Caring for the whole person

Young doctor focuses on patients’ dignity as she leads Catholic health care group

By John Staughnessy

Her time with the dying patient continues to remind Dr. Casey Reising of the most important approach she strives to have as she starts her career as a family physician.

“This man was middle-aged, he had a huge tumor on his head and neck, and it was thought he would die within weeks,” Reising says, recalling the home hospice visit she made as a medical student.

“I was struck by how joyful he was. I remember looking into his eyes, and I could see Christ in him and feel Christ there with us. We were there to take care of him, and he was taking care of us. It was a good reminder to me to maintain my relationship with Christ so I can be his hands and his feet, to take care of all those I encounter—to really love every person I come in contact with.”

Beyond her personal practice, Reising is working to promote the connection between Catholic faith and health care as the president of the St. Raphael Catholic Medical Guild of Indianapolis. The goal of the group is to provide support and education for Catholic health care professionals who try to uphold Catholic values in medicine.

As part of the group’s efforts, a White Mass for health care workers will be celebrated at 6 p.m. on Sept. 29 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis.

“I think the group can offer a place where we can meet, make friends and learn more about our faith and the Church’s beautiful teachings about modern medicine,” says Reising, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “In the future, we’d like to branch out and be more involved in service opportunities in the community, including ethics seminars and health fairs.”

In helping to re-establish the group this year, Reising has called upon the guidance of Dr. James Scheidler, an Indianapolis physician who has long been involved in service opportunities in the community, including ethics seminars and health fairs.

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Dr. Casey Reising, right, shares a moment of joy with Kim Haley, an office assistant who works in Magnificat Family Medicine, the new Indianapolis medical practice that Reising named to honor the Blessed Mother. (Photo by John Staughnessy)

Archbishop Sheen’s sainthood cause suspended indefinitely

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The canonization cause of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen has been suspended indefinitely, according to a statement issued on Sept. 3 by the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, where the archbishop was born.

The suspension was announced “with immense sadness,” the diocese said. “The process to verify a possible miracle attributed to Sheen had been going extremely well, and only awaited a vote of the cardinals and the approval of the Holy Father. There was every indication that a possible date for beatification in Peoria would have been scheduled for as early as the coming year.”

With evidence of her son’s alleged miraculous healing boxed and sealed in front of a portrait of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, Bonnie Engstrom proclaims a reading at a 2011 Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Peoria, Ill. The Diocese of Peoria, Ill., announced on Sept 3 that the canonization cause of Archbishop Sheen has been suspended indefinitely. (CNS photo/Tom Dermody, The Catholic Post)

Pope appoints 14 couples to attend Synod on family

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—More than 250 participants, including 14 married couples from around the world, are expected to attend October’s extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family.

In addition to 114 presidents of national bishops’ conferences, 13 heads of Eastern Catholic churches and 25 heads of Vatican congregations and councils, the pope appointed 26 synod fathers to take part in the Oct. 5-19 synod.

A list of the appointments was released on Sept. 9 by the Vatican.

Almost all of the 26 papally appointed voting members are from Europe. Of these, none of the 14 cardinals, eight bishops and four priests appointed by the pope is from North America or other English-speaking countries.

Some of the papal appointees include German Cardinal Walter Kasper, Belgian Cardinal Godfried Danneels, and Italian Cardinal Elio Sgreccia, as well as Jesuit Father Antonio Spadaro, director of La Civilta Cattolica journal, and Msgr. Pio Pinto, dean of the Roman Rota, a Vatican-based tribunal that deals mainly with marriage cases.

However, among the nonvoting members of 38 observers and 16 experts appointed by the pope, the majority are laymen and laywomen, including 14 married couples, and they are more geographically diverse, with several coming from Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas, as well as Europe.

Voting synod members include officials from the Roman Curia, heads of the Eastern churches, and archbishops of Churches “sui iuris,” including Byzantine Archbishop William C. Skurla of Pittsburgh.

Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and U.S. Cardinal Raymond L. Burke, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, are members of the synod fathers to take part in the Oct. 5-19 synod.

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Archbishop Sheen, who gained fame in the 1950s with a prime-time television series called “Life Is Worth Living,” died in New York in 1979. The diocesan statement said the Archdiocese of New York denied a request from Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Peoria to take over the cause of Sheen’s sainthood, saying the archdiocese “would never allow the examination to be exhumed, relics that might have been buried with Mr. New York.”

A Sept. 4 statement from Joseph Zwillinger, communication director for the New York Archdiocese, said Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York “did express a hesitance in exhuming the body” absent a directive from the Vatican for inspection for Saints’ Causes and family approval. The statement added that Archbishop Sheen’s “closest surviving family members” asked that the archdiocese’s wishes be respected, and that he had “expressly stated his desire that his remains be buried in New York.”

Zwillinger said Cardinal Dolan “does object to the dismemberment of the archdiocese’s body,” but it had been exhumed, relics that might have been buried with Archbishop Sheen might be “reversely collected” and “shared generously” with the Peoria Diocese.

A subsequent statement on Sept. 5 from the Peoria Diocese said it had received a “shocking statement” on June 27 from an attorney for the New York Archdiocese saying the archdiocese would not allow the examination of the body, the securing of relics or the transfer of the body.

The new statement said Bishop Jenky had been assured in 2005 that Peoria would pursue the cause of Archbishop Sheen’s beatification, but last fall the archdiocese received a statement from Cardinal Dolan, saying the cause would now have to be relegated to the “Congregation of the Causes of Saints” in Rome. The statement added that Archbishop Sheen’s miracles are “for official inspection and to take first-class relics to assume responsibility for the cause in an attempt to move it forward.”

Cardinal Dolan told Crux, “I guess my next step is to write a formal letter to Bishop Jenky and the congregation, saying we’d be honored to take over the cause if that’s what seems best.”

“After further discussion with Rome, it was decided that the cause might well have to be relegated to the congregation’s historic archive,” the Sept. 3 diocesan statement said.

Bonnie Enstrom, whose delivery of a stillborn baby, that later survived in 2010 provided the basis for a possible miracle attributed to Archbishop Sheen, expressed sadness and confusion over the delay in the sainthood cause.

“We are very disappointed that the cause to canonize Venerable Fulton Sheen had to be closed, especially because it had been progressing so well,” she told The Catholic Herald, a British Catholic newspaper. “We are incredibly saddened and confused by the Archdiocese of New York’s decision to not cooperate with the Peoria Diocese on the cause. We trust in the goodness of God.”

Engstrom’s son James had no recorded heartbeat for 61 minutes after delivery. Then, as doctors were about to pronounce the child dead, James’ heart started beating. He has defied doctors’ predictions that he would not survive, or that he would have severe physical and developmental limitations. In March, a seven-member team of medical experts convened by the Vatican reported there is no natural explanation for the boy’s survival.

“Countless supporters, especially from the local Church in central Illinois have given their time, treasure and talent for this good work with the clear understanding that the body of Venerable Sheen would return to the diocese,” the Sept. 3 Peoria statement said. “Bishop Jenky was personally assured on several occasions by the Archdiocese of New York that the transfer of the body would take place at the appropriate time. New York’s change of mind took place on the work on behalf of the cause had reached a significant stage.”

Archbishop Sheen, after his years in the TV limelight, retained a high profile by operating the Society for the Propagation of the Faith out of New York City.

How has faith helped your marriage? We want to know

As part of our continuing series on marriage, The Criterion is inviting our readers to share their input on any of these three questions:

How does your faith deepen your relationship with your spouse?

What shared expressions of faith and shared experiences of your faith have helped to make your marriage more Christ-centered?

Do you have a story of a time in your marriage when you have especially counted on your faith?

Please send your responses and your stories to assistant editor John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime number where you can be reached.

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Echoes program in Southern Africa for couples experiencing difficulty in their marriages

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For some Iraqi Christians, returning to homeland is not an option.

In Antwerp, Belgium, a gathering of leaders from various faiths and organizations discussed the world’s religious repression under the title of “A Healing World.”

Pope Francis says war is senseless slaughter, can always be avoided.

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—War is just “senseless slaughter,” and should never be seen as inevitable or a done deal, Pope Francis said.

“War drags people into a spiral of violence which then proves difficult to control; it tears down what generations have labored to build up, and it sets the scene for even greater injustices and conflicts,” he said in a written message to a world summit of religious leaders.

“War is never necessary, nor is it inevitable. Another way can always be found: the way of dialogue, encounter and the sincere search for truth,” he wrote.

The pope’s message was presented on Sept. 7 to people taking part in the International Meeting of People and Religions, organized by the Rome-based lay Community of Saint Egidio and hosted by the Diocese of Antwerp, Belgium.

More than 300 leaders representing the world’s religions participated in the global summit, which was being held on Sept. 7-9. Its aim was to create an international alliance of religions dedicated to peace and dialogue and to countering fundamentalist ideologies and violence.

In his written message read to participants on Sept. 7, the pope said this year’s 1,000th anniversary of the start of the First Crusade World War I “can teach us that war is never a satisfactory means of redressing injustice and achieving balanced solutions to political and social discord.”

Citing the wartime pope, Pope Benedict XV, Pope Francis said, “All war is ultimately ‘senseless slaughter’ that ruins lives and poisons relations.”

“We cannot remain passive in the face of so much suffering,” he said.

The pope urged the world’s religious leaders to cooperate in “healing wounds, resolving conflicts and putting peace on the agenda.”

Among those speaking at the summit in Antwerp was Ali Abtahi Sayyed Mohammad, a former vice president and current president of Iran’s Institute for Interreligious Dialogue.

“Radicalism is the product of an alliance between tyrants and ignorant followers,” Abtahi said in his address. “All conflicts based on presumably religious motives have shown that political leaders are the ones fomenting the violence, trying to convince ‘the devout that they are the only authentic religious group in the world and that the other religions are deviant and false.’

True religious believers, he said, “are those who understand the essence of religion, and are ‘always against war and the hostility that religious radicalism spreads in the world.’”

Abtahi said the radical religious groups, al-Qaida and fighters for the Islamic State, developed because of support from the West, “especially from the United States,” in order to carry out Western interests.

“Those who blew up the Twin Towers were the ones America armed to fight against communism” spreading from the Soviet Union, he said, “and those who are killing Muslims and Yezidi in Iraq are those who received financial support in Syria” to carry out the regime there.

“History teaches us this rule: You can build religious groups that [will be] very dangerous, but it will be very difficult to suppress or eliminate them,” the Muslim scholar said.

Egypt’s grand mufti, Shawqi Ibrahim Abdul-Karim Allam, said in his presentation on Sept. 9 that “Islam is a religion of dialogue,” and that radical extremists are “secular people who proclaim to be religious authorities, even though they are unqualified to interpret religious and moral laws.”

These extremists have an “eccentric and rebellious attitude toward religion” that “opens the door to extremist interpretations totally extraneous to Islam,” he said.

However, it’s not enough to dismiss extremists as having no legitimate religious authority, he said.

“If we do not understand the factors that contribute to the justification of terrorism and extremism, we will never be able to eradicate this epidemic,” he said.

