Matt Hollowell’s focus on connecting the Catholic faith to the classes he teaches and the groups he leads is one of the reasons the math and physics teacher at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis was chosen as this year’s Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award recipient. Here he poses with one of the groups he leads—members of the school’s A Promise to Keep group.

Teacher’s emphasis on ‘modeling’ leads to archdiocese’s highest honor for educator

(Editors’ note: Three members of the archdiocese have been honored with prestigious awards in Catholic education. Msgr. Paul Koetter of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis has received the 2014 Distinguished Pastor Award from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), while Lisa Vogel of St. Mary School in North Vernon has received the 2014 Distinguished Teacher Award. Matt Hollowell of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis has received the Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese. Msgr. Koetter and Vogel’s stories are featured on page 8 and 9 in this issue of The Criterion.)

By John Shaughnessy

Matt Hollowell stood in front of his first period classroom, struggling to find the words to help his students—and himself—deal with the heartbreak of one of the most shocking mass killings at a school in the United States.

Less than 24 hours earlier, a lone gunman walked into the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, on Dec. 14, 2012, and killed 20 students and six adult staff members before shooting himself.

As a math and physics teacher at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, Hollowell always starts his classes with some kind of prayer, but he felt at a loss of what to say or pray that morning until, he believes, God provided a way through the loss.

“I want my students to get to heaven”

By Sean Gallagher

St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis is at the far northern end of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. St. Pius V Parish in Troy is close to its southern tip.

According to Google Maps, the two faith communities are a 190-mile drive apart that would take about three hours to complete. But the members of the two parishes named after saintly popes named Pius are brought together in one in Christ.

That unity was on visible display on April 15 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Roll received the oils for her parish during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass celebrated on April 15 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Roll received the oils for her faith community, St. Michael Parish in Bradford in the New Albany Deanery.

Oils blessed and priests renew ordination promises at annual archdiocesan chrism Mass on April 15

By Sean Gallagher

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That unity was on visible display on April 15 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis at the archdiocese’s annual chrism Mass, where representatives from both parishes came together in worship with Catholics from parishes and religious communities across central and southern Indiana.

It was the Holy Week liturgy in which Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin blessed oils that are used in sacraments celebrated in parishes across central and southern Indiana in the coming year. Priests ministering in the archdiocese also renewed during the liturgy the promises they made at their ordination.

Kathleen Quissler is a member of St. Pius X Parish who attended the annual archdiocesan Chrism Mass on April 15 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Roll received the oils for her faith community, St. Michael Parish in Bradford in the New Albany Deanery.

Easter proclaims that love gives life, pope says; share it with others

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis urged Christians to remember how they first encountered Christ and to share his love and mercy with others, especially through acts of caring and sharing.

Proclaiming the good news of Jesus’ Resurrection means giving concrete witness “to unconditional and faithful love,” he said on April 20 before solemnly giving his blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city and the world).

Celebrating the second Easter of his pontificate, the pope told at least 150,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square and on adjacent streets that evangelization “is about leaving ourselves behind and encountering others, being close to those crushed by life’s troubles, sharing with the needy, standing at the side of the sick, elderly and the outcast.”

Whatever is going on in one’s life, he said from the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica, Jesus’ victory over sin and death demonstrates that “love is more powerful, love gives life, love makes hope blossom in the wilderness.”

Overlooking the square where he had just celebrated Easter morning Mass surrounded by hundreds of flowering trees and bushes and thousands of daffodils, tulips and roses, Pope Francis said Christians proclaim to the world that “Jesus, love incarnate, died on the cross for our sins, but God the Father raised him and made him the Lord of life and death.”

In his Easter message, the pope prayed that the risen Lord would “help us to overcome the scourge of hunger, aggravated by conflicts and by the immense wastefulness for which we are often responsible.” He also prayed that Christ might be given the strength “to protect the vulnerable, especially newborns, the elderly, the sick and the poor, the homeless, the outcast, the abandoned, the lonely.”

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EASTER

children, women, and the elderly, who are at times exploited and abandoned.”

The pope offered special prayers for those facing serious difficulties and threats in various parts of the world: for victims of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa; the victims of kidnapping; migrants and refugees; and for the victims of war and conflict in Syria, Iraq, Central African Republic, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.

Celebrating that in 2014 Easter fell on the same day on the Gregorian calendar used in the West and on the Julian calendar used by many Orthodox and Eastern Catholics, the pope’s Easter morning Mass included a Byzantine choir singing “stichos” and “anthems,” hymns that in ancient times were sung in the presence of the bishop of Rome on Easter.

In his “urbi et orbi” message, the pope offered special prayers for peace in Ukraine, a country with various Orthodox, Eastern Catholic and Latin-rite Catholic communities. The pope prayed that all sides in the current political tensions would avoid violence and, “in a spirit of unity and dialogue, chart a path for the country’s future.”

The pope’s celebration of Easter got underway the night before in a packed St. Peter’s Basilica.

His Easter Vigil began with the lighting of the fire and Easter candle in the atrium of the basilica. Walking behind the Easter candle and carrying a candle of his own, Pope Francis entered the darkened basilica. In the silence and solemnity of the moment, very few pilgrims and tourists disturbed the atmosphere with their camera flashes.

Brian Baker, a deacon and seminarian from the Archdiocese of Atlanta, sang the Exalter—the poetic hymn of praise calling the whole world to rejoice at the Resurrection of Christ.

As the bells of St. Peter’s pealed the joy of the Resurrection through the night, torrential rains beat down on Rome.

In his homily, Pope Francis, who often tells people to look up the date of their baptism and commemorate it each year, urged people to remember and reflect on the first moment they really recall having encountered Jesus.

Referring to the Easter account from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Pope Francis noted how the women who went to Jesus’ tomb were told first by the angel and then by the risen Lord to await him in Galilee and tell the disciples to go as well.

“At the death of the Master, the disciples had scattered; their faith had been utterly shaken, everything seemed over,” the pope said. Yet they were told to go back to Galilee, the place they first met Jesus.

Returning to Galilee, he said, means re-reading everything—Jesus’ preaching, his miracles, the new community, the excitement and the defectors, even the betrayal—to re-read everything starting from the end, which is a new beginning, “one that begins with Jesus’ ‘supreme act of love’ in dying for humanity’s sin.”

Departing repeatedly from his prepared text, Pope Francis kept telling people: “Have no fear. Do not be afraid. Have the courage to open your hearts to the Lord’s love.”

Returning to Galilee, he said, “means treasuring in my heart the living memory” of “the moment when his eyes met mine.”

“Where is my Galilee?” the pope urged people to ask themselves. “Have I forgotten it? Have I gone off on roads and paths, which made me forget it?”

Pope Francis baptized 10 people at the Easter Vigil. They ranged from a 7-year-old Italian boy to a 58-year-old Vietnamese woman. Four other Italians and one person each from Senegal, Lebanon, France and Belarus also were baptized. As each stepped forward, the pope asked if they wanted to be baptized and waited for their response. He asked one man twice because his response had not been clear.

The catechumens bent over the baptismal font and the pope, putting one hand on their heads, used a deep silver shell to pour water over their foreheads.

The pope confirmed the 10 during the liturgy, anointing them with oil and giving each a kiss on the cheek. And, although Pope Francis does not usually distribute Communion at public Masses, he made an exception for the 10 new Catholics, who received their first Communion during the vigil. †
Jesus wants everyone to serve others with love, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In the humble act of washing his disciples’ feet, Jesus is showing all Christians how they should serve them with love, Pope Francis said.

“This is the legacy that Jesus leaves us as a model of service,” the pope said on April 24 at the start of Holy Week, when the pope washed the feet of 12 men and women to commemorate Jesus’ act of love on the evening before his arrest.

The teenager, who is paralyzed from the neck down from a diving accident last year, said he could not believe it when he was told he was chosen to be one of the 12 people for the ritual.

“I was speechless, like today I want to tell him something but I was mute. I was too stunned. I will always treasure this encounter,” he said.

The liturgy was celebrated in a church on the grounds of the center. The church walls were dotted with bright stained-glass windows. Angels and other saintly representatives, as well as the facility’s religious and lay staff, directed and volunteered at the evening Mass.

Medical personnel and other staff members dined with the patients while staff and patients, some seated in wheelchairs, provided the singing and music. One person played acoustic guitar, another marked the beat with a triangle.

The pope greeted every one of the patients attending the Mass, giving them “a blessed kiss, a comforting word,” reported the Vatican newspaper.

