform culture,” Anderson said, but he added that Catholics don’t “realize well enough… the potential power we have through charity to change the culture.”

Responding to claims the fortnight is politically motivated, he said it is not a partisan effort and neither is there any “new way” in which the Knights of Columbus is supporting the effort financially, he said.

“It should not come as a surprise to people that the Knights support the bishops’ mission on religious freedom,” he explained. “We support the bishop’s conference…local bishops…local pastors in a lot of ways. So the fact that once again the Knights of Columbus are stepping up to help the bishops on a project to me it’s not very newsworthy, frankly.”

Asked about the new movie For Greater Glory,” about the Cristero Rebellion in Mexico in the 1920s, Anderson said the story resonates with the Knights because a number of the martyrs of the war were Knights.

He does see one fundamental parallel between the situation in Mexico at that time and the current fight in the U.S. over the HHS mandate and religious freedom.

Both governments made a “serious effort to limit the role of the Catholic Church,” he said. “Catholics were right in Mexico to attempt peaceful means to resist that, and I think Catholics are right today to use the means at our disposal—the courts, comments, legislation. … I wouldn’t draw any more parallels beyond that.”

After a period of peaceful resistance, the brutality of Mexico’s dictator, Plutarco Elias Calles, ultimately led Catholic clergy and laity to take up arms.

“It’s obvious we’re not in a situation like that,” Anderson said. “Trying to read more into it, it is, is unjustified.”

Catholic Church’s role in society is at the heart of HHS debate, says Anderson

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Catholic Church’s role in society is at the heart of HHS debate, says Anderson

‘Some say what kind of Christian would impose that kind of restriction on religion in America? I don’t think that’s the proper question. I don’t think we ought to be in the business of judging people about the sincerity of their faith.’

—Supreme Knight Carl Anderson

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia addresses attendees at the Catholic Media Conference in Indianapolis on June 20.