A nun leads prayer for displaced Iraqi Christians who fled Islamic State militants in Makhmour, school accommodation at Irbil, Iraq, on Sept. 6. Irbil now hosts more than 100,000 displaced Christians and other minorities. Some Christians who have fled Iraq say they do not want to return.

Beirut where he and his family from a modest apartment in Beirut where he and his family from a modest apartment in Beirut where he and his family from a modest apartment in Beirut where he and his family

Michel Kasdano, a third-generation Iraqi Chaldean in Lebanon who volunteers his time to help Iraqi refugees, has no intention of returning to Iraq.

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“I'm open to do any kind of work to support my family,” Nouree said. But the 45-year-old biology teacher has not found much left over for food and other necessities. Nouree’s elderly mother, who has Alzheimer’s, is also living with them.

A Sept. 5 report by Fides news agency of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, quoted Father Paul Karam, head of Caritas Lebanon, as saying that around 350 families of Christians who fled Mosul and the villages in the plain of Nineveh have found shelter in Lebanon, “but the numbers continue to rise every day.”

We at Caritas Lebanon provide health care, food and prime necessities,” Father Karam said. “However we are saddened by the fact that almost all of them [Iraqi refugees] have no intention of returning to their country. Their desire is to emigrate, to leave the Middle East for ever. Sad to say this is the situation. And also on this issue the international community is called to make sensible decisions and it wants to contribute with its policies, to the extinction of Christians in Iraq,” Father Karam said.

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Whatever the Kurdistan regional forces promised [Cardinal Filoni] will be only words,” he said.

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The stories of persecution, displacement and even death are heartbreaking.

The pictures, including families fleeing for their lives, highlight the volumes about the challenges our brothers and sisters in Christ face each day, too.

The chaos and civil unrest in the Middle East these days begs the question: Why are so many victims in one part of the world, known as the cradle of Christianity, ever see peace?

We can debate the political landscape and discuss the various faith traditions and religious persecution that have engulfed the region, but we cannot ignore that, more than ever, we must pray for the suffering people whose lives are being turned upside down by a dire situation.

As Catholics, we are also being asked this weekend in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to contribute to a special collection to assist with the most urgent humanitarian needs facing the people in Iraq, Gaza, Syria and the surrounding countries.

The funds will be used by Catholic Relief Services and other Catholic agencies working in partnership with the local Church. “These agencies have well-established partnerships with the Catholic Church in the region which allows them to respond quickly and efficiently to victims in some of the hardest-to-reach areas,” said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. “Collection funds will also be used to support Church programs and other relief agencies trying to raise funds to aid persecuted Christians and to provide relief supplies for victims of the humanitarian disaster in Iraq. Catholic relief agencies are trying to raise more money than ever to assist the victims in the region. Parishes in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are being asked to contribute to a special collection this weekend.”

A Dutch Royal Air Force transport aircraft at Eindhoven Airbase in Eindhoven, Netherlands, is loaded on Aug. 18 with supplies and personnel from the humanitarian relief agency that provided dry relief to the displaced victims in Syria. (PHOTO COURTESY OF Kees Van Reemeren, EPA)

Remembering our lost children

There will be a solemn observance across America this weekend.

This Saturday, Sept. 13, marks the National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children. Thanks to the efforts of Citizens for a Pro-life Society, Priests for Life and the Pro-Life Action League, memorials are being hosted across the United States for a second year to memorialize society’s tiniest innocent victims.

According to the National Right to Life Committee, mourners across the country will visit the gravesites of aborted children whose broken bodies were recovered from trash dumpsters and pathology labs and solemnly buried over the four decades of legal abortion. In 1973, the first legal abortion went into effect in the United States. To date, more than 55 million children have died since the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalized abortion on demand in 1973.

Simultaneous memorial services will be held at more than 40 such gravesites, as well as at scores of other memorial markers set up in memory of the aborted born in cemeteries and churches.

Eric Schedler, executive director of the Pro-life Action League, said, “It’s sobering to realize that grave markers for the unborn victims of abortion list only a date of burial. They have no binoculars because they were never allowed to be born. We can list no date of birth, because those who killed them discarded their bodies like garbage. But they are not garbage to us. They are our brothers and sisters. That’s why we buried them, and that’s why we visit their graves to mourn for them and testify to their humanity.”

For more information about the National Day of Remembrance, including the stories behind the gravesites of aborted children and the locations of memorial services being held on Sept. 13, visit: AbortionMemorials.com

And take a few moments on that day—and each day—to pray that we continue to convert hearts in our nation, and take steps to build a culture that embraces every life, from conception until natural death.

—Mike Krokski

Helping our brothers and sisters in the Middle East

The overwhelming negativity response to the conversation surprised me, especially since I asked it of a group of about 50 people who are mostly Catholic and avid sports fans. It’s a question that won’t likely be confused with deep theological thoughts, but it has intrigued me for years: “Does God care about sports?”

When I asked the group how many of us believe that God cares about sports, no one raised a hand for a long 10 seconds. Then in the back of the room, one man lifted his right hand—slowly. Seconds later, so did another person—me. No one else joined us.

Of course, I realize that many people reason that God has many more important concerns to consider in this world. Yet I also see some evidence for my belief in one of the dramatic, down-to-the-wire games in Notre Dame football history.

It was the kind of finish where Irish fans promise God that they will change their lives for the better if he will let this latest comeback attempt become a reality. And the promises were even more grand than usual because the game was against the hated Michigan Wolverines, who were winning.

Standing in Notre Dame Stadium on that day in 1980, my father-in-law, Al Carson, lowered his head and made his own prayers and promises as Harry Oliver trotted onto the field to try the most desperate of field-goal attempts: 51 yards, into a strong wind, with just seconds remaining. Call it the Hail Mary of field goal attempts.

The ball was snapped, and a hush fell over the stadium. As Oliver kicked the ball, even classrooms and bathrooms around him noticed that the flags atop the stadium went limp, signaling that the wind had finally died. The ball kept rising and toward the goalposts. As it began its descent, fans leaned into one another, another and whispered one last prayer—“Please, God!”

As the ball cleared—just barely—the crossbar of the goalposts. The kick that botched Oliver, students stormed the field, and the shouts of 60,000 suddenly best friends echoed through the heavens—united against God.

To date, more than 55 million children have died since the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalized abortion on demand in 1973.

As Oliver kicked the winning field goal, it’s not the reason that game contributes to my belief that God cares about sports. What happened next?

In the midst of the crazy celebration, Carson walked on the field where the students were still going wild with joy. He headed toward the spot where Oliver made the kick. He looked toward the goalposts in awe as he marveled at how the ball had traveled so far, so true. Then he noticed a grass divot a few yards up the field. And he immediately believed that this divot was the very one that Oliver made when he kicked the ball.

He picked up the divot and left the stadium convinced he had found a tremendous treasure. After his three-hour ride back to Indianapolis, he planted the divot at the edge of his flower garden, a garden with a statue of the Blessed Mother in the middle of it. He figured that she, of all people, would understand the tremendous faith—and the blessed lunacy—of a Notre Dame football fan.

If God sees everything, as people of faith believe, I like to think he would have taken a curious yet extended look at what Carson had done. I also like to think that God would have smiled, shaken his head in appreciation and would have even been touched by that gesture of faith and devotion toward his mother.

So while I’m not convinced that God cares about sports who cares about sports—too—if only from the standpoint of how they influence our lives and our relationships, even our relationship with God.

That connection of sports, faith and relationships will be featured this weekend when the Irish football team comes to Indianapolis to play Purdue University in Lucas Oil Stadium on Sept. 13.

The game and a pep rally are naturally part of what is called the Shamrock Series, Notre Dame’s annual “home” football game in a city beyond its campus. So, if you do not hold any tickets, is the desire to leave a positive impact on the community where the game is played. In the weekend’s schedule of events also will include a Mass at 10 a.m. on Sept. 13 at St. John the Evangelist Church. The Mass will be open to anyone by Notre Dame president Father John Jenkins will be the homilist.

And the influence of the Blessed Mother on Notre Dame will also be featured as professor emeritus of theology Lawrence Cunningham is scheduled to give a presentation on “Mary in Art and Image on Notre Dame’s Campus” at 11:30 a.m. at the Westin Hotel in downtown Indianapolis.

Some eight hours later—the game begins shortly after 7:30 p.m.—the same in heaven do and the usual Notre Dame football promises and promises phone line.

(John Shaughnessy is the assistant editor of The Criterion and the author of When God Cheers.)

Reflection

‘Does God care about sports?’ Yes, and Notre Dame fans say his mother does, too

Columnist offers inaccurate portrayal of Middle East conflict, reader says

I usually enjoy the columns by Effie Caldarola, but the one in the Aug. 29 issue of The Criterion made me furious. The column is about her general dislike of bumper stickers, and her positive reaction to the one saying: “If you love Jesus, seek justice. Any fool can honk.”

She then proceeds to list many injustices in our world, among them “thousands of innocent residents of Gaza suffering the violence of a cruel war pursued by a side who pay little heed to civilian casualties.”

If you want to preach justice, be informed about the facts before—

Do not equate the murderous Hamas, that uses human shields to protect its missiles, with Israel, which goes to unheard of lengths to warn and protect the civilian population from harm.

Sophie Boguslawski

Indianapolis
Las enseñanzas de la Biblia y de la Iglesia sobre la familia

Durante los meses de septiembre y octubre escrito acuerdo de la familia. Este es un tema serio y oportuno ya que la Iglesia se prepara para el Sínodo Extraordinario de los Obispos que se celebrará en Roma del 5 al 19 de octubre. Hay algunas de las preguntas que estará abordando:

- ¿Cuál es el plan de Dios para la familia?
- ¿Qué enseñas la Biblia y las enseñanzas de la Iglesia acerca del significado del matrimonio y de la vida familiar?
- ¿Por qué la perspectiva cristiana de la familia resulta tan difícil de comprender y aceptar hoy en día?
- ¿Qué podemos hacer cada uno de nosotros para fomentar una comprensión más profunda y una aceptación más plena del carácter sacramental del matrimonio cristiano y de la función indispensable que desempeña la familia como cimiento de la Iglesia y de la sociedad humana?
- Comencemos con la Biblia, tanto el Antiguo como el Nuevo Testamento.

¿Qué nos dicen las sagradas escrituras acerca del matrimonio y de la familia? En esta breve columna no es posible proporcionar una respuesta detallada o integral.

La Biblia sagrada no es un solo libro sino un compendio de muchos, variados, personajes, parábolas, cartas y otras formas de expresión escrita (como los Evangelios) que creemos que fueron producto de la inspiración del Espíritu Santo y que revelan, de muchas formas distintas, la historia de nuestra salvación que creemos que incluye el plan de Dios para la familia.

Comenzando por el Libro del Génesis, la Biblia nos enseña que hombres y mujeres son compañeros e iguales, creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios, y que están destinados a unirse “en una sola carne” en el vínculo sagrado de intimidad que llamamos el matrimonio. El Génesis también nos dice que, juntos, hombres y mujeres están llamados a procrear con la obra de la creación de Dios, tanto como “procreadores” (al engendrar hijos) como “administradores” (guardianes o cuidadores) que ejercen dominio sobre todas las cosas, seres vivientes y objetos inanimados. Estas dos funciones fundamentales, la procreación y la administración, se llevan a cabo dentro de la unidad social básica que denominamos la familia.