Msgr. Angelo Bazzarri, president of the Father Gnocchi Foundation, told Vatican Radio on April 21 that the pope’s decision to wash the feet of patients with different ages, abilities and disabilities “was meant to reflect the universal gesture of a God who became man, who serves all.”

By choosing to visit the rehabilitation center, the pope was showing the kind of “evangelical mercy” that he wants everyone to embody, the pope said.

“I, too, am worried about the way we can serve others with love, pope says

Holy Fathers: Is being pope a shortcut to sainthood? An ongoing debate

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—“They call me Holy Father and that is what I must be,” the future St. John XXIII wrote in his diary.

A nun who worked in the papal apartements with the future St. John Paul II saw him tire one day and said, “I’m worried about my holiness.”

Most Catholics would agree the Church needs holy and saintly popes, but as the canonization of Blessed John XXIII and Blessed John Paul II approaches, some questioned the need to canonize them.

The debate is not new. Shortly after Blessed John Paul II died in 2005 and Pope Benedict XVI waived the five-year-waiting period before his sainthood process could open, a respected Italian journalist wrote that canonizing popes was like the “Vatican Roman hierarchy to canonize itself.”

But one of the most authoritative and productive experts in the Church’s saint-proclaiming process, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, has said that “recent popes have not been proposed for sainthood just because they were proposed by the Roman Curia; they were proposed because they represented the same type of person that is being proposed in an excellent way of living as Christians.”

Pope Francis’ criticism revolves around the quick pace of the sainthood process for popes, especially for Blessed John Paul, who died April 2, 2005.

Critics say it is possible in such a short time to thoroughly investigate a candidate’s life and writings, not to mention the extraordinary devotion of the faithful.

Msgr. Slawomir Oder, postulator of the cause of Blessed John Paul’s sainthood cause, was asked by media on April 22 about reports that the pope had ignored evidence that Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, the late founder of the Legionaries of Christ, had been “abusing minor seminarians and leading a double life.”

The postulator said the Vatican, as part of the canonization process, insisted those reports be investigated. He said investigators determined there was “no sign of the personal involvement of John Paul II.”

Blessed John Paul, who beatified and canonized a record number of Catholics, is responsible for the dispensation of the five-year waiting period “was the only exception” made from the canonical procedure called for in Church law.

On a practical level, he urged the Congregation for Saints’ Causes to devote more time and energy to the study and “speeding up” the processes for laypeople, especially married couples, because modern Catholics need these models.

The saints may be models, but they are not angels, and the priests formally conducting the canonization process are humbly acknowledged that fact.

“John XXIII was aware of his defects and his own limitations, including his ‘speaking appetite’ and struggle losing weight, said Franciscan Father Giuvangiussepe Califano. He said Blessed Paul was “very much depressed all of his life, depicting sense of humor, which made him “more endearing.”

“John Paul II had defects like every human being,” Msgr. Oder said. “Total holiness lies in a person, responding to God’s grace, being a saint, which is the case of Blessed John Paul II included some being mercurial or brusque. ‘He reacted,’ sometimes too quickly, the monsignor said. As archbishop of Krakow, he once got so angry at one of his priests that he demanded the man’s driver’s license and forced him to walk back to his parish. ‘He later asked forgiveness.’

At a Vatican briefing for the media, Msgr. Oder said, “It’s true there are criticisms opposed to the canonization of popes,” but that all canonizations are good for the Church because they demonstrate that individuals really can fulfill the call to holiness and are “a tangible sign of the Church’s spiritual freedom.”

“It would be absurd to have a pope who evangelizes and doesn’t arrive at holiness himself,” Msgr. Oder said.

In addition, St. John Paul will “remain a point of reference for his successors, but not only for them,” he said. Karol Wojtyla, the future pope and saint, pursued holiness as a student, an actor, a quarry worker, a poet, priest and bishop—and many people can find inspiration in his life.

Father Giuvangiussepe, postulator of the cause of Blessed John Paul, said it is obvious the vast majority of Catholics never will be called to imitate his holiness as pope, but they can imitate his “desire to belong to the Lord.”

The Franciscan works mostly on the causes of other Franciscans, but occasionally promotes other causes as well, including the recently beatified 19th-century Queen Maria Cristina of Savoy.

Recently I’ve had the joy of proposing for the veneration of the Church both a queen and a pope. Obviously, they led totally different lives, but in fulfilling the call of every baptized Christian, the call to holiness, they are similar,” he said.

Popes are not canonized because they are popes, but because they lived exceptional lives, said Father Giuvangiussepe.

“Pope John was holy even as a child and as a young adult,” he said. “In his diocese he knew himself and follow God’s will.”

Recently, his papacy was the apex of his holiness, because he then had “an enormous weight on his shoulders, a great responsibility, and still knew how to pursue God’s will,” the postulator said.

Jesus Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, said thinking of new saints only as models to imitate narrows their importance and misses one of the riches of Catholic teaching.

“Canonized saints are also intercessors,” he said. “They are recognized by the people of God as friends, intercessors and guides to an encounter with God. And, obviously, that is what these popes are.”

Canonization Mass to be broadcast live on EWTN, other media outlets

The April 27 canonization of Blessed John XXIII and Blessed John Paul II will be live on EWTN, other media outlets and YouTube.

The Diocese of Rome has created two pontiffs and how to follow the live on EWTN, other media outlets and YouTube.

The website is also available in Spanish and several other languages. The website is also available in Spanish and several other languages.
Remembering ‘Good Pope John’

On Sunday, Pope Francis will canonize two popes—John XXIII and Blessed John Paul II. For trivia buffs, out of 266 pontiffs, they will be the 81st and 82nd popes to be canonized. Of course, two of them are still living. When Pope Pius X, who was pope from 1903 to 1914, was canonized in 1954, he was the first pope to be declared a saint since Pius V, who was pope from 1566 to 1572. However, the Church was blessed to have other holy popes during the 20th century. Besides Pius X, John XXIII and John Paul II, Popes Pius XII and Paul VI have been declared venerable, and Pope John Paul I has been declared a servant of God.

Of the two popes to be canonized on Sunday, certainly most people are more familiar with John Paul II since he died so recently. In this editorial, we’d like to refresh your memory about some of the things that earned John XXIII the name “Good Pope John.”

Many people recognize similarities between him and Pope Francis. Both have now been named Time magazine’s Person of the Year—as was John Paul II. Both were over 75 years old when they were elected pope, as was John XXIII, and Francis was 76. Both are known for their humility and infirmity. Both must be with other people; John XXIII’s family said that he suffered greatly while he was pope because he felt isolated. He was the first pope since 1870 to make pastoral visits in his Diocese of Rome, causing a sensation when he visited children with polio at the Bambino Gesù Hospital and met nuns in Rome’s Regina Coeli prison. He himself wrote in his diary about those visits: “Great astonishment, the Roman, Italian and international press... I was hemmed in on all sides: authorities, photographers, prisoners, waiters.”

He was also the first pope since 1870 to travel outside of Rome—to Assisi and Loreto—although, of course, he didn’t travel as extensively as his successors. We know a great deal about his religious development thanks to a document of that diary, eventually published as Journal of a Soul. He started it when he entered the seminary as a young man named Angelo Roncalli, and it shows his efforts to “grow in holiness.”

Like Pope Francis, John XXIII had a great sense of humor. Probably the most quoted example was his answer to the reporter who asked how many people worked in the Vatican: “About half.” John XXIII is known mainly as the pope who called the Second Vatican Council to make the Church more relevant to the modern world. He said, “I wish to open the Church’s window so that we may see what is happening outside and so the world may see what is happening within.”

A papacy bearing the likeness of Blessed John XXIII hangs from the facade of St. Peter’s Basilica during his beatification ceremony at the Vatican in this Sept. 2, 2000, file photo. Blessed John will be canonized along with Blessed John Paul II on April 27 at the Vatican.

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Letter to the Editor

President Obama has similar sense of social justice to Pope Francis, reader says

In the letter to the editor that appeared in the April 11 issue of The Criterion, the letter writer challenges readers to “think about whether your president is anti-Catholic or not,” and suggests that little hope exists for common ground between the Church and President Barack Obama.

In thinking about this divisive issue, readers should remember that Mr. Obama is president of the United States of America, not just president of the United States— or even Christians of America. Moreover, even the letter writer would have to admit that President Obama’s sense of social justice and compassion for the suffering among the least advantaged has extraordinarily much in common with that of Pope Francis.

As the president’s actions in this regard, to paraphrase the letter writer’s words, indeed have spoken louder than simply his words—this in spite of opposition to a number of these actions from many within the Christian community.