En el Antiguo Testamento no se define la familia con precisión sino que el concepto está implícito en las escrituras de los autores sagrados. La unión de un hombre y una mujer es esencial para cumplir con el plan de Dios para la humanidad y toda la creación. Los hijos son una bendición y la unidad familiar (más que la familia como institución formal para proporcionar una estructura (una “escuela de amor”) en la que puedan crecer satisfactoriamente los hijos y que se sirve de marco para participar en las instituciones sociales en las que viven (tribus, clanes, poblados o ciudades).

Como todos, el plan de Dios para el matrimonio y la vida familiar se resquebrajaron aún más cuando Cain asesinó a su hermano Abel. Y las escrituras dicen que seis generaciones después de la caída Lamec tuvo dos esposas (Gn 4:19), lo que quizás fuera una necesidad cultural, pero ciertamente no era el ideal establecido por Dios. De hecho, a lo largo de la mayoría del Antiguo Testamento vemos cómo se aclaró el plan original de Dios para la familia. Incluso los personajes principales del Antiguo Testamento (como David y Salomón) tuvieron dificultades para preservar los valores que sabían que Dios les había ordenado.

Los Evangelios y los demás libros del Nuevo Testamento dan testimonio de una “reinstauración” del diseño de Dios para el matrimonio y la vida familiar. Jesús reafirma el carácter indisoluble del contrato del matrimonio y al mismo tiempo ofrece perdón y esperanza a aquellos que han pecado extramuros. San Pablo insiste en que el matrimonio cristiano es un imagen del amor de Cristo por su Iglesia y en su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) reconoce los desafíos que enfrentan los esposos, las esposas y los hijos a medida que luchan por vivir según el plan de Dios para ellos. Los escritores constantes del inicio para frustrar su determinación.

Desde el principio de los tiempos, las familias han tenido dificultades para mantenerse fieles al plan de Dios. La Iglesia enseña sistemáticamente que el matrimonio es un sacramento (un signo de la gracia de Dios que materializa lo que significa). Incluso en contra del poder del mal obrando en su contra, la familia sobrevive. “El futuro de la humanidad se fragua en la familia,” escribió el papa Juan Pablo II. “Por consiguiente es indispensable y urgente que todo hombre de buena voluntad se esfuerce por salvar y promover los valores y exigencias de la familia.”

El plan de Dios para la familia, pero jamás sugiere que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. En su Carta a los Efesios (Capítulos 5 y 6) recuerda que el matrimonio y los hijos como medio de vida para el santo. 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Respect Life Mass, Life Chain and other Life Chain events set for Oct. 5

The annual Respect Life Sunday Mass will be at 9:30 a.m. at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis at 1 p.m. on Oct. 5. Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, vicar general, will preside. The Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award will be presented during this Mass.

The Mass will be followed by a Life Chain from 2:30-3:30 p.m. along N. Meridian Street between Ohio and St. Joseph streets.

Life Chain is an interdenominational, one-hour prayer vigil, supporting respect for life at all stages. Central Indiana Life is the Indianapolis-based group participating in the annual Life Chain, which is held across North America on the first Sunday in October. To learn more about other Life Chain locations throughout the archdiocese, log on to lifechain.net.

VIPS

Florentino H. and Zenaida (Montemayor) Buenaventura, members of Holy Spirit of Geist Parish in Fishers in the Diocese of Lafayette, Ind., and former members of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 12.

The couple was married on Sept. 12, 1964, in Ermita Catholic Church in Manila in the Philippines. They have two children, Judy and Brian, and four grandchildren.

David and Mary Sue (Burke) Mann, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 5.

The couple was married on Sept. 5, 1964, at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Clarksville.

They have three children, Kelley, Chris and David. The couple also has six grandchildren.

The couple attended Mass and received a blessing at St. Anthony of Padua Church, and their children hosted a party for family and friends on Sept. 6.

White Violet Center to host Harvest Dinner on Oct. 4 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, a ministry of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, will host its fourth annual Harvest Dinner, at 5 p.m. on Oct. 4. The White Violet Center Gardens on the grounds of the Sisters of Providence. A cash bar, appetizers and silent auction will begin at 5 p.m. A meal prepared by local chefs will be served at 6 p.m. The meal will be made with locally grown food. Local chefs include Kris Knaat of Baesler’s Market, Jeff Ford of Ford Black Angus and Shelley Shober of Country Club of Terre Haute. Cost to attend is $50 per person.

For more information or to reserve tickets, call 317-919-5640 or visit www.wvec.org.

Gracious Choir from South Korea to perform in Indianapolis on Oct. 14

St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis is a co-sponsor of the upcoming 2014 U.S. Tour of the Gracias Choir from South Korea. The group is visiting 20 cities throughout the United States. This award-winning group will perform a free Christmas Cantata at the Old National Center, 502 N. New Jersey St., in Indianapolis at 7 p.m. on Oct. 14.

Limited tickets are available by calling 317-919-5640. The tour is conducted under the auspices of the International Youth Fellowship. For further information, go to their website at iyfusa.org.

Sept. 15

Indianapolis Attorney General Greg Zoeller, pictured, and Deputy Attorney General Rich Bramer visited St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville on Aug. 21. Zoeller, a 1969 graduate of St. Anthony School, is shown here speaking to students in a classroom. According to school principal Sheila Noor, Zoeller told students, “I think I learned at a little Catholic school that serving others was everyone’s mission in life, so it is probably where I started thinking about public service.” (Submitted photo)
Pope Francis cites 3 lessons from Mary: Be joyful, help others, never give up

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—When a mother has a birthday, children send their greetings and love, so make sure to do the same thing on the feast of the Nativity of Mary, Pope Francis said.

The liturgical feast day on Sept. 8 “would be her birthday. And what do you do when your mom has a birthday? You send her greetings and best wishes,” the pope said, after praying the Angelus with people gathered in St. Peter’s Square on Sept. 7.

The pope asked people to say “a Hail Mary from the heart,” and to not hesitate to tell her, “Happy Birthday!”

Mary has three very important lessons for today’s Christians, the pope said in a written message to Cuban bishops marking Sept. 8 as the feast of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, patroness of Cuba.

He said Mary teaches people to experience the joy of Christ and share it with others; to never let adversity beat you down; and always help those in need with love and mercy.

The pope said people should imitate how Mary responded to God’s call with her same joy, haste and perseverance.

“Every time I read sacred Scripture, in the verses that talk about Our Lady, three verbs catch my attention,” the pope said.

The three kinds of action—be joyful, help without hesitation and persevere, should be “put into practice” in all Catholic, he said, because I knew that Xavier wasn’t ready to give up to a hurricane. We had 80 people who brought us back in four and a half months, and 75 percent of them had lost their homes. That was not easy. There’s something about adversity. There’s something about knowing when it’s time to make a decision.

Francis had lost his home as well, but even in the midst of the recovery efforts he agreed to a plea from Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco to chair the Gulf Coast Restoration Authority, the state panel that provided guidelines for how the region would use federal funds to rebuild. In 2006, Francis received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush.

Michael Rie, chairman of the university’s board of trustees, said there is no true way to measure Francis’ impact on thousands of students and on the New Orleans community.

“There’s not a lot of servant leaders in this world,” Rie said. “This man could have been a politician, a successful businessman, a very successful lawyer. A lot of doors would have opened for him. But Xavier needed him, and the needs needed him.”

Rue said board members hope to have a new president in place by July 1.†

NEW ORLEANS (CNS)—Fittingly, the announcement came inside Xavier University of Louisiana’s sleek conversion center, the newest of the many green-roofed monuments that Norman C. Francis, the longest-serving university president in the United States, had built through charisma, prayer and personal witness.

Francis, 83, the patriarch of the Xavier family since 1968, told thousands of students, faculty and staff on Sept. 4 that he would step down in June 2015 as president of the only historically black Catholic university in the Western Hemisphere.

“After nearly 47 years, I know the time has come to take the brightly burning torch turned over to me by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and pass it on to new leadership,” Francis said. “I do this with a passionate confidence and absolute certainty that Xavier is better prepared than ever to continue its educational and spiritual mission and to build on its tradition of excellence.”

Francis’ tenure spanned generations and overcame many obstacles, not the least of which was restoring a campus inundated with the U.S. military in 1943.

When Francis came to Xavier as a 17-year-old freshman on a work scholarship in 1948, the campus consisted of just a few permanent buildings, several small houses and Army surplus trailers in one city block.

Xavier’s burgeoning campus today is dotted with 16 buildings on 63 acres, and the endowment has grown from $2 million to more than $160 million.

Xavier wasn’t ready to give up I was, but because I knew that Katrina devastated the Xavier campus and flooded 80 percent of New Orleans, I thought notions quickly vanished as he pulled together a small core of administrators, faculty and staff in temporary headquarters in Grand Coteau, La.

“I thought about it, but not for long,” Francis said. “I couldn’t leave, not just because of who I was, but because I knew that Xavier wasn’t ready to give up to a hurricane. We had 80 people who keep their word, who are constant in their good works, of life’s commitments, the Virgin encourages us to be disposable triumphs, in which it seems people are afraid of making a difference and helping others does not have to be done on a grand scale, he said, but entails doing everyday things “with tenderness and mercy.”

The third verb is to persevere,” the pope said.

“Victory is to those who repeatedly rise up, without getting discouraged. If we imitate Mary, we cannot sit with our arms crossed, just complaining or perhaps avoiding any effort so that others do what is our responsibility,” he said.

Making a difference and helping others does not have to be done on a grand scale, he said, but entails doing everyday things “with tenderness and mercy.”

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Courts strike down Indiana, Wisconsin marriage laws, uphold another

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A federal judge upheld an amendment to Louisiana’s state constitution in early September that defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman, but later that same week, a federal court struck down similar laws in Wisconsin and Indiana.

In the Louisiana case, U.S. District Judge Martin Feldman said on Sept. 3 the state did not overstep its authority in adopting a constitutional amendment approved in 2004 by 78 percent of the voters that banned same-sex marriage.

It was the first such decision by a federal court since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down part of the federal Defense of Marriage Act last year.

The defendants [the state] maintain that marriage is a legitimate concern of state law and policy, that it may be rightly regulated because of what centuries has been understood to be its role,” Feldman wrote in his 32-page decision.

The plaintiffs were six same-sex couples who had wed in other states and wanted Louisiana to recognize their marriages. A seventh couple living in Louisiana sought the right to marry in the state.

Feldman said for gay couples to have rights superior to the democratic process, they must constitute a protected class, and no court has bestowed that status on them.

“In light of still-binding precedent, this court declines to fashion a new suspect class. To do so would disrupt precedent and demean the democratic process,” he wrote.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, lauded the decision in a Sept. 3 statement.

“The federal court rightly declared that Louisiana’s marriage laws ‘serve a central state interest of linking children to an intact family formed by their biological parents,’ ” Archbishop Cordileone said.

“The federal court affirmed that the voters of Louisiana, who overwhelmingly chose to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman in their state constitution made a rational decision in furtherance of the logical consequences of their arguments to which they were unable to give an answer, including: ‘Must marriage be limited to only two people?’ Indeed,” the court said.

“I’m proud of the fact that the Louisiana court’s decision is consistent with the historical definition of marriage,” said Father Ryan McCarthy, pastor of Holy Rosary Parish.

The group meets the second Sunday of every month at 6 p.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

“We pray, we have fellowship and we discuss ethical issues that physicians, other health professionals and patients face in modern medicine,” Reising says. “We want to provide support intellectually, emotionally and spiritually for each other.”

After finishing her residency at St. Vincent, Reising decided to start her own practice. Searching for just the right name, she finally chose Magnificat Family Medicine.

“I chose that name because I have always had a strong devotion to Mary,” says Reising, a 2006 graduate of the University of Notre Dame. “I started praying with the ‘Magnificat’ during devotion at Notre Dame. Three different people—a friend, a priest and a patient—also suggested the ‘Magnificat’ as the name for my practice.”

Prayer was also a key part of her decision about what she should “stay in Indiana or go elsewhere.”

“I started praying and felt called to stay in Indiana.”

The motto of her practice is, “Holistic care upholding the dignity of the person and the dignity of the family.”

“With Jesus as the divine healer, we just try to bring healing to people. Sometimes, we can. Sometimes, we can’t, but we always try to walk with them.”

(For more information about the St. Raphael Catholic Medical Guild of Indianapolis, contact Reising at casie1.reising@gmail.com)

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Scheidler says. “She’s very competent, a charming young woman and a conscientious physician who will take care of her patients. And she believes in the Catholic Medical Association. It’s an organization that firmly adheres to Church teaching.”

—Dr. James Scheidler, an Indianapolis physician who has long been active in the national Catholic Medical Association

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Upholstering & Mill End Window Fashions

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—Dr. James Scheidler, an Indianapolis physician who has long been active in the national Catholic Medical Association

“I can’t be combined with any other offer. Must be presented at time of service.

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The prides and economy of our family working together makes a difference.”
Religious education is relevant to the ‘here and now’ for all Catholics across the archdiocese

By Natalie Hooter

Franciscan Brother Moises Gutierrez may be the archdiocesan director of the Office of Intercultural Ministry, but for a moment he plays the role of trivia master. “Do you know where the word ‘catechesis’ comes from?” he asked. “It comes from a Greek word meaning ‘to echo the teaching.’”

And that, he says, is what catechetics—religious education—allows each person to do: to echo the teachings of the Catholic faith, making that faith relevant to everyday life.

This article examines two ways that catechesis is relevant in an everyday way—through intercultural ministry, and through performing works of mercy.

‘Our faith does call us to serve’

Working for Catholic Charities in Terre Haute, development director Jennifer Buell says she is blessed by the nature of her work to take part daily in performing most of the seven corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit those in prison, and burry the dead.

“We have a pretty unique opportunity to [perform the corporal works of mercy] every day,” she said. “We don’t do our job because it’s our job—we are here because we want to do what we’re doing, and we’re blessed and lucky enough to do those works as part of our job.”

“Blessed and lucky, she said, because every Catholic is called to imitate Christ in serving others.

“We’re called to be that opportunity that someone might need to be able to turn their life around, to receive the food they need, find shelter they need, to help them and their family to really live in a dignified way.”

For Catholics whose jobs do not directly involve the corporal works of mercy, said Buell, there are still many ways to practice each one, thus “echoing the teaching” of Christ.

“The first thing for everyone is prayer,” she said. “Pray for openness to hear what God’s will is for each of us and through performing works of mercy.

Stepping up in faith

Whenever you are in your spiritual life, Jesus Christ wants to encounter you first, and take you further.

TUESDAY MORNING | 6:00AM - 7:30AM | STARTING IN SEPTEMBER

By John Shaughnessy

When they each talk about their goals for their lives, Aaron Hyre and Art Johnson also focus on the potential they believe all Catholic men have:

- The potential to grow stronger in their faith.
- To use that deepened faith to be leaders of their families, their parishes and their Church.
- To step out into the community to serve others.
- To perform most of the seven corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit those in prison, and bury the dead.
- To hear what God’s will is for each of us and directly involve the corporal works of mercy.
- To turn their life around, to receive the food that someone might need to be able to build a home, put food on the table, etc.

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‘Our faith does call us to serve’

Working for Catholic Charities in Terre Haute, development director Jennifer Buell says she is blessed by the nature of her work to take part daily in performing most of the seven corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit those in prison, and bury the dead.

“We have a pretty unique opportunity to [perform the corporal works of mercy] every day,” she said. “We don’t do our job because it’s our job—we are here because we want to do what we’re doing, and we’re blessed and lucky enough to do those works as part of our job.”

“Blessed and lucky, she said, because every Catholic is called to imitate Christ in serving others.

“We’re called to be that opportunity that someone might need to be able to turn their life around, to receive the food they need, find shelter they need, to help them and their family to really live in a dignified way.”

For Catholics whose jobs do not directly involve the corporal works of mercy, said Buell, there are still many ways to practice each one, thus “echoing the teaching” of Christ.

“The first thing for everyone is prayer,” she said. “Pray for openness to hear what God’s will is for each of us and through performing works of mercy.

Good catechesis is substantial, relevant and missionary

Catechesis is, in some ways, always the same, just as Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8). The basic truths of our Catholic faith don’t reverse themselves.

Our teaching of the faith, though, can be adjusted at times in methodology and emphasis. On that note, I suggest three traits that catechesis needs to show clearly in southern Indiana at this time: Our catechetical efforts must be substantial, relevant and missionary.

Substantial

A substantial effort has content—meat on the bones, lumber on the framework. Jesus—who wants to have a real, personal relationship with you—is a specific person with definite personality traits, likes, dislikes, etc.

Jesus has strong opinions about how we should live, pray, worship and love. Catechesis helps us to get to know Jesus better and better—the real Jesus and not a poster boy or Jesus conjured by a special interest group in service of some unseemly agenda.

Relevant

Just as catechesis must relate to our relationship with Jesus, it also must be relevant to our daily life.

Religion is becoming more and more compartmentalized in our culture, and catechists can succumb to the trap of delivering content without witnessing to why it matters.

What difference does this or that doctrine make in my life, the life of someone I know, a saint’s life, etc.? The power and beauty of truth are more or less powerful and beautiful, depending on how well the teacher also witnesses.

Missionary

When we witness to our faith, we tend to communicate sincerity and enthusiasm.

The third word to describe catechesis is ‘missionary’—calls to mind the healthy enthusiasm that has motivated saints and Apostles throughout salvation history.

A missionary catechist has a sense of urgency without a feeling of panic, because we have such a merciful Savior in Jesus. Our holy Redeemer guides us as we venture forth into areas of culture that need the light of truth and warmth of God’s love made clear in effective teaching of Catholic faith.

Jesus promised to be with us as we bring the light of faith to women and men throughout the archdiocese (Mt 28:20). He wants to be close to all people in ways that each individual is aware of and appreciates. A missionary sense of catechesis drives us to engage all women and men in ongoing, lifelong faith formation.

When catechesis has substance, when catechists show faith’s relevance by witnessing as well as teaching, and when catechetical leaders feel and instill a sense of missionary zeal in efforts to teach our faith, the times we live in will continue changing for the better by God’s grace.

Many he bless all catechists on this Catechetical Sunday and at all times as these devoted women and men bring Jesus to his people and his people to Jesus.

(Ken Ogorek is archdiocesan director of catechesis. He can be reached by e-mail at kogorek@archindy.org.)

Programs aim to make men better husbands, fathers and disciples in a challenging culture

By John Shaughnessy

When they each talk about their goals for their lives, Aaron Hyre and Art Johnson also focus on the potential they believe all Catholic men have:

- The potential to grow stronger in their faith.
- To use that deepened faith to be leaders of their families, their parishes and their Church.
- To step out into the community to serve others.
- To perform most of the seven corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit those in prison, and bury the dead.
- To turn their life around, to receive the food that someone might need to be able to build a home, put food on the table, etc.

Aaron Hyre stands with a banner promoting “That Man Is You!” at St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. The new program hopes to make Catholic men grow stronger in their faith.

See RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Supplement, page 12.
Catechetical leaders work to put substance in religious education programs

By Sean Gallagher

When Christine Beiriger was a child growing up as a member of St. Barnabas Parish on Indianapolis' south side, she participated in her parish’s annual vacation Bible school and served as a volunteer as a teenager. Then she went off to college at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio.

While there, she learned about a different kind of vacation Bible school, one that was more distinctly Catholic than the others she had experienced.

It is called “Totus Tuus” (a Latin phrase meaning “totally yours,” and is connected to devotion to Mary) and has been developed over the past two decades by a growing number of dioceses across the country. Totus Tuus is also different from typical vacation Bible school programs in that it uses volunteer college students from outside of the parish to teach the classes. Beiriger volunteered two summers in Totus Tuus while a college student.

So when she began her ministry as director of faith formation at St. Barnabas, she wanted to bring Totus Tuus to the archdiocese for the first time.

“Totus Tuus isn’t the same as other vacation Bible school programs,” said Beiriger. “It is a way that Totus Tuus addresses this challenge in catechesis.

“Children, teenagers and volunteer college students teach for joy on June 20 at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis at the conclusion of a Totus Tuus vacation Bible school at the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community. (Submitted photo)

“Totus Tuus is a Vacation Bible School in which children and teenagers of various ages learned the substance of Catholic teachings and traditions was a natural choice for Beiriger.

“I don’t think it’s effective or fruitful to water down the faith for kids,” she said. “Especially nowadays, kids are maturing so much faster. It doesn’t do them any good to treat them like they won’t understand.”

Amy Baker, a St. Barnabas parishioner who had children in Totus Tuus’ pre-school and fourth-grade classes, was pleased with how the program passed the faith and laid the foundation for her children to proclaim the Gospel themselves as they grow older.

“We don’t give the kids the credit that they can learn these difficult concepts. They really, really can,” said Baker. “And once they feel that [a teacher] entrusts them to know this, and that it’s a big deal, then they’re more willing to pass it on.”

Baker’s 9-year-old son, Mason, said that he learned a lot in his class.

“We read some verses from the Bible,” he said. “We talked about venial sin, mortal sin and vocations.”

But he also liked that he had a fun time learning about these things from college students that were great for him to be around.

“They’re kids still, a little,” Mason said. “Grown-ups would just want kids to behave and act very good. But if you have [college] kids, then they understand what it’s like being a kid. You want to have fun. Kids want to be kids.”

Having energetic college students pass on the substance of the Catholic faith in a way that is attractive to young people is a way that Totus Tuus addresses this challenge in catechesis.

Kristina Vogt, coordinator of religious education and youth ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Clark County, faces the challenge of handing on the substance of the Catholic faith to audiences across the age spectrum, not just for children and youth.