—John F. Fink

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—John F. Fink

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**Making Sense of Bioethics**

**Frl. Tad Pacholczyk**

A path of renewal for the Catholic sterilized couple

Among married men and women who undergo surgical sterilization through a vasectomy or a tubal ligation, it has been estimated that anywhere from 10 to 20 percent will come to regret the choice. Sometimes, there may be an immediate awareness of wrongdoing following the surgery, while in other cases, as Patrick Coffin, radio host and author of Sex as God Intended, has suggested, sterilized couples may “...drift for years before acknowledging that something between them is no longer in sync. After the initial pregnancy fear subsides, and the vision of 1,001 erotic nights turns out to be something of a farce, once-spouse (or spouse-to-be) finally turns against spouse while doing their best to ignore the silent, disturbing ‘presence’ of the children they may have.”

Their decision to seek out a permanent form of contraception can also affect their marriage in other significant ways.

As Dr. John Billings has noted, there is “an effect that is even more tragic than the clinical, and that is that in many cases the use of contraceptive methods in marriage has been followed by an act of infidelity of one of the members.” It would seem that contraception diminishes the mutual respect of husband and wife. And, it effectively abandons the self-control diminished in the marriage.

The “abandonment of self-control” that can follow permanent sterilization raises outstanding spiritual and marital challenges for couples who later repent, and confess the sin of having undergone a vasectomy or tubal ligation. A similar type of fixing problem arises because sterilized individuals may find themselves, as Coffin often describes them, as “sincerely desiring to detach themselves from the very sex-without-babies mentality that led to the sterilization in the first place. Repentant couples, out of an abundance of spiritual caution, may thus wonder what they should do, and whether they are obligated to get a surgical reversal of the procedure.”

The Church has never declared this to be a required step, in part because of the risks and burdens associated with surgical interventions, in part because of the high uncertainty of a successful outcome, and in part because of the potentially significant expenses involved.

Even though a reversal may not be feasible or obligatory, the repenting couple may, nonetheless, become aware of the need to order their sexual activity and appetites in the face of their original sin of anti-Semitism, and the value of the person and not just in sexual gratification. This is important because various forms of contraception, including permanent sterilization, often involve the phenomenon of the woman feeling as if she is being “used” by her husband.

Abstinence, therefore, assists couples in expressing their mutual love in other ways. Blessed John Paul II explained this perspective in his famous work Love and Responsibility: “Inherent in the essential character of continence as a virtue is the conviction that the love of man and woman loses nothing as a result of temporary abstention from erotic experiences, but on the contrary gains: the personal union takes deeper root, grounded as it is above all in the affirmation of the value of the person and not just in sexual attachment.”

In one of his weekly general audiences later that year, the pope said, “Abstinence is... continence itself is a definite and permanent moral attitude; it is a virtue, and therefore, their whole line of conduct guided by it acquires a virtuous character.”

Fertile couples who incorporate NFP into their marital lives can often end up acquiring a different attitude toward life as they chart and practice their fertility awareness methods. Understanding this change of heart and discern a call to have one or several additional children.

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(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org)
Somos un pueblo de Pascua unidos por humildad, esperanza y propósito

¡Aleluya! Cristo ha resucitado y nuestros corazones están llenos de alegría. Si aceptamos el ofrecimiento de salvación del Señor, según nos dice el Señor, nuestra aldea está llena de alegría. Si aceptamos el ofrecimiento de salvación del Señor, según nos dice el Señor, nuestra aldea está llena de alegría. Si aceptamos el ofrecimiento de salvación del Señor, según nos dice el Señor, nuestra aldea está llena de alegría. Si aceptamos el ofrecimiento de salvación del Señor, según nos dice el Señor, nuestra aldea está llena de alegría. Si aceptamos el ofrecimiento de salvación del Señor, según nos dice el Señor, nuestra aldea está llena de alegría.

Por una muy afortunada coincidencia (una gita de la Divina Providencia), existe una extraordinaria sincronía entre las enseñanzas del papa Francisco y el lema que elegí cuando el papa Benedicto XVI me llamó a servir a la Iglesia en calidad de obispo. Es en este sentido que he elegido el título “Alegría en el Señor” para mi columna semanal en The Criterion. Los artículos que escribí para The Criterion durante el período de la Pascua están inspirados, primero que nada, por el papa Francisco, pero, en segundo lugar, por las opiniones y sugerencias específicas del grupo de estudio surgidas de nuestras reuniones semanales durante la pasada Cuaresma.

El papa Francisco le ha dado un soplo de vida nueva a la Iglesia, “comentó uno de los integrantes del grupo de estudio. ”Es un soplo de vida nueva a la Iglesia, “comentó uno de los integrantes del grupo de estudio. ”Es un soplo de vida nueva a la Iglesia, “comentó uno de los integrantes del grupo de estudio. ”Es un soplo de vida nueva a la Iglesia, “comentó uno de los integrantes del grupo de estudio. ”Es un soplo de vida nueva a la Iglesia, “comentó uno de los integrantes del grupo de estudio.

Alérgenes en el Señor.

REJOICE IN THE LORD

Archbishop/Arzobispo Joseph W. Tobin

We are an Easter people connected by humility, hope, purpose.
Events Calendar

April 25 Community Life Center, 10418 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. 12th Annual Mission Day, “Exploring the Value and Function of Grief Symptoms: The ‘Companioning Role’.” Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D., presenter. 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $30 per person. CRU credits available. Information: 317-256-1586.

St. Anthony’s the Great Byzantine Catholic Church, 1117 S. Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. Icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Defense of Life, Divine Liturgy Mass, 9 a.m. Information: 317-406-0528 or abbfathercf@gmail.com. (Repeats each Sunday)

April 26 The Slovenian National Home, 2717 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. Spring dance, 5-11 p.m., $35 per person. Adults 18 and older included, children 16 and under no charge if accompanied by an adult. Information: 317-632-0619.

April 27 John XXIII Retreat Center, 407 W. McDonal Dr., Hartford City, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). Mass celebrating the canonization of Pope John XXIII, Father Keith Hesy, celebrant, 4 p.m. Information: 765-384-1100.

April 28 Roncalli High School, 1357 S. Michigan Ave., Indianapolis. First Friday exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary and Benediction, 4-6 p.m. Mass, 5-45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

April 30 St. Patrick Parish, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute. Wabash Valley Right to Life, “Boot Camp for Life,” training for high school and college-age students to defend unborn human life. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 812-877-9440 or thecker@frontier.com.

May 1 The Ritz Charles, 12356 N. Meridian St., Carmel (Diocese of Lafayette). “A Luncheon Style Show,” 11 a.m., $45 per person. Information: 317-872-6420.

May 2 St. Vincent Training Center, 22200 Naab Road, Ste. 200, Indianapolis. Office of Pro-Life and Family Life Health Ministry and St. Vincent Hospital, CPR and AED training for organized groups, $5-45 per person, $30 per person included booklets. Information: 317-244-9002.

May 3 St. Anthony Catholic Church, 1117 S. Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. Icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Defense of Life, Divine Liturgy Mass, 9 a.m. Information: 317-406-0528 or abbfathercf@gmail.com. (Repeats each Sunday)

May 4-5 Sacred Heart Parish, 12156 N. Meridian St., Carmel (Diocese of Lafayette). “Welcome Aidefather Cuf,” the Sisters of Providence foundress, who was declared a saint in 2000, Indianapolis. Information: 317-841-1231 or Hollis.Adams@gmail.com. (Repeats each Sunday)
A Promise to Keep teens honored for mentoring adolescents

By Natalie Hoefer

When Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin addressed the 150 teenagers at a luncheon at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on April 10, he spoke about sexuality.

“The gift of human sexuality is a lot like a fire,” he said. “Fire can do really good things for you. It can warm the house, cook your food, light your path.

“But it can also burn and scar, and finally destroy. It all depends on the decisions you make with that gift.”

These teens—along with 225 additional high school students unable to attend the luncheon—serve as mentors in the archdiocesan A Promise to Keep program. They have decided not just to use that gift wisely, but to encourage younger students to do the same.

Through A Promise to Keep, high school students serve as mentors to junior high school-aged students in Catholic grade schools and religious education programs, speaking to them about the beauty and truth of the Church’s teaching on human sexuality as God intended.

The 19th annual luncheon marked the 19th year that the program has promoted chastity and abstinence to adolescents throughout central and southern Indiana.

“As we begin our 20th year, I am filled with gratitude for the vision of St. Vincent Health and the archdiocese as they partnered to develop the A Promise to Keep program in 1994,” said program director Margaret Hendricks.

“This initiative helps equip thousands of adolescents and teenagers in our archdiocese with the knowledge and support they need to choose a counter-cultural lifestyle of chastity before marriage.

“Through the witness and commitment to virtues and values like self-control and self-discipline, teens are helping build healthier communities while they are helping to promote the Church’s teaching on sexuality,” Hendricks said.

For such an important task, there is more to being a mentor than simply signing up, noted Hendricks.

“The students must apply and be accepted into the program. The mentors themselves are periodically and are trained by adults on how to present to junior high students on seven specific topics—freedom and peer pressure, media, consequences, assertiveness, sex and drugs, healthy dating and parenthood.

“Leafy Anderson, a nurse who worked for several years at a Planned Parenthood abortion center in Indianapolis but is now a pro-life advocate, gave a keynote address supporting the teens’ commitment and example.

“You’re the front line,” she said. “It has to start with you.”

A mentor from each of the five Catholic high schools attending the luncheon shared their thoughts on and experiences with the program.

Sean Myers, a senior at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis and A Promise to Keep mentor, said he did not see himself being involved in the program when he was a freshman.

“I was told to go talk to my friend, Patrick, who was a senior my freshman year,” Sean explained. “He played sports, was a cool guy, everyone loved him. One time he talked with me in high school before he from that he didn’t drink and party— that was inspiring to me.

“I decided I wanted to be the type of person he was. That’s when I decided to be a Promise to Keep mentor because I saw the impact that just one person had on my life, and I hope I can have that effect on other people.”

Coincidentally, it is the same Patrick that Emily Coffey of Father Thomas Secina Memorial High School in Indianapolis mentions in her presentation to younger adolescents.

“My favorite story I like to tell is about my friend, Patrick—the same one Sean mentioned—who is 22 and still carries his ‘pledge of chastity’ card with him in his wallet. ‘They kids really connect to that,’” she said.

Kathleen Byers, a senior at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, shared with the group her memory of an underclassman asking her if she was embarrassed to be involved in A Promise to Keep.

“I remember answering that question with a quick ‘no,’” said Kathleen. “My faith and my values are two of the strongestholds of my life.

“This program has taught me to be true to myself and to others. It’s taught me how to live a mentally, physically and spiritually happy life.”

Senior Sydney Cabell of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis said that living as a mentor in the program means doing more than presenting to middle school-aged students.

“We display our values through the way we speak with people, the things we say on Twitter and the things we post on Instagram,” she reminded her peers. “I know I have kids follow me [on social media] after a presentation. They look up to us.

“When you teach teens to respect others, they respect themselves and their own bodies. You cannot simply give them words. We try to show them by how we live our lives every day.”

As a child adopted from South Korea at birth, junior Anthony Ryback of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis said he chooses to live the model taught to A Promise to Keep mentors in honor of his birth parents.

“I want to honor that ultimate sacrifice [they made to give me up for adoption] by being chaste and staying pure.

“When I get older, I want to be able to look at that special person on the altar and say, ‘I saved myself for you.’

“That was the very message Archbishop Tobin sought to promote to the teens.

“When I was in second grade, my father sat me down and talked with me about sexuality,” the archbishop shared. “He described it as a gift.

‘Thinking it all over, I decided my dad was right. Sexuality is a gift. It is a gift to be shared with the one you love and the one with whom you’re willing to spend the rest of your life.’

‘[God] has given us a way, a model to love fully—in the sacrament of marriage. I hope you choose right for yourselves and the ones you love,’ Archbishop Tobin said.

‘Pray that you can live with this fire in a way that gives glory to God.’”

Margaret Hendricks, coordinator of the A Promise to Keep chastity program

‘This initiative helps equip thousands of adolescents and teenagers in our archdiocese with the knowledge and support they need to choose a counter-cultural lifestyle of chastity before marriage.’

The Office of Catholic Education and the Office of Stewardship and Development are hosting a series of informational breakfast or luncheon events in conjunction with the annual Catholic Schools Week observance. The purpose of this series of events is to promote awareness of the benefits of the Indiana Tax Credit Scholarships. Tax Credit Scholarships allow students to select many more students, including those already in our schools. Come and find out about the extraordinary impact that these scholarships can have on our students and families. All scholarship donations can be designated to individual schools.

Above, teen mentors for A Promise to Keep listen as Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin addresses them during a luncheon in their honor on April 10 at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

Left, junior Anthony Ryback of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis speaks on April 10 about his experience as a mentor in the A Promise to Keep program.
Teacher with ‘greatest job in the world’ earns national award

By John Shaughnessy

The wedding invitations from her former grade school students offer one sign of Lisa Vogel’s specialness as a teacher.

So does the fact that on the wall of her classroom she has a picture of every student she has taught at St. Mary School in North Vernon during the past 15 years.

Still, perhaps the most telling sign of Vogel’s approach and impact as a teacher is revealed in a moment involving a student struggling with the approaching one-year anniversary of his dad’s death.

“We spent a great deal of time talking about his dad during my prep period and discussing ways in which he could deal with his emotions,” Vogel recalls. “When the day arrived and the young man showed up at school, his emotions were very visible, and it was obvious it was going to be a difficult day.

“I quickly made arrangements to have someone cover my class so that the two of us could spend some time lighting a candle and praying in the adoration chapel. As we knelt beside each other, crying and praying in unison to our God, I knew God was the only one who could help him make it through this difficult time. I prayed many prayers of thanksgiving for the opportunity to be right where I was on that day.”

It’s moments like that one that lead Vogel to say, “I have the greatest job in the world, and the rewards and blessings are infinite.”

It’s moments like that one that help explain why Vogel was selected as one of the 11 national recipients of the 2014 Distinguished Teacher Award from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

Keeping the focus on faith

Vogel was “very humbled” by the honor that she received during the NCEA national conference in Pittsburgh on April 22. Colleagues and parents of the children she has taught in the seventh and eighth grades view it as well-deserved.

“I have had kids at St. Mary’s for over 14 years and, in that time, the impact that Mrs. Vogel has had on not only her students, but the entire school, is nothing short of amazing,” notes Brenda Campbell, a parent.

“Lisa is the true embodiment of a Catholic educator. She lives and breathes her faith. She helps the whole student grow and develop not just in school subjects, but in maturing and growing, and encourages them to develop themselves in their faith.”

That focus on faith is crucial to the teaching of Vogel, a 39-year-old mother of four who has been married for 17 years to her husband, Kevin.

“I believe that first and foremost it is my responsibility to help these young people develop a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ that will help them throughout their lives,” she says. “We are Catholic first and a school second. Catholic identity is an integral piece of my entire curriculum. My students learn there is very little, if any, facet of their day-to-day life where Catholic teaching and discipline are not considered. I might take the chance to educate my students about the beatification process, or about a saint while learning about parts of speech. This provides an opportunity to learn more about their faith while also-covered the state academic standards.”

For several years, 100 percent of her students have passed the math part of Indiana’s standardized test while more than 95 percent have passed the language arts part. Her students also have a history of graduating from high school in the top 10 of their class.

She also finds creative uses for technology, such as having her students form groups that design and create a teacher at St. Mary School in North Vernon, Lisa Vogel is the recipient of the 2014 Distinguished Teacher Award from the National Catholic Educational Association. Here, she pauses for a photo with two of her seventh-grade students, Allison Short, left, and Mary Diekhoff.

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The Distinguished Pastor Award is a national award that honors pastors who advance Catholic elementary education by providing strong spiritual guidance, demonstrating a clear philosophy of Catholic education, and working closely with the school community. Msgr. Koetter is one of seven national recipients of the 2014 award. CONGRATULATIONS!
Pastor's focus on relationships leads to national education honor

By John Shaughnessy

The fifth-grade girl launched the whipped cream pie toward the face of Msgr. Paul Koetter as other students at Holy Spirit School in Indianapolis howled with delight.

Yet the girl’s aim was slightly off so only half of the pastor’s face was plastered with whipped cream, while the rest of the whipped cream landed on his shoulder.

When someone zoomed in on a camera to capture the result of Msgr. Koetter’s good-natured cooperation for a school fundraiser, the priest made sure that the girl was part of the photo, too. Suddenly, he hugged the girl so that some of the whipped cream on his shoulder ended up on her, leading to another round of smiles and laughs in the crowd.

That scene explains why Msgr. Koetter is so well-liked by the students and staff members of Holy Spirit School.

So does the scene that unfolded during the weekly school Mass at the parish church on the Wednesday morning of Holy Week.

After reading a passage from Matthew’s Gospel about Judas betraying Jesus, Msgr. Koetter walked among the kindergarten to eighth-grade students sitting in the pews and asked them a series of questions about what it means to be a friend, and how friends can hurt each other.