“The hardest part is knowing where your listeners are, what they need to hear and what they must know to be informed and prepared,” said Vogt. “Knowing what you want your listeners to take home with them that day to me is the best way to make sure you deliver the right substance. You have to be intentional about what you teach, making sure to emphasize the important things. How will this make a difference in my listeners’ lives? Will it draw them closer to Christ?”

Vogt said that shaping the catechetical programs at her parish, with this goal in mind, helps those who participate pass the faith on to other people in ways that make a difference in the world around them.

“Catechetical and youth ministry programs should be nourishing and provide the tools the participants need to be better disciples,” said Vogt. “They should share the love of Christ with others. If the message they have heard is indeed Good News and has changed their lives for the better, then they should want to share that with others.”

Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, said that teaching the faith can make a difference in people’s lives through fostering a deeper relationship with Christ and the word of God.

“I think of Jesus himself quoting scripture, ‘Man does not live by bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God,’ “ said Ogorek, citing Matthew 4:4. “So, our catechesis has to have substance, because, in many ways, good catechesis feeds our souls. ‘Jesus doesn’t say, ‘Man lives on one or two sound bites that come from the mouth of God,’ but ‘on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ God loves us so much that he reveals quite a bit of helpful truth to us.”

—Christina Vogt, coordinator of religious education and youth ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Clark County

‘Catechetical and youth ministry programs should be nourishing and provide the tools the participants need to be better disciples.’

—Kristina Vogt, coordinator of religious education and youth ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Clark County
Catechetical professional organization broadens its outreach in archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

Long before Lori Hamilton began ministry as director of faith formation at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany in 2006, she helped lead religious education efforts at an Air Force base in Texas.

It was a difficult experience, to say the least. “I felt like I was an island in isolation,” said Hamilton. “I didn’t have a support system.”

There were few people in the area for her, a newcomer to catechetical ministry, to learn from.

That led her to be hesitant about taking up leadership in parish catechesis at Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Over the past eight years, however, Hamilton has found all the support she desired through the Association of Parish Catechetical Leaders (APCL), an organization of a wide array of religious education leaders in faith communities across central and southern Indiana.

“I absolutely love it now,” said Hamilton, APCL’s treasurer.

“The support of my peers and being able to share ideas and talk to people and just to know that there are lots of other people doing what I’m doing is very helpful.”

APCL underwent a significant change two years ago to broaden the support it has offered catechetical leaders in the archdiocese since the late 1970s when it was founded as a professional organization independent of the archdiocese.

Until 2012, it was known as the Association of Parish Administrators of Religious Education and primarily served directors of religious education in archdiocesan parishes.

According to Stacy Hennessy, pastoral associate and director of religious education at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, the widening of APCL’s vision was needed because “of a change over time in how the parishes are staffed. It also recognized the important catechetical leadership offered in many parishes by youth ministers and pastoral associates.”

“We wanted to throw the net much wider,” said Hennessy, who served as APCL’s president from 2012 until earlier this year.

Youth ministers and pastoral associates can now join APCL and, as a result, its membership has doubled in the past two years.

More membership means more mutual support for parish catechetical leaders. Thus, in turn, said Hennessy, will enable parishioners to have better faith formation programs.

“It gives energy to catechetical leaders and puts new resources into their hands,” said Hennessy about APCL’s broadened outreach. “In turn, this would allow them to offer better quality classes, more programming in youth ministry, more service opportunities, more liturgical opportunities, more financial connections so that, for example, we can get more kids to the National Catholic Youth Conference.”

Kay Scoville, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, is glad to have an organization for youth ministers across central and southern Indiana that offers support.

“They can share resources and ideas,” she said. “It will motivate them to be the best that they can be. If you have other colleagues around you promoting professional development, then they’re more apt to jump on board.”

Scoville works closely with Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis.

In speaking about the changes in APCL, he emphasized its focus on cooperation in catechesis among parish ministers who approach passing on the faith from a variety of perspectives.

“The breadth of APCL’s outreach reminds us that ministry is a collaborative effort,” Ogorek said. “Good parish catechesis involves parish administrators of religious education, pastoral associates and youth ministers.”

Benedictine Sister Pam Doyle, director of religious education at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis and APCL’s current president, said the change in the professional organization came at a good time for the local Church.

She noted how these changes can work hand in hand with the Connected in the Spirit pastoral planning process that has fostered collaboration among parishes across central and southern Indiana.

“The timing may have purely been the Holy Spirit’s intervention on this,” said Sister Pam. “But the timing is very good. There will be a learning curve for APCL because we need to see what this collaboration looks like. It will be different in many places.”

Even if the partnerships in catechetical leadership that APCL will foster will look different in various parts of the archdiocese, the organization will always be a support for people involved in this challenging but rewarding ministry, says Hennessy.

“They support me spiritually and emotionally,” she said of her fellow APCL members. “If I have a difficult time in my job, we’ll pray about that together. It’s very uplifting.”

(For more information about the Association of Parish Catechetical Leaders, log on to www.apclindy.org.)
what he has as opportunities for us to live that out. Sitting in his silence and listening to what his path is for us is an important first step.

Next, said Buell, Catholics can consider volunteering for organizations that perform works of mercy. “We see hundreds of people come through to help, whether it’s delivering food, working in a soup kitchen or serving as positive role models at the youth center.” And while giving time and talent are vital, she said, giving of treasure enables others to perform larger works of mercy. “We can also help out by providing for the least among us through donations,” she said.

Whether in a small or broad way, said Buell, “Our faith does call us to serve. It calls us to live out the life of Jesus. Through performing works of mercy, we can do that.”

Intercultural catechesis in the “here and now”

Many immigrants settling in central and southern Indiana are Catholic. They become members of parishes and worship at Mass. If they are already Catholic, why is it important to catechize them? “The role of catechesis in the immigrant communities is teaching our Catholic faith in the context of the Church in the United States,” Brother Moises explained.

“In many cases, immigrants continue using faith formation programs from their native countries. Sometimes it is not easy to let go of the context of the country, culture and reality where we learned our faith. Even though our faith is Catholic, meaning universal, the context of where we live, worship and work has an impact on how we teach and live out our faith.”

To help Catholic immigrants integrate and adjust to the cultural context of their faith, the Office of Intercultural Ministry has created ethnically-based pastoral formation institutes—three for Hispanics, one for Burmese, and one for black Catholics. The goal of these institutes is to form pastoral and catechetical leaders within the various ethnic communities. “The role of the catechists in the immigrant community is important and even imperative because they are the ones who pass on to the next generations the teachings of our faith,” Brother Moises said.

While these catechists are learning to share the faith in the context of the American culture, he said, “They [also] understand and appreciate their community’s native culture and spirituality.”

As the number of immigrant Catholics increases, said Brother Moises, the need for native catechists to teach their communities the relevance of the faith in the “here and now” also grows. “I personally believe that well-formed catechists from immigrant communities are a great blessing for the archdiocese because they have the potential to be intercultural catechists, which means that they can catechize in the context of our reality here and now, while presenting and witnessing a catechesis that appreciates and values diversity.”

“Catechizing is one of the main missions for Catholics,” said Brother Moises. “Without good catechesis, it would be difficult to evangelize or be pastoral leaders in our Church. Therefore, our hope is that we are forming leaders that are able to ‘echo’ the teachings of our faith in word and deed; to ‘echo’ the faith that was passed onto us through our parents, our culture and our present context in a way that is mutually transformative and alive.”

—Franciscan Brother Moises Gutierrez

Men

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in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese this past winter. The meeting started at 6 a.m. on a Monday morning in February, and 150 men were there.

“I knew there had to be something to the program,” Hyre says. “Men have a tendency to want to isolate themselves from spiritual things. You don’t hear discussions of God in men’s conversations. But when you talk to them, there’s a yearning for that. That’s what this program does. It brings these issues up to men, and there are discussions about what it means in our lives and how to implement it.”

Hyre knew he needed that approach in his own life. “I’m struggling with that masculine identity myself,” he says. “My father was basically out of my life since I was 13. I wasn’t the role model I needed. And I found a lot of other men were in that same situation. We were not the men God intended us to be. I knew I would be more fulfilled if I was following God’s design for men.”

So Hyre made a commitment to start the “That Man Is You!” program at St. Simon. He also saw it as an opportunity to reach out to the men in the two parishes that have been partnered with St. Simon through the archdiocese’s Connected in the Spirit process: St. Michael Parish in Greenfield and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville.

“Our program, it will meet at St. Simon on Tuesday mornings for 13 weeks through the rest of this year, following the format of a school’s semester. Hyre chose a 6 a.m. start for the program so it doesn’t conflict with work schedules in the morning or family schedules in the evening. The first meeting at St. Simon was on Sept. 2.

“I had to assemble a team to start it. As soon as I explained it, people said they were in. I’ve actually had wives come up to me to get the information for their husbands. Fifty-six guys attended the first meeting. It was a very large success. I can see the Holy Spirit working in this already.”

Art Johnson also sees the Holy Spirit at work in his life, leading him to live his faith so he can make an impact on society. As part of his development, Johnson traveled to Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio, in late July to attend the annual “Defending the Faith Conference”—a weekend-long gathering with the theme this year, “Holy and Heroic: The Courage to be Catholic.”

“I have a responsibility to my fellow Catholics, my fellow Christians and those who are struggling in the faith. You do that by being a good witness, and you do that by trying to explain your faith.”

—Art Johnson

People in need receive food at Deli Days, a food pantry operated by Catholic Charities Terre Haute at its Bethany House Soup Kitchen in Terre Haute. (Submitted photo)

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MEN

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The singing started with the school fight song before eventually leading to a rousing rendition of “Lean on Me.”

Even if they weren’t perfectly in tune with each other or with the words, the players seemed to enjoy being there and being a part of the moment.

“Even if they weren’t perfectly in tune with each other or with the words, the players seemed to enjoy being there and being a part of the moment,” said Sister Sheila. “We had a lot of folks helping, but they provided the extra strength for hauling the stone and the gravel. They were game-changers.”

“Four-Star School” recognition

Near the end of the 2013-14 school year, the Indiana Department of Education recognized seven Catholic high schools and 10 elementary schools in the archdiocese for achieving the status of a “Four-Star School.”

That recognition was given to schools that “perform in the upper 25 percent in performance on ISTEP+ and End-of-Year Assessments state exams, as well as their rating determined by the national No Child Left Behind statute’s Adequate Yearly Progress.”

The four archdiocesan Catholic high schools that earned this recognition are Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville and Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

The three private Catholic high schools that received that status include Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis, Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg.

The 10 elementary schools that earned “Four Star” status include St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County, St. Paul School in Sellersburg and St. Susanna School in Plainfield.

Six Indianapolis Catholic schools also received that recognition: Christ the King, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Luke the Evangelist, St. Pius X, St. Simon the Apostle and St. Thomas Aquinas.

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(Send short summaries—and photos—of your school’s success stories to assistant editor John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include a contact person for your school’s success stories and a phone number where he or she can be reached.)

Pope Francis! just bragging rights are being a sinner, being saved

VoATCAN City (CNS)—Pope Francis said Christians should boast about only two things: that they are sinners and they have been saved by Jesus Christ.

“IT’s useless to brag about formal education and degrees because they don’t have the power to transform people into credible Christian witnesses, the pope said. Only a personal experience of God’s saving grace can do that.”

In his homily on Sept. 4, Pope Francis focused on the day’s readings in the first St. Paul warns about the vanity of those who are “wise” and how “the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God” (1Cor 3:18-23). The Gospel reading tells of Simon Peter, the fisherman, who begged Jesus to “depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man” (Luke 5:1-11).

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Church cracks down on Catholics ensnared in murderous code of revenge

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Hidden beneath Albania’s long legacy of interreligious harmony and peace lie the turmoil and bloodshed of an ancient vigilante code that affects thousands of families, many of them Catholic.

Called “blood feuds,” they stem from a traditional Albanian code or “kanun” that sanctions murder to restore a family’s honor after a member experiences an affront, injustice or killing.

The feud can start with a quarrel or offense, which then triggers the murder of any male member, even teenagers, in the perpetrator’s family.

When Pope Francis visits Tirana on Sept. 21, he is expected to highlight the nation’s Muslim-Christian cooperation as a successful model for the rest of the world. But one expert anticipates the pope will also chastise the Balkan nation for its lingering social strife, political corruption and barbaric honor code of revenge.

“We’re really good when it comes to collaboration and coexistence among religions, but we’re not that great from the social-issues point of view,” said Luigj Mila, secretary-general of the Albanian bishops’ peace and justice commission.

This established right to spill blood in return for bloodshed has meant the practice has cycled and spanned over generations.

At least 7,000 people have been killed in the past 20 years alone, and some 1,500 families have members living as virtual prisoners in their house since the code considers the home sacred ground, and was often seen as the only viable law of the land.

Priests and religious, especially Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries, he said, spent years “walking into the mountains trying to reconcile the feuding families.”

But even voluntary confinement wreaks havoc as the person is unable to work or go to school, and the whole family can suffer from fear, trauma and depression.

An extensive set of rules, the “kanun” is thought to date back to prehistoric times and was codified in the 15th century to offer law, order and a system of justice.

Its practice was squelched during the oppressive Stalinist regime from 1944 to the 1990s, but gained a resurgence with the nation’s newfound freedoms.

The blood feud practice had been isolated in the mountainous northern region, but has slowly trickled down to nearby cities as villagers flocked to urban areas for better opportunities or to flee vengeance back home.

An estimated 70 percent of the murders involve Catholics.

Mila said that’s because Catholics make up the majority in the mountains, where they fled during the Ottoman incursions beginning in the 14th century. It’s estimated that among Albania’s 3 million inhabitants, Catholics make up 16 percent of the total population, Muslims about 65 percent and Orthodox 20 percent.

The murders have been “a scourge” and “very painful” for the Catholic Church, Mila said, as incidents of Catholics killing Catholics call into question the sincerity of Church sanctions.

Mila said the three Albanian bishops in the North decided to take the situation into their own hands.

Led by Archbishop Angelo Massafra of Shkoder-Pult, the bishops published a decree in September 2012 declaring that any Catholic who does not obey God’s commandment of “Do not kill,” faced automatic excommunication.

Such a drastic measure was necessary, the bishops’ letter said, because Church teachings have been ignored.

“Now it is time to apply the penalties that the holy Church and the [kanun] law foresees in such cases,” that is, the most severe of Church sanctions.

Mila, a lawyer, said the impact was immediate.

As soon as an honor killing took place, the bishop publicly declared the penalty of excommunication on the murderer, sending shockwaves throughout the country.

“It had an effect because, even if the person isn’t very religious, they fear divine condemnation. The psychological—spiritual pressure is very strong,” and people abhor the thought of being “cursed” or excluded, Mila said.

The bishops’ stance also had an impact on the Albanian government, which, Mila said, then decided to “take control.” Authorities finally accepted that there was a problem and acknowledged its seriousness, something they had never done before, he said.

“I’m sure it has served the good because it also gives people the possibility of repenting, of turning back and become part of the family” of the Catholic Church again, he said.

In the run-up to the pope’s visit, Mila said the bishops have called on all feuding families to reconcile.

“And I know the pope will ask people to forgive each other and stop this vendetta,” he said.

 Albaniangirls hold portraits of a 17-year-old girl who was killed in 2012 with her grandfather in Tirana, Albania. (CNS photo/Armando Babani, EPA)
Faith Alive!

Pope Paul VI's message on evangelization still relevant today

By Effie Caldarola

In October, when the Synod of Bishops meets in Rome to discuss the issues related to evangelization and the family, Pope Francis will beatify one of his predecessors, Pope Paul VI.

Paul is sometimes thought of as an interim figure, serving between St. John XXIII who called the historic Second Vatican Council, and the long-serving and dynamic St. John Paul II. But it fell to Paul to finish the council, to begin the implementation of its reforms and to begin to look at how the Church might be immersed in “the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age,” as stated in the beautiful opening lines of the council document “Gaudium et Spes.” (“Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.”) #1.

Paul, who was elected pope in 1963, was especially concerned with how the Church might continue to proclaim Jesus Christ to the modern world. In 1975, 10 years after the closing of Vatican II, and a year after a meeting of the Synod of Bishops studied evangelization, Pope Paul VI issued an apostolic exhortation, “Evangelii Nuntiandi” (“Evangelization in the Modern World”).

Catholics sometimes recoil from that word—“evangelization.” It sounds too much like proselytizing, like the doorbell ringers who bother us on Saturday morning, or the acquaintance determined to “convert” us.

But real evangelization isn’t bothersome or obvious or overbearing. In reading “Evangelization in the Modern World,” we understand that from the earliest days of Christianity, sharing the message of salvation offered through Jesus Christ is a touchstone in the life of anyone who truly believes.

As Pope Paul VI writes, “It is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom of Christ without encountering him in our families, where we first us to evangelize through our families, where we first know that we must continually be challenging ourselves to “return to the city to tell everyone about Jesus.”

To do this, we might consider furthering our Catholic education. If we haven’t dusted off our knowledge of the faith since high school religious education, it’s time for a refresher course. Most parishes offer opportunities for this. Evangelization means that all of us must be evangelized herself” (#15). We don’t rest on our laurels, but are Christians by Our Love,” if we live a countercultural lifestyle, embracing simplicity and charity and justice, prioritizing faith, expressing joy in the Resurrection in the face of adversity. When we live this way, people will ask that question. Why are they like this?

In his apostolic exhortation, Pope Paul also challenges the Church. The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself” (#15). We don’t rest on our laurels, but know that we must continually be challenging ourselves to “return freshness, vigor and strength in order to proclaim the Gospel” (#15).

To do this, we might consider furthering our Catholic education. If we haven’t dusted off our knowledge of the faith since high school religious education, it’s time for a refresher course. Most parishes offer opportunities for this. Evangelization means the huge impact on society, and he saw how it could be used to transmute the message of Christ.

But he also saw a challenge, and offered a beautiful caveat. While social communication can reach vast numbers of people, the evangelist should seek to gain the “capacity of piercing the conscience of each individual, of implanting [the Gospel] in his heart as though he were the only person being addressed” (#45).

Paul also reminds us that we must take our faith into the marketplace, what he calls “the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media” (#70).

So we modern evangelists won’t necessarily be ringing doorbells. First and foremost, though, we will make a commitment to let our whole lives be informed by the Spirit, and he led to proclaim Jesus by the witness of our lives and our families.

(Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and a columnist for Catholic News Service.)

Proclaim the Gospel by showing the difference Jesus makes in your life

By Marcello D’Ambrosio

We’re all heard it: “Evangelization? That’s not my charism, not my personality.” Others make the excuse: “I need more education first,” or “I evangelize by example.”

The Second Vatican Council and all popes since teach that Catholics are called to evangelize in deed and word. After all, we are told in the First Letter of Peter “always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1 Pt 3:15).

Practically, how are we to do this? Not everyone is a Fulton Sheen, and not everyone can manage to get a degree in theology. But the story of the Samaritan woman (Jn 4:4-52) teaches the kind of evangelization that all of us can manage.

First, Jesus models it for us. He sits down by a well in a town where everyone is a member of a sect that has been rejected by the broader Jewish people. A woman comes to draw water. Israelites usually didn’t talk to Samaritans, much less drink out of their ritually impure vessels. To boot, men usually didn’t make conversation with women in that time and place.

But Jesus recognizes her existence and affirms her by being willing to accept a drink from her. Once she gets over her shock, a dialogue ensues. It starts out about water, wells, Jews and Samaritans, and the proper venue to offer pleasing worship to God. But Jesus asks her questions that throw her off a bit and make her think. He finally makes a suggestion that leads her to “fess up” and admit her need: “Go call your husband and come back” (Jn 4:16). She’s hungry for love, and has run through quite a few partners looking for the real thing. Jesus’ soul-piercing glance tells her that his is the love she’s been looking for. She abandons her water jar and returns to the city to tell everyone about Jesus.

Did she wait until she had cleaned up her act and attained a high degree of virtue? Did she wait until she had a master’s degree in theology? Did she sit down with people and demonstrate from Scripture why he was the Messiah? No. She acted immediately.

She simply told people, with joy, confidence and conviction, what Jesus had done for her. She shared her experience and invited others to accept the same gift. That’s how a large portion of the Samaritans in that town came to believe. And that’s how a large portion of the Roman Empire came to believe. There were no crusades in stadiums, no TV preachers. Christians simply listened to neighbors and co-workers with respect and love, asked questions to find out their needs, and told how Jesus had met similar needs in their lives. An invitation was issued to “come, check it out.”

We need to get over our fear of sharing the Good News, to be aware of the spiritual needs of those around us, and share his love. More people are looking than you think. “Look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest” (Jn 4:35).

(Marcello D’Ambrosio writes from Texas. He is co-founder of Crossroads Productions, an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.)

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 incantate Word Brother Michael Zhang, who is in priestly formation for his religious order, chats with a woman at the entrance of a subway station in the New York borough of Brooklyn. Pope Paul VI penned an apostolic exhortation on evangelization nearly 40 years ago that still has relevance for Catholics today. (CNS photo/Stephanie A. Dettweiler)
From the Editor Emeritus/Fr. John Catoir
Old Testament: Legends about the prophet Elisha

(Thirty-sixth in a series of columns)

The Second Book of Kings begins with the death of King Ahaziah of Israel, the son of Ahab and Jezabel, in 849 B.C., and concludes in 561 B.C. after the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah. However, it also includes stories about the prophets Elisha and Jezabel circulated by their disciples until they became legends. They include numerous miracles.

We met Elijah in the First Book of Kings, and we learned that after the deaths of Ahab and Jezabel, in 849 B.C., Elijah traveled to Damascus and then to Jericho. He then began a 40-day test in the desert in preparation for the final battle against the army of the King of Aram which was attacking Israel. It left him very weak and exhausted. However, when he was attacked by the enemy and they threw stones at him, the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, “Get up, eat some food and bring on your strength for your journey.” (1 Kings 19:5-7)

Elisha circulated by their disciples until they became legends. They include numerous miracles. For example, Elijah healed the woman whose son was dead in Shunem. Elisha sent his servant to Shunem to announce his passage through the town. Upon his arrival, the servant found the woman and her son eating a meal. The child was well and continued to live. The story of the cure of Naaman, the army commander of the king of Aram, who leprosy is read during Catholic Masses, is well known. However, it includes Naaman’s declaration that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel, and his thanksgiving from a pagan.