After listening to their thoughtful answers, he talked about how Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, how the other Apostles ran away from Jesus when soldiers arrested him, and how Peter denied Jesus.

“That might have been his greatest suffering. Everyone left him,” Msgr. Koetter told the students. “But he continued to trust that God was still with him. God never betrays us. God is always there. We can rely on God when other relationships let us down.”

In that last sentence and in those two scenes, Msgr. Koetter reveals what is essential to him as a priest and a pastor.

“I’ve always felt pretty strongly that you have to develop relationships.”

Trying to unite a community

Those two scenes also show why the Holy Spirit community is thrilled that Msgr. Koetter was honored on April 22 as one of the seven national recipients of the 2014 Distinguished Pastor Award from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

In the past three years, enrollment at Holy Spirit School has increased from 301 students to 411—a result of the parish’s effort to make families aware about Indiana’s school voucher program. The program provides assistance for families to pay for an education of their choice for their children. Msgr. Koetter led the effort to communicate the benefits of the program to the parish’s Hispanic and English-speaking families.

He has also strived to bring together those two cultures at church.

“Our parish community has a large Hispanic population with one large Mass on Sundays,” notes Alessandra Brown Baer, a parish member. “Father Paul believed we needed to make another one of the Masses a ‘unity’ Mass where both communities celebrate liturgy in both English and Spanish. This has united us as a community in other areas as well.”

For the past two years, Msgr. Koetter has met monthly with the school’s staff members to teach a class about the Catholic faith.

“The staff will say, ‘Being raised Catholic, I thought I knew our Catholic beliefs, but this class has put the icing on the cake for me. It makes sense.’” says school principal Rita Parsons.

“This interaction has enlightened most of us to carry on discussions outside our staff meeting.”

His focus on prayer and communication has had the same impact on the parish staff, Parsons says.

“Our parish staff meetings have connected our ministries together as one. It makes a huge difference when we all work together for the common cause of living out our faith.”

Connecting school and parish

Msgr. Koetter humbly downplays the praise and the award, preferring to view them as an affirmation of “our school and the people who work here.”

“It’s all about working together,” he says.

For him, it’s also about following these words from Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, the only visible quote in his office: “Do small things with great love.”

He loves that the parish he pastors has a school.

“I think a school adds a lot to a parish. There’s a vitality and energy that comes with a school. It adds work and financial responsibilities, but it’s well worth the effort. I think a school creates a strong identification with the parish. For the kids, this is their place. I tell people that when they walk into church they should feel like they’re walking into their home. And they feel it here.”

He smiles when he talks about the reactions he receives from students when he comes to the playground—how they run up to him and share their news with him.

“I like to feel I have a relationship with the kids, that they know me, they’re comfortable with me, and that they can come to me if they need to.”

“I try to go over to the school if there’s a play or another activity going on. I just want to let them know I’m supporting what they’re doing, and I want the parents to see I’m doing that, too. It builds the connection between the school and the parish.”

“God is working with these kids!”

The students embrace that connection, too.

“One of the first things I think about Father Paul is how connected he is with every individual,” says Jack Wright, an eighth-grade student at Holy Spirit. “He learns everyone’s name.

“God is working with these kids!”

The students embrace that connection, too.

“Some of the Gospel readings are very hard to understand, but he puts them in perspective for all the little kids. Father Paul also gets you involved and engaged during Mass. He’ll ask questions about the Scriptures, or he’ll make a joke and cause the whole church to laugh. And from my experiences while serving, the reverence and respect he carries, especially during funerals, is unrivaled.”

Msgr. Koetter views his interactions with students as teaching moments.

“If I ask them questions, they’re engaged. With the questions, you get them thinking, and you can reach them in a different way. I usually end with something I want them to do that day. . . . Today, I want you to say, ‘Have a good day,’ 10 times. I give them a challenge they can carry forward.”

Sometimes, he’s the one learning from the interactions.

“Yesterday, we had a junior high retreat, and I gave a talk on the Mass. There was one young lady whose eyes were glued on me. I really felt a hunger of her wanting to learn, to know, to understand. Those kinds of moments are very enriching for me as a priest.

“My whole role as a priest is to help people grow closer to God. When I see something like that happen, it lets me know I am doing what I want to do. It also reminds me that God is working with these kids, and they have something to offer, something we may have missed.

“It always goes back to relationships.”

Submit photos to thecriterion@archindy.org.
HOLLOWELL
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the words for him.

“I told my students that as sad as the events were that took place just the day before, the thing that comforts me is that the battle between good and evil had already been fought and won, 2,000 years ago. Jesus himself was crucified,” Hollowell recalls.

“From that moment on, there will never be the same in our classroom. This is the ultimate victor. I then concluded my brief reflection by reading one of the Gospel accounts of the Passion of the Lord.”

From that heartbreaking day came one of the most rewarding teaching experiences for Hollowell—this year’s recipient of the Saint Theodora Guerin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

“Five months later, on the last day of school, I came back into my room, once all the students had left for home, to find a card sitting on my desk,” he says.

“Up onto the card, I read an extremely thoughtful thank-you note from a student who was in that first period class. The student concluded her note by writing, ‘I will never forget the lesson you taught us by saying that evil was defeated by love over 2,000 years when Jesus died on the cross. Thank you for sharing that with us. It made everything so much better for me that day.’”

“God was calling me to do more”

That ever-present desire to connect faith to his classes and the lives of his students has become a trademark of Hollowell’s teaching.

That emphasis is on display in the only two posters that the 33-year-old Hollowell features in his classroom. One showcases an image of Albert Einstein and this saying from the famous scientist: “I want to know God’s thoughts; this is my calling to life. I want to know what is true; this is my life’s work.” The other poster, right near the classroom door, shows a picture of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and this quote from her: “God has not called me to be perfect, but to be faithful.”

“Quality Catholic education is made up of best practices, from games to groups to pre-calculus class, he shows his students the architecture of St. Peter’s Square—which is actually an ellipse, he says. He also uses that math lesson as an opportunity to let his students know this Vatican City site is “the epicenter of Catholicism since Jesus himself was crucified,” Hollowell recalls.

“We have a lot of students who aren’t Catholic,” Hollowell says, sharing one reason for his approach. “That can be a moment of great teaching and great evangelization for those students.”

Lighting the fire

Hollowell’s ability as a teacher also shines in terms of academic success.

After the 2011-12 school year, he noticed that the algebra end-of-course assessment scores for the school’s eighth-grade students were at a “pass rate” of 33 percent and a “pass-plus-pass rate” of 6 percent.

So he took over the class and changed the curriculum for the 2012-13 school year—a year in which the “pass rate” soared to 100 percent and the “pass-plus rate” dramatically improved to 59 percent.

“The level of dedication to his job is unbelievable,” wrote Jo Hoy, principal of St. Louis School as a child and is still a member of the Parish’s adoration chapel.

She places flags on the graves of veterans on Memorial Day. She assists with food drives for the Father Jonathan Meyer, then pastor of St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes in Jennings County and St. Mary Parish in North Vernon.

“Where else on Earth would I have the opportunity to teach and help mold young people while sharing my faith, my family and my friendship?” Vogel says. “I love each and every one of my students. They have spent time in my class, they are mine for life.”

Finalists for teaching honor come from throughout the archdiocese

Eight teachers became finalists for this year’s Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for Catholic educators in the archdiocese.

The recipient of this year’s award is Matt Hollowell of Cardinal Ritter R 8th High School in Indianapolis.

The other seven finalists were:

• Beth Brogan—Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis
• Amy Huber—Holy Family School in New Albany
• Karen King—St. Christopher School in Indianapolis
• Jenny Lents—St. Louis School in Batesville
• Alice Vogel—St. Pius X School in Indianapolis
• Teresa Minton—Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School in Indianapolis
• Jenny Lents—Teresa Minton—Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School in Indianapolis

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YOU have the most brilliant physicist that ever lived. What do you think about that? That’s the quote from his high school principal, which is actually an ellipse, he says. He also uses that math lesson as an opportunity to let his students know this Vatican City site is “the epicenter of Catholicism since Jesus himself was crucified,” Hollowell recalls.

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to get to heaven, so I model my own quest for heaven by taking part in the sacrament of reconciliation when it’s offered at school,” he says. “God himself used modeling over 2,000 years ago when he sent me to us as a model for how to live, pray and suffer. A quality Catholic education should provide students with daily opportunities to encounter the perfect model of human life.”