The second story is about a young girl named Naaman who was suffering from leprosy. He sought the advice of a prophet named Elisha, who lived in Samaria. Elisha told Naaman to go to the Jordan River and wash himself seven times to be cleansed. Naaman was furious because he thought Elisha was making fun of him. However, when Naaman did as Elisha said, his leprosy disappeared. He rejoiced and went home to Aram to thank his commander for sending him to a foreign land where he was healed.

In Chapter 2, we get a war story that hinges on Elijah’s role. He gave advice to the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom in a battle against Moab. The battle itself is strange because the Moabites saw water that they thought was blood, possibly caused by the red sandstone in a dry river bed. They thought that the three kings were pitted against themselves, so they went out to collect spoils. Then the three kings attacked and destroyed them, as Elisha had predicted.

There’s the story of Elisha predicting that a Shunammite woman will bear a child. Two years after the child is born, he dies, but Elisha restores him to life. There’s another story of Elisha mortality and “barley bread” on some corn to feed 100 people, with some left over.

Chapter 3 begins with the cure of the naaman, the army commander of the king of Aram, of leprosy by Elisha. However, it includes Naaman’s declaration that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel, and his thanksgiving from a pagan.

The story of the siege of Samaria by King Ahaziah is a notable first. Emily’s first time living alone. Not a square foot, all hers. Where to begin, what to do that with each small space. The project was overwhelming, so Emily mapped out the apartment, breaking down foot by foot, corner by corner, before windows and markers for the kitchen sink.

At 23, Emily is one year out of college, working in marketing and development at a Catholic primary school. Her future, like her apartment, remains a work in progress.

She moved to a two-bedroom apartment, wearing a white tank top, a messy bun and lime-green circles filling the page, spiraling toward the heavens. And lime-green circles filling the page, spiraling toward the heavens. She gave me a Skype tour Monday night. They’re piled on her dresser-turned-hutch right now, awaiting proper display. It means buying herself flowers just because. It means posting the occasional Instagram picture, like the bustling street scene she recently snapped while walking home from work, a way to pause and soak in the moment. I have far to go in my spiritual journey, but Emily’s ability to recognize the beauty in her life makes me feel like a sacred one. I can’t help but marvel over the nearly Aspens, fluttering in the late-summer sun. They look just like the impressionist leaves painted by the young children’s book illustrator Gyo Fujikawa, sage and gold, swirling in a dance toward the heavens.

“We don’t have to make art,” writes Emily Freeman in her latest book, A Million Little Ways: Uncover the Art You Were Made to Live. “You were also made to live art.” Indeed, we were made to be vessels of the image and likeness of the Creator, and so we are called to create—with our sunburns and our one-year leases, with the remnants of the respooled, the rearranged and the reimagined, with our feet planted in the here and now and our eyes up. (Christina Capocci is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and editor of SisterStory.org, the official website of National Catholic Sisters Week.)
Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Sunday Readings

Sunday, September 14, 2014

- Numbers 23:1-9
- Deuteronomy 25:1-5
- John 3:13-17

Whenever a feast supersedes a regular Sunday liturgy in the Church, Catholics should realize that the Church is interrupting the usual sequence of Sunday readings to provide a lesson that it considers to be especially important.

Such is occurring this weekend.

This evening, if the Lord permits, we observed the Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. Next week will be the Twenty-Fifth Sunday. Instead of presenting to us the liturgy of the Twenty-Fourth Sunday this weekend, the Church calls us to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

This is because it is important for Catholics to think about the crucifixion of Jesus, not just in historical terms, but in terms of the enormous, miraculous effects of the cross in human life. The Lord's willingness to accept death, even as a sacrifice to the Father, achieved the crucifixion on Calvary, and of their place in the story.

The reason why this feast is celebrated this year but not every year on a Sunday is that it falls on Sept. 14. Since it is a feast connected to Christ, it takes precedence over Sundays in Ordinary Time.

For the first reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Book of Numbers. The reading looks back to the Exodus, the Hebrews' long and wearying journey across the Sinai Peninsula in search of the Promised Land. This book recalls how disgusted they were with the want and uncertainty of the trip. Their disgust was understandable. Their very survival was at stake because they were on the verge of starvation. No food was in sight. They could not find their way. But God led them. They survived. They eventually reached the Promised Land.

The Book of Numbers lists how to look upon a serpent that he had mounted on a pole. Many people detest snakes. In ancient cultures, however, snakes often symbolized life because snakes shed their skins.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians furnishes the second reading. Scholars believe that this actually was a hymn in early Christianity, sung during worship. It is one of the most magnificent pieces of literature in the New Testament, dazzling in its exclamation of Christ.

St. John's Gospel is the source of the last reading. The reading is not from John's detailed passion narrative. Instead, it is from an account of a time when Jesus is explaining salvation to Nicodemus, a prominent Jew.

Jesus draws a comparison between the Messiah and the serpent raised in the desert by Moses. The Savior will bring eternal life. Even the Christian must look to the Lord, the only bond between God and humanity, between heaven and Earth.

Reflection

What is so urgent about the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, about the crucifixion itself that the Church sets aside the Twenty-Fourth Sunday to celebrate this feast this weekend?

The urgency is in the fact that we must realize the ancient Christian adage that disciples must take up their crosses and follow the Lord.

Why? Understanding the story of Calvary helps us to understand our place in the story.

On the Cross, Jesus reconciled all people to God, and to bring God's mercy to them. Human sin works against this process. Indeed, human sin can seem to triumph. Christ died. Human sin overtook the situation, but only for a moment. Christ rose from the dead. He was victorious. He lives.

We too can live if we resist sin, and if we follow Christ. Following the Lord will require determination, even to the point of seeming to bear a burden as heavy as the cross.

Enabling us to carry our own cross is the mercy of God. Theologians call it grace. It strengthens us. It enlightens us.

We must ask for grace, and we must prepare ourselves for grace, by looking only and always to Jesus. We must resolve never to pause, or desert, our intention to follow Jesus to Calvary, and beyond Calvary to the glory of heavenly life, life eternal.

Jesus faced crucifixion not in despair, but in faith. We too must live in faith.

Daily Readings

Monday, September 15

Our Lady of Sorrows
1 Corinthians 11:17-26, 33
Psalm 40:7-10, 17
John 19:25-27
or Luke 2:33-35

Tuesday, September 16

St. Cornelius, pope and martyr
St. Cyprian, bishop and martyr
1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27-31a
Psalm 100:1b-5
Luke 7:11-17

Wednesday, September 17

St. Robert Bellarmine, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 Corinthians 12:13-13
Psalm 33:2-4, 12, 22
Luke 7:33-35

Thursday, September 18

1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Psalm 118:19-22, 28-26
Luke 7:36-50

Q The church that we attend has front-row seating for disabled members of the congregation, and that is where my husband and I sit. A. That should not be. Why? Understanding the story of Calvary helps us to understand our place in the story.

When the congregation is offered the Eucharist, Catholics with disabilities should be able to receive Communion under both species. A. Why? Understanding the story of Calvary helps us to understand our place in the story.

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

People with disabilities should be able to receive Communion under both species.
**Soccer for peace**

Former Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona competes in the first “Interreligious Match for Peace” at the Olympic Stadium in Rome on Sept. 1. The match was inspired by a suggestion from Pope Francis, who spoke to the fans gathered in the stadium via video link. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

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**Louisiana diocese asks Supreme Court to hear case involving confessional seal**

BATON ROUGE, La. (CNS)—The Diocese of Baton Rouge has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse a Louisiana Supreme Court decision that a priest may be compelled to testify as to what he heard in the confessional in 2008 concerning an abuse case.

The legal step is the latest in a case involving Father Jeffrey Bayhi, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Zachary, La., and the sanctity of the seal of confession. The petition to the U.S. Supreme Court comes after a Louisiana Supreme Court ruling in May outlining arguments that priests are subject to mandatory reporting laws regarding abuse of minors if the person who makes the confession waives confidentiality.

The state Supreme Court opened the door to a hearing in which the priest would testify about what he heard in the confessional.

Under canon law, the seal of confession is sacred and breaking it results in the penalty of excommunication. In the case, a girl who was 14 in 2008 said she told her parish priest, Father Bayhi, in the confessional that she was abused by a now-dead lay member of the parish. The girl’s parents sued Father Bayhi and the Diocese of Baton Rouge for failing to report the abuse. The parents won at the First Circuit Court of Appeals, before the state’s highest court reversed and vacated the ruling in May outlining arguments that priests are subject to mandatory reporting laws regarding abuse of minors if the person who makes the confession waives confidentiality.

In a documents filed with the U.S. Supreme Court on Aug. 21, the diocese said the state Supreme Court ruling threatens “Church autonomy.”

The diocese cited case law from a court decision involving the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese that found that “religious controversies are not the proper subject of civil court inquiry.”

The hearing proposed by Louisiana Supreme Court would violate the Church’s constitutional protection afforded by the First and Fourteenth amendments of the U.S. Constitution to abide by its own laws, the diocese claimed.

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**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.


**BRANDON, Dean M., 56, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 28. Grandfather of two.**

**DOUGLAS, Joan M., 84, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Aug. 21. Mother of Mary Lamkin, Jeanie Perry, Cynthia Williamson and Thomas Lamkin. Sister of Betty List. Grandmother of Cynthia Williamson and Thomas Lamkin. Mother of Mary Lamkin, Jeanne Perry, Dale and Dan Brandon.**


**HOCHUN, Catherine, 88, St. Mary, Mitchell, Aug. 28. Mother of Sharon Abbott, Kathy Cummings, Carol Hugers, Dorothy Wagner, Charles and Martin Houchas. Grandmother of eight.**


**SCHMIDT, Catherine I., 84, St. Rose of Lima, County, Aug. 25. Mother of Mary Cissell and Denise Hagan. Sister of Elizabeth Bean.**

**TASSARO, Alfred, 92, St. Mary, Richmond, Aug. 23. Husband of Datis Tassaro. Father of Mary Brown, Maggie, Mark and Steve Tassaro. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of two.**


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**The state Supreme Court’s decision “strikes a very hard blow against religious freedom, and one which the diocese and Father Bayhi feel compelled to vigorously contest.”**

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**Kristian Hawkins**

President of Students for Life of America

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**TheCriterion Friday, September 12, 2014**

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**In a separate statement released on Sept. 4, the diocese said the state Supreme Court’s decision “strikes a very hard blow against religious freedom, and one which the diocese and Father Bayhi feel compelled to vigorously contest.”**

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**The ruling, left undisturbed, would result in a trial during which the plaintiffs would be permitted to offer evidence regarding what transpired during a series of alleged confessions with Father Bayhi and the diocese utterly unable to defend themselves, unless Father Bayhi were to violate his vows to his Church by divulging whether or not Ms. [Rebecca] Mayeux obtained confession, and, if such confessions did take place, what was said.**

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**Baton Rouge, La. (CNS)—The Diocese of Baton Rouge has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse a Louisiana Supreme Court decision that a priest may be compelled to testify as to what he heard in the confessional in 2008 concerning an abuse case.**

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**The Louisiana Supreme Court has directed the trial court to hold an evidentiary hearing and then to take the unprecedented step of deciding whether or not a sacrament actually took place. Such a trial is completely at odds with the guarantees of religious freedom enshrined in our federal and state constitutions, and the diocese and Father Bayhi will take every legal step available to ensure that those proceedings never occur,” the statement said.**
Parish fights city to guard dignity of Baltimore’s homeless, poor

Baltimore (CNS)—Father Dick Lawrence doesn’t see homeless people through rose-colored glasses, but he doesn’t close his eyes to them either.