While he focuses on presenting Christ as the perfect model of human life, Hollowell shares with his students that he is far from perfect, including in his faith. “I have more problems with them sharing my struggles with them, and to tie it into what the Church is teaching,” Hollowell has found that calling.

“I am working through what it means to have vocational. To the other years in this profession and to absolutely be in love with what I do, it’s my vocation for sure. This is what God wants me to do.”

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a model of an amusement park ride to demonstrate Newton’s Three Laws of Motion.

“They are mine for life”

“I once had an administrator [at another school] tell me that his students would also perform at a very high level if they only had to teach ‘the cream of the crop,’” Vogel recalls.

She has that same goal for herself.

She plans accordingly.

Work hours: Some weekdays, some Saturdays. Pay: Satisfaction, fulfillment and lots of gratitude.

Go to www.volunteersindy.org (“Volunteer Opportunities”) or call 687-4258 for more info.

Matt Hollowell writes an equation on the board for one of the math classes he teaches at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.
People are accustomed to giving up things for Lent. Perhaps we need to start a new tradition and start giving up things for Easter.

What’s that you ask? Why would someone give things up for Easter?

Where Lent is a season of discipline and prayer, fasting and self-denial, Easter is a time of celebration and of joy, of living in the Lord’s time of wonder.

Self-deprivation may seem out of place in a time of joy, but in some ways it is impossible for us to truly feel joy unless we let go of some negative feelings and emotions that prevent us from fully taking in what is available to us during the Easter season.

Imagine that you are a kid in a candy store and you see a big jar of jawbreakers sitting on the counter and your mouth starts watering. You really, really want a piece of candy. The store manager says, “Try your luck. You can have free as many pieces as you can take from the jar in one try.”

You reach into the jar and grab a large handful of candy, closing your fingers on your treasure. However, when you try to remove your hand from the jar, it won’t come out. It’s stuck. The mouth of the jar is big enough for your unchewed hand to enter with room to spare, but as soon as you grab a handful of candy and close your fist, the jar’s mouth is too small. The only way to get your hand out of the jar is to let go of the candy.

The same happens to us when it comes to matters of faith. We see all of the joys of the Easter season, which lasts for 50 days until Pentecost. We truly want to celebrate, but we can’t because we are holding on to our fears and our concerns, our petty jealousies and closed attitudes.

Like the child grabbing too much candy in the candy store, we are not able to take advantage of the Easter celebration as long as our fists are closed.

In order to truly revel in the joy of the Resurrection, we have to realize that there are things we must give up, and the things we must give up are those that get in the way of our true joy.

Unlike Lent, when people give up things they enjoy or love as a sacrifice, Easter can bring a type of dumping, a spiritual spring cleaning, if you will, of attitudes and behaviors that are useless and are a hindrance to our happiness.

To start, give up hungering for things. Instead, hunger for God. In John 4:14, which we read during Lent, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman at the well that he is the living water that relieves all thirst. In John 6:51, Jesus tells his followers that he is the bread of life and that those who eat of his flesh will live forever.

As long as we hold bad feelings in our hearts, we are not free to savor Easter joy.

The Lord offers us all the water and food that will satisfy our hunger. All we have to do is open our minds and hearts to accept these gifts. Don’t hold on so tightly to the material. Let the Lord satisfy your hunger instead.

It also would serve us well to give up bitterness and resentment, jealousy and envy. In Galatians, the Apostle Paul offered this advice: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

Scripture scholars suggest that this statement may have been an early baptismal formula, words that the early Church used when people were baptized. To the Galatians, Paul is doing more than offering them sage advice. He is reminding them of what it means to be a Christian.

If all are “one in Christ Jesus,” there is no room for jealousy or envy, bitterness or resentment.

As long as we hold bad feelings in our hearts, we are not free to savor Easter joy.

To the list, add giving up loneliness and fear, especially fear of sickness and death. Jesus’ disciples were heartbroken when he was crucified. Their hopes and dreams had died with Jesus. The Gospels tell us that most of the disciples fled and hid, thinking that they had been fooled. Then came the Resurrection and things changed.

The fullness of Jesus’ teaching became real for them:

“The kingdom of God that Jesus had preached took on new meaning in light of the Resurrection.”

That’s the ultimate good news of Christianity: death has no more power over us. This revelation filled the first disciples with such joy that they took to the streets at Pentecost to share it with others. They did so with such enthusiasm that many in the crowd thought they were drunk. To believe in the Resurrection, we must, like the disciples, let go of our fears.

If we let go of all of these negative things, only then can Easter, its 50 days and beyond, truly begin.

By Daniel S. Mulhall

Easter season helps Catholics connect the Resurrection to life’s challenges

A few years ago, I attended Mass at a small parish. On any given Sunday, anywhere from eight to 12 of us went to Mass regularly. One Easter Sunday, our population surged to about 20. Following Mass, we were handed a yellow balloon with the figure of Christ stamped on it.

Catholics leave offerings as they pick up holy cards that feature St. Cajetan on his feast day at the church that bears his name in Madrid. People marked his feast with a traditional procession and prayers appealing to the patron of jobseekers.

Celebrating Easter over a 50-day season can help Catholics relate Christ’s Resurrection to their daily trials.

It had the words “Christ is risen,” and we were sent on our way.

“I remember feeling a huge letdown. Where was the Easter joy? I was bent on finding a different parish, a bigger one with a little more fervor, one where Easter could really be felt.”

A few days later, I heard an Easter-time homily that was a call to action, one that asked us to be better brothers and sisters to each other, to build a sense of community and caring in our neighborhood, which was plagued with high crime and poverty and where several homicides had taken place that week.

We were told to be brothers to all, inside and outside the parish, no matter how small our numbers were, to act out the Gospel instead of just parroting it. We were told not to abandon those in most need of us.

Sometimes we must heed the words of Exodus: “The Lord will fight for you; you have only to keep still.”

For some, Easter will bring a letdown, but we have to remember that Easter is more than throngs of people at church, a big meal, flowers, egg hunts or chocolates. It is more than a day on the calendar. We have 50 days, not one, to find and bring the joy, the liberation we celebrate, to others.

In a collection of essays from Rediscovering the Meaning of Lent and Easter, writer Kathleen Norris tells us that “God doesn’t bring us to a desert in order to let us die.”

She says that “God intends for his beloved to thrive,” and that’s what Easter aims to show us. She points to the words in this Psalm: “I shall not die but live and declare the deeds of the Lord” (Ps 118:17).

Norris refers to Mary Magdalene as the model of one who recounts the good deeds of the Lord. It is she who brings the news that Jesus was alive to the disciples, and who is thus an important witness to the Resurrection.

This asks an important question that should make us think about how we go about telling the Good News in modern times. How do modern-day disciples celebrate Easter and recount its message? It’s a hard message to communicate to those who have not yet experienced liberation from the daily struggles of unemployment, violence, economic or racial disparity, among others ailments.

“How do we recognize that we have seen the Lord, and how do we reveal this glorious truth to others?” she asks.

“How do we dare speak of salvation and hope in a world so full of injustice, hatred, violence and deadly accident? This is the challenge and the mystery of Easter.”

(Rhina Guidos is an editor at Catholic News Service.)
The Levites (descendants of Jacob’s son Levi) were the priests who served in Israel’s priests were drawn. Therefore, it’s understandable that the Book of Leviticus, the third of the five books in the Torah, came from a priestly source.

Cynthia Dewes

Cornucopia

The voice of the turtle is still heard loud and clear.

In the spring, it seems anything is possible. For some reason, our chemistry, and our ability to combine help us think about future opportunities rather than past failures. We consider life rather than death, health rather than sickness. And nature seems to support this effort with her usual display of new growth and warm breezes and sunlight.

Many animals have their babies in springtime. Country people on their rounds may find nests of baby rabbits, or sometimes a hidden bower where a fawn or two live with mom. Birds are nesting nests under porches, moving into fancy birdhouses in bird lovers’ yards. As Scripture says, the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

When one is further along in the span of life, when the end is closer to us than the beginning, we realize that “turtle’s voice” and dwell on gloom. We want answers as to why a troubled young man is the missing jetliner with 239 people? It’s definitely not an easy question to answer. For some reason, our chemistry seems to welcome the invitations.

The unusual part is always a terrific bore with not much to contribute to conversation and absolutely no clue about children, but she seemed to enjoy it. The cupid de grace came one day when I was building up to a migraine headache about time shopping.

As dinner progressed, I felt so sick that I had to excuse myself and go to bed. The family graciously called the spouse struggling to make small talk and the kids ramping up to the anxiety of the occasion. Suddenly, one of the boys threw a roll at his sister, who promptly screamed that it was her fault. And someone did it, but Dad quickly sent them all to their rooms, For once, our guest was tactful and merciful.