“They didn’t get there overnight, and you’re not going to get them out of homelessness overnight,” said the pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in downtown Baltimore. “Sometimes the best you can do is to treat them like human beings, and provide effective support services to keep them from declining further and faster.”

Father Lawrence and the congregation of his urban parish, in partnership with the congregation of suburban Our Lady of the Fields Parish in Millersville, Maryland, have been doing that for more than 20 years. Every Friday night, St. Vincent de Paul hosts a dinner for anyone who wants a hot meal. Deacon Ed Stoops and his cadre of volunteers from Our Lady of the Fields bring the food and join St. Vincent parishioners in setup and cleanup each week.

“Tonight we are expecting to serve about 150 poor and homeless,” Deacon Stoops told Catholic News Service on a recent Friday. “Last week at the end of the month we had 316 people, but now it’s the beginning of the month and the checks are in, so we’ll have fewer people.”

The deacon, along with his wife and daughter, started the weekly meals 22 years ago. “It’s been our great privilege to meet Jesus in his poor and homeless people,” he said.

But the meals are just a small part of the services provided at St. Vincent de Paul for those in need. When the city of Baltimore put a small park next to the church up for sale, the parish bought it and has now become what outreach worker Dwayne Tony Simmons calls “a safe zone” for the homeless.

“This church is like our safe haven,” said Simmons, who is himself homeless but operates a street newspaper called Word on the Street and works for an organization called Faces of Homelessness Speakers’ Bureau.

“If you’re hungry, you can come here,” he added. “If you need clothing, you can come here. People are very generous, and they know they can find people if they come to this park. And it protects you. It gives you a sense of peace when you’re sitting in this park.”

Supported by the Baltimore Archdiocese, Father Lawrence stood up to the city officials threatening to arrest anyone who slept overnight in the parish-owned homeless encampment. The priest said he told Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, “You have your choice of who you lock up first, but I guarantee you who the second person will be.”

A compromise reached with the city requires that the park be cleared for cleaning from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. each day and that no tents or permanent structures can be set up on the site. Father Lawrence said the no-tents policy is safer for everyone because some tents had been taken over for drug dealing or other illicit activities.

Although those at the park are encouraged to go to the city-run homeless shelter when the temperature drops, “even on the coldest night we won’t tell people they have to go to the shelter,” Father Lawrence said. “Giving people a place to sleep is one of the basic human needs.”

The parish also provides clothing for the homeless and helps to find furniture and household goods when someone is able to find housing. Homeless people are welcome at Mass and at the parish’s Sunday coffee hours, although there are two rules: “You can’t leave with more than two doughnuts and a cup of coffee, and we don’t ask each other questions.”

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, mayor of Baltimore, said the no-tents policy is safer for everyone because some tents had been taken over for drug dealing or other illicit activities.

Despite the good work of Catholic artists, musicians and filmmakers, the plight of the homeless remains a challenge. Catholic News Service reported on a campaign led by Madonna’s Center to change housing laws for homeless people in Baltimore.

Michael Sparks is hoping to end the cycle of homelessness for teenagers. “As a mother, you only want the best for your children,” she said. “It breaks my heart warming their dinner in a 7-11 microwave and eating on the floor of our van instead of a nutritious meal where we can sit around a table and eat together.”

It’s hard to get a job with no access to your legal documents and no place to keep your telephone, she explained. She can’t afford child care, and mostly she can’t focus on what she needs. There is not much chance for her to advance in education or work without stable housing.

“Waking up each day with one goal in mind,” she said. “Find a place for my kids and myself to lay our heads down tonight.”

—Father Dick Lawrence, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in downtown Baltimore

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1938 BUICK SPECIAL. Straight 8 engine. 12 volt alternator. 7-1/2 gallon gas tank. Excellent condition. $32,000.00. Call or email for more information. csblasdel@hotmail.com, 812-614-7972. Partial proceeds to the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator.

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In Google Hangout, pope helps launch worldwide social network

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The wisdom of “It takes a village to raise a child” has been lost as kids are either overprotected by permissive parents or neglected, Pope Francis said.

“The educational partnership has been broken” as families, schools and society are “no longer united together for the child,” he said on Sept. 4 after holding his first Google Hangout—a live video conversation—across five continents with teenagers who belong to the international network of “Scholas occurrentes,” uniting students in all faiths and cultures.

Parents and teachers used to stick together to teach kids important values, the pope said, recalling when he got into trouble in the fourth grade.

“I wasn’t respectful toward the teacher, and the teacher called my mother. My mother came, I stayed in class and the teacher stopped out, then they called for me,” he told a group of educators and experts involved with the worldwide Scholas network.

“My mom was really calm, I feared the worst,” he said. After getting him to admit to his wrongdoing, his mother told him to apologize to the teacher.

The pope said he apologized and remembered “it was easy and I was happy. But there was an Act 2 when I got home,” insinuating stiffer punishment had followed.

However, today, “at least in lots of schools in my country,” if a teacher notes a problem with a student, “the next day, the mother and father denounce the teacher,” he said.

The family, schools and culture have to work together for the well-being of the child, he said. People have to “rebuild this village in order to educate a child.”

All of society also needs to help children and young people who are homeless, exploited, victims of violence or without any prospects, he said.

The pope pointed the blame on today’s “culture of disposal” and “the cult of money” for creating and perpetuating adults’ apathy to or complicity in the mistreatment of kids.

This is why “it’s very important to strengthen bonds: social, family and personal ties” with kids and young adults, and create an environment that helps them approach the world with “trust and serenity.”

Otherwise, kids will be “left only with the path of delinquency and addiction,” he said.

The pope’s comments came at the end of an afternoon encounter to launch http://scholas.social—a new social network for students from all over the world to cooperate on environmental and social causes, sport and art initiatives, and charitable activities.

The Scholas initiative was begun in Buenos Aires and supported by its then-Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio, who also used to teach high school when he was a young Jesuit priest.

When he became pope, he asked fellow Argentine Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, to expand the network’s reach and impact.

With a high-definition camera and studio lights aimed at him in the Vatican synod hall, the pope took questions from five Scholas members, who were linked in from Argentina, Israel, Turkey, South Africa and El Salvador.

The pope urged the young people to build bridges through open and respectful communication, in which the “system cannot be to others and exchange experiences, ideas and values.”

Siya, a teenage boy in Istanbul, thanked the pope for letting more than schools and students come together, “but also our beliefs and hearts.” He then asked the pope if he thought the future was going to get better or worse.

“I don’t have a crystal ball like witches do to see the future,” the pope answered, adding that what the future will be like is in the hands of today’s young people.

The future “is in your heart, it’s in your mind and your hands,” and if people cultivate constructive thoughts and feeling and do good things, “the future will be better.”

He said young people need several things: They need wings to fly and the courage to dream of big things, and they need strong roots and respect for their culture, their heritage and all the wisdom passed down from their elders.

“What is in the news on September 11, 1964? As the third session of Vatican II prepares to open, ecumenism is seen at a central theme

By Brandon A. Evans

This week, we continue to examine what was going on in the Church and the world 50 years ago as seen through the pages of The Criterion.

Here are some of the items found in the September 11, 1964, issue of The Criterion:

• Ecumenism seen as top issue for third council session

“VATICAN CITY—In the minds of men within and without the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council—will meet its most formidable test when it tackles its schema on ecumenism. This policy-making document on interfaith relations, the third on the council’s agenda at its forthcoming third session, will not only help to shape the outlook of Catholics toward persons of other faiths, but will directly affect the outlook of persons of other faiths toward Catholics. The interest of the world at large will be large; the chief from one part of the schema: its statement on religious liberty. For the Protestant and humanitarian world, this is a test of good intentions of the council and of the Catholic Church.”

• Archbishop Schulte’s schedule

“Archbishop Schulte will leave Weir Cook Airport at 7 p.m. [Friday] on the first leg of a flight to Rome for the third session of Vatican Council II. The overseas charter flights is scheduled to leave New York at 7 p.m.

Accompanying the Archbishop, as he did at the first two sessions, will be Father Raymond T. Bolster, Criterion editor and pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Indianapolis. Father Bolster is one of several hundred priests who have been named periti [experts] for the council.”

• Marxist soundly beaten: Christian Democrat wins Chilean election

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“Today’s young people need three key foundations: education, sports and culture, that’s why Scholas unites everything,” he said.

He urged the teens to speak out against war and injustice, and to stick together like a team, defending each other against “gangs” and other negative influences that only seek to destroy and isolate people.

His last piece of advice, he said, came from Jesus, who often said, “Be not afraid!”

“Don’t lose your nerve. Don’t be afraid. Keep going. Build bridges of peace. Play as a team and build a better future because, remember, that the future is in your hands.”

On September 11, 1964, issue by logging on to our www.CriterionOnline.com

• Cardinal dead at 83

• Latin American family life to get CFM lift

• Underline Bible’s words on Mary

• Concelebration to open council

• Raps Catholic laxity in race issue

• Race issue seen crucial for labor

• Public schools to share cafeteria facilities

• Clergy-laity dialogue ‘ground rules’ asked

• More foreign nuns will study in U.S.

• Immaculate Heart girl joins Papal Volunteers

• American church art wins nun’s support

• Marian College classes to resume Wednesday

• British prelate’s views: Mixed marriage law changes predicted

• Public schools to share cafeteria facilities

• Race issue seen crucial for labor

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• Pope selects ND head for special assignment

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• Marxist soundly beaten: Christian Democrat wins Chilean election

• Historic precedent: Women to be admitted as auditors at council

• Fr. Ajamie cites impact of Mass in vernacular

• Cardinal dead at 83

• Concelebration to open council

• Third session preview: Council and Catholic education

• A new understanding: Council and matrimony

• Notre Dame given journalism grant

• Annual open house scheduled Sunday at St. Elizabeth’s Home

• Enrollment hits 5.6 million mark

• Underline Bible’s words on Mary

• Latin American family life to get CFM lift

• Dual vernacular is approved

• Cardinal Bea predicts fruitful third session

• Origin of episcopal authority discussed

• St. Meinrad opens 103rd school year

• Origin of episcopal authority discussed

• Cardin...