Then, there was our neighbor, Dick, the Bruiser, a TV wrestler who sounded mournful when he mentioned, "We need a new policy was abandoned. The new policy was adopted and they tore open the land and again. Volcanoes also come to mind at this point. However, we never again. We consider life rather than death, health rather than sickness. That is the voice of the turtle that I’m listening to the voice of that turtle.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)

Consider This/Stephen Kent

Christianity’s timeless lessons to society in a rush

Years and years ago, whaling vessels left the harbor of New Bedford, Mass., but this was never to be seen again in the cottage world of 239 people. We want answers as to why a solder is the missing jetliner with 239 people? We want answers as to why a solder is the missing jetliner with 239 people? We want answers as to why a solder is the missing jetliner with 239 people?

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(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Encounter with a saint led to a deepened relationship with Christ

On April 2, 1988, I was blessed more than I knew at the time. I was attending the Easter Vigil liturgy at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. I was 17 at the time and was on a spring break tour of Italy with fellow members of the Latin Club at St. Peter’s High School in Shelbyville.

That Saturday morning, a leader of the Catholic News Service from a Catholic high school in Philadelphia offered extra tickets to the vigil that they had received. I jumped at the chance to attend the Mass, even though I didn’t fully know at the time how important it is in the life of the Church.

Looking back on that day 26 years later, I realize now that participating in that Mass had a tremendous effect on my life. It was inspiring to worship and to joy the Resurrection with so many people from around the world, to witness people from so many countries being baptized into the life of Christ. I shared in the Eucharist and do it all with Christ’s vicar on Earth, Blessed John Paul II.

At about 2 a.m., the four-hour Mass concluded and Pope John Paul process down the main aisle of St. Peter’s Basilica. I was sectored about having a photo taken with the pope near me. Then I realized that maybe I should reach out, too. I did and Blessed John Paul reached out his hand to me.

It wasn’t much of an encounter. I know priests who concelebrated Mass with him in his homeland and spoke with people who met him and spoke with him. Still, I’m proud to say that I’ve shaken hands with the Pope.

On April 27, Pope Francis will solemnly declare Blessed John Paul and Blessed John XXIII saints in a Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican that will likely number hundreds of thousands of people who are more who are now descending on Rome.

Wherever Blessed John Paul traveled around the world, he did it in the same way as he was after that Easter Vigil that I attended in 1988. But when he spoke to those people, the pontiff pointed them not to himself, but to Christ. He was much more interested in them than an encounter with the Lord than with himself. By the help of God’s grace, that has happened to me in the 26 years since shaking hands with that saint. During that time, Christ led me to discern possible calls to the priesthood, and after much prayer I learned that he wanted me to love and serve him as a husband and father.

I’ll be the first to admit that I was wrong. By the help of God’s grace, I’ve developed opportunities to grow closer to Christ in the ordinary events of my everyday life with my wife, Cindy, and our five sons.

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I’ll be the first to admit that I was wrong. By the help of God’s grace, I’ve developed opportunities to grow closer to Christ in the ordinary events of my everyday life with my wife, Cindy, and our five sons.

The next thing I knew was that Blessed John Paul II, Blessed John XXIII and Pope Francis would want for all of us.

(Stephen Kent is the retired editor of The Criterion, the newspaper of archdiocesan newspapers in the Diocese of Shelbyville. He can be reached at consdkent@gmail.com.)
Sunday Readings
Sunday, April 27, 2014

- Acts 2:42-47
- Psalm 1:3-9
- John 20:19-31

With deep faith and faith-filled excitement, the Church continues the celebration it began a week and a day ago on Easter Sunday, the day of the Lord’s Resurrection and final victory over death and sin.

As it is the case in almost every Mass of this season, the first reading this weekend comes from First Epistle of the Apostles.

Originally Acts was readily seen to be a continuation of St. Luke’s Gospel. Obscuring this fact for centuries has been the insertion of St. John’s Gospel in all the translations and revisions of the New Testament between Luke’s Gospel and Acts. Nevertheless, the Gospel of Luke and Acts should be seen as a whole, for they tell an uninterrupted story of salvation in Jesus, from Mary’s conception to a time years after the Ascension.

This weekend’s reading describes what life actually was like in the time shortly following the Ascension. The Church, very much geographically in the place where it first formed, where Jesus lived, died, rose and ascended.

The reading describes the first Christians, most of whom likely knew Jesus, as reverently following the Apostles, of being together in a most realistic sense of community, of eagerly caring for the needy, of the Resurrection narratives. In this reading is the story of the reluctance of the Apostle Thomas to accept that Jesus indeed had risen from the tomb. Then, as all recall, Jesus dramatically appears on the scene. He invites Thomas to believe. In awe, and with the uttermost faith, Thomas declares that Jesus not only is teacher and Redeemer, but indeed that Jesus is God.

The Lord then confers upon the Apostles that most divine of powers, the power to judge what is sinful and to forgive sin.

Reflection
This weekend is special in the Church. At the Vatican, Pope Francis on Sunday will solemnly declare Blessed Pope John XXIII and Blessed Pope John Paul II to be saints. It will be of interest to many people, since very many remember John Paul II, and many still remember John XXIII.

Much appropriately can be said about each of these extraordinary leaders of the Church. Together, they give us the images of ordinary human beings for whom Jesus was a living, loving personal, close friend. Their sense of Jesus reminds us that the events liturgically commemorated at Holy Week and at Easter were not stulte historical references to things past. Rather, they celebrated the fact that Jesus still is with us. So the mercy of God, offered us in Jesus, still is available.

This mercy reaches us in very visible ways. It is through the Apostles. The Apostles and their successors bring us this mercy, this contact with Jesus, with God, and the sure hope of being forgiven.

Through faith in Jesus, in the Church, with the Apostles, like the faith so wonderfully shown by John XXIII and John Paul II, we meet Jesus face to face. We are saved from our own death and sin. We grasp in our faith that Jesus lives. Jesus is real!

Q

I would like to take holy Communion more often from the chalice, but people concerned about contacting someone else’s illness.

Has anyone ever studied how “clean” the chalice is? Is there anything that swipes of the purificator? Has anyone been able to document whether illness could be transmitted even to a whole congregation in this way? And lastly, has the Church ever considered using single-serving plastic cups, as some Protestant churches do? (Newport News, Va.)

A

Recognizing Jesus in the Eucharist

Recently, I took my 4-year-old grandson to Mass. Above the altar, we have a very large crucifix and I noticed that, while looking at it, the boy was visibly shaken and quite upset. How does one explain Jesus on the cross to a 4-year-old? (Davenport, Iowa)

A

Recognizing Jesus in the Eucharist

A

What I know is that precious little about theology, I nevertheless venture an answer. First, there is no way to prevent children from seeing a crucifix and asking adults about it.

Many years ago, our seminary class was studying sign language so we could transmit the Scriptures to the hearing-impaired. I recall very little from that time, but what I do remember is that the sign for “Jesus” was to point to the center of both palms. So ingrained in our consciousness is the suffering of Christ that his nail prints identify him.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal stipulates that there should be a cross with the figure of Christ crucified on or near the altar of every church that is clearly visible to the congregation” (#308).

I do take your concern as a helpful caution against displays or descriptions that are overly graphic. In explaining the passion of Christ to your child, there is no need to highlight the nails, the scouring, the crown of thorns. I think that I would say something like this: Many years ago, you used to punish people who had done something very wrong by hanging them on a cross. Jesus didn’t do anything wrong at all. In fact, he was the nicest and the kindest man ever was.

But other people have done many wrong things, and Jesus still loves them. So he told his father that he wanted to offer his own life to make up for the wrongdoings of those other people, so that they could one day live with him in heaven. Jesus suffered a lot that Good Friday, and he died because he loved all of us so much.

But the nice thing is that three days later, his Father brought him back to life again. He saw his friends and his mother some of whom likely knew Jesus, as reverently following the Apostles, of being together in a most realistic sense of community, of eagerly caring for the needy, of the Resurrection narratives.
Rest in peace

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


ERFMAN, Jim, 75, St. Peter, Franklin County, April 1. Brother of Julie Wilhelm, Jerry and John Erfman.


Grieving Gracefully ... Into a Future Full of Hope

May 8th
9 am - 3 pm
Presented by Sr. Connie Kramer, SP

This picture taken of the Atlantic Ocean at dawn is a reminder of the special gift which is hidden within the process of grief. Just as waves are a part of the natural rhythm of the ocean’s flow, grief, like breathing, is a part of the natural flow of one’s life’s journey. However, like the rocks at the ocean’s shore which stop the natural flow of the ocean’s waves, unreconciled grief can stop the natural grief process and leave one with a broken heart unable to be healed. Those who choose to embrace their own grief process as a sacred journey open themselves to new life in totally unexpected ways.

This one day retreat will focus on understanding and embracing the process of grief within a group setting, with hope and healing awaiting those willing to share their sacred grief journey with their God and one another.

Cost: $39 per person – includes continental breakfast, lunch and program.

To register or find out more about these programs, visit us at: www.archindy.org/fatima

Way of the Cross

Actors take part in a re-enactment of the Way of the Cross which commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus during the Orthodox Holy Week celebrations in Bucharest on April 15. Romania’s Christian Orthodox majority will celebrate Easter on April 20 together with Catholic believers.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

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At the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Barnabas Church in Indianapolis on April 19, she received her first holy Communion and was confirmed in the Catholic faith. Her 1-year-old son, Murphy, was baptized, too.

“She realized pretty quickly that, even though she thought it was a lot of money. It’s hard to explain to someone who hasn’t had that [Catholic school] experience. And in some cases—like McGill’s—it’s through a Catholic education assisted by UCA funds that others are brought to the faith.

“Those kids in Catholic schools become part of the community,” she said. “You can look at statistics at the kids that comes out of Catholic schools, the types of scholarships they receive, the things they’re doing when they graduate—everyone benefits from what goes on here at a Catholic school. Even the ones who attend.”

Two years ago, an Italian chocolate maker had donated a gigantic, 550-pound chocolate Easter egg to Pope Benedict XVI, which he in turn donated to a juvenile detention center in Rome.†

Pope Francis sends Easter eggs to hospitalized children, gift to the homeless

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Ending small patients at a Vatican-owned hospital could keep an Italian Easter tradition, Pope Francis had toured the hospital, which was founded in 1869 and had been owned by the Vatican since 1924.

By Natalie Hoefer


In college, she was a substitute teacher at Roncalli High School and Bishop Chatard High School, both in Indianapolis. She now teaches full-time at Roncalli.

But up until this Easter, 29-year-old McGill was not Catholic—officially.

“I’ve been the most Catholic a non-Catholic could be,” she said of her journey to the Church.

She looks to her experience at Catholic schools as the main path that led her to join the Church—schools made possible in part by funds from the United Catholic Appeal: Christ Our Hope annual campaign (UCA).

“If you’re immersed in [the faith] in a Catholic school, it just becomes part of who you are,” said McGill. “That was instrumental in my own decision.”

Her journey actually started in 1981, four years before she was born, when her mother, a Methodist, started teaching at Our Lady of Providence.

Raised in the Methodist faith, McGill said when it came to decide on where she wanted to teach, her first choice was Catholic schools.

“My mom is still assistant principal at Providence,” she said. “She’s been there for so long. I knew that it was something you didn’t get for the money, [but] for the mission of the schools. What’s going on there is so special.”

McGill, who teaches English and speech and coaches Roncalli’s speech team, defines Catholic schools with words like “family,” “community” and “caring.”

“Watching the test or getting the grades or getting the scholarships,” she explained. “It’s all about the people that those kids are becoming.”

Of course, McGill said, the faith component of Catholic schools “is huge.”

I took it for granted as a child that I prayed every day in school, that I was allowed and encouraged to pray on my own, that I was taught to memorize the [Apostles] Creed and other prayers.

Those things become a part of who you are, even as kids. Sometimes I think the kids don’t even know it’s happening to them, but those things become a part of who you are.”

McGill knew that when she had children, she wanted them to attend Catholic schools, even if they weren’t Catholic.

Her husband Mickey, a non-Catholic, didn’t understand. “He didn’t dislike Catholic schools,” she said. “But he thought it was a lot of money. It’s hard to explain to someone who hasn’t had that [Catholic school] experience. Now through me, and through other people we know, he completely agrees, and he gets it. He’s the one saying to other people, ‘You might not get it, but it’s real. There’s something special about these schools.’

So, after many years attending and teaching in Catholic schools, McGill has decided to “make it official.”

“Those kids in Catholic schools become part of the community,” she said. “You can look at statistics at the kids that come out of Catholic schools, the types of scholarships they receive, the things they’re doing when they graduate—everyone benefits from what goes on here at a Catholic school. Even the ones who attend.”

And in some cases—like McGill’s—it’s through a Catholic education assisted by UCA funds that others are brought to the faith.

“Had I just stumbled across Catholicism, or if I just knew some things about it and liked the tradition, I don’t know if I would have joined the Church,” McGill said.

“But it’s so much of a part of who I am now after being so immersed in it at Catholic schools. I feel so well-versed in the Bible and the prayers and the traditions.

“It’s one of those things that just feels right. It feels like what I’m meant to become.”

(For more information about the United Catholic Appeal, log on to www.archindy.org/uca or call the Office of Stewardship and Development at 317-236-1425 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1425.)†
the Mass. It’s been a regular part of her observance of Holy Week for years. After the Mass, she spoke of her appreciation of representatives from parishes across central and southern Indiana worshipping together.

“It’s inspiring to know how far our faith goes,” she said. “It’s pretty amazing and fulfilling to see it.”

Father Sengole Thomas Ginagaran, the administrator of St. Pius V Parish, as well St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Bristow and St. Michael Parish in Cannelton, shared that appreciation.

“It’s always good to have the people from the parishes,” he said. “I felt very blessed to bring four of my parishioners [to the Mass].”

In his homily at the chrism Mass, Archbishop Tobin reflected on how the oils blessed during the liturgy are “essential elements of the sacramental life” of the parishes in which people are anointed and are given a share in the mission of Christ and the Church.

He noted that the oil of catechumens, with which people are anointed before their baptism, “reminds us of the journey of faith that begins with God’s gift.”

Archbishop Tobin then turned to the oil used in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. He recalled how Pope Francis has emphasized the Church’s ministry of healing and likened the Church in an interview last year to a field hospital after a battle where the faithful are to “heal the wounds, heal the wounds …”

He then gave thanks for Catholics in central and southern Indiana who seek to further physical, mental and spiritual healing.

“We [also] pray for strength and wisdom for the pastoral leaders who heal the wounds that have resulted from the process of Consecrated in the Spirit,” continued Archbishop Tobin, referring to the ongoing planning process in which several parishes in central and southern Indiana have been merged with nearby faith communities.

He then reflected on the last oil to be blessed—sacred chrism. It is used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy orders, as well as in the dedication of churches.

“In consecrating holy chrism, we thank God for one another and all the faithful of the archdiocese, who share a common mission to make God visible for the world,” Archbishop Tobin said. “We commit ourselves to search for the doors God is opening for us, so that we might become a pathway by which others might find him.”

“God has anointed us and sends us forth. We cannot return to him alone.”

After his homily, Archbishop Tobin led the approximately 145 priests present at the Mass in renewing their ordination promises.

The moment was special for retired Father John Geis, who is celebrating this year the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination.

“It always felt like whenever I made that commitment [at a chrism Mass] that it was like the beginning when I did it the first time,” Father Geis said.

For Father Douglas Marcotte, associate pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, it was the first time for him to renew the promises he made last May when he was ordained a priest.

He said the chrism Mass was a reminder that “I’m still doing the work of Jesus Christ and his Church as a priest. So, I need to be mindful that I am keeping those promises that I made in front of all the people that day in the cathedral on the day of my ordination.”

In a matter of weeks, Father Marcotte will witness the priestly ordination of his brother, transitional Deacon David Marcotte, who participated in the chrism Mass by presenting the oils to Archbishop Tobin to be blessed.

Speaking before the Mass, Deacon Marcotte said his thoughts were on the chrism oil that he would present, knowing that his hands would be anointed with it at his upcoming ordination.

“That is definitely something that I am happy to be a part of and to see firsthand,” he said. “It’s a very special Mass.”

Other people were anointed with the chrism blessed at the Mass sooner than the ordination on June 7. During Easter Vigils celebrated in parishes across the archdiocese at the culmination of Holy Week, catechumens are anointed with chrism as part of their baptism and during the sacrament of confirmation.

Jillian Vandermarks, director of religious education and faith formation at the St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, received the oils for her faith community.

She said, “One of my catechumens will present the oils [at the parish] on Holy Thursday. I have walked with her this whole year. Their conversion is always an affirmation of my faith.”

(To view a gallery of photos from the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass, log on to www.CriterionOnline.com.)