Pope: Evolution, Big Bang do not push aside God, who set creation into motion

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Big Bang theory and evolution do not eliminate the existence of God, who remains the one who set all of creation into motion, Pope Francis told his own science academy.

And God’s existence does not contradict the discoveries of science, he told members of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on Oct. 27.

“When we read the account of creation in Genesis, we risk thinking that God was a magician, complete with a magic wand, able to do everything. But it is not like that,” he said.

“He created living beings, and he let them develop according to the internal laws that he gave each one, so that they would develop and reach their full potential.”

God gave creation full autonomy while also guaranteeing his constant presence in nature and people’s lives, the pope said.

“The Big Bang, which today is held as the beginning of the world, does not contradict the existence does not contradict the possibility of a supreme principle that creates out of ‘chaos,’ he said, but comes directly from ‘a supreme principle that creates out of love.’

“The Big Bang, which today is held as the beginning of the world, does not contradict the intervention of the divine Creator, but requires it,” he said. “Evolution in nature and people’s lives, the pope said.

“The beginning of the world is not a result of ‘chaos,’ he said, but comes directly from ‘a supreme principle that creates out of love.’

Members of the academy, many of them renowned scientists and philosophers, were told their own science discoveries of nature and people’s lives, the pope said.

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“The Big Bang, which today is held as the beginning of the world, does not contradict the existence does not contradict the possibility of a supreme principle that creates out of ‘chaos,’ he said, but comes directly from ‘a supreme principle that creates out of love.’

Science, philosophy and religion have all contributed to how people see the world, how it began and what it all means, said the introduction to the academy’s program.

“Twenty-five years ago today, my parents committed themselves to each other for life. Through their commitment and love for each other—as well as their faith in God—my brothers, sister and I have been afforded a luxury becoming increasingly less common in today’s world. I’ve learned not to take for granted the loving and supportive home we were brought up in, and feel blessed for my family today. Love you, Mom and Dad! Congratulations!”

Naturally, the couple was touched.

“We told them that what they said and how they worked together meant so much to us.” Therese said. “We tend to think of marriage as just between two people. It hit home to me how important it is with our kids.”

That story about marriage, its connection to God, its importance to children, and the affirmation and support that can help sustain married couples is a timely one—especially considering the recent extraordinary meeting of the Synod of Bishops on marriage and family.

Those same qualities are also at the heart of a relatively new program that Therese Hartley and other members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis are promoting to strengthen marriage among Catholic couples.

Called Marriage on Tap, the program borrows key concepts from Theology on Tap, an established program that includes a relaxed atmosphere, food and even a mug of beer or a glass of wine to strengthen the faith of young adults.

United Catholic Appeal donations ‘make it possible to care for each other,’ archbishop says

United Catholic Appeal (UCA) funds have on three essential areas of ministry for the Church in central and southern Indiana: celebrating the sacraments, proclaiming the word of God and exercising charity.

But one figure regarding donations to the United Catholic Appeal—which has a goal this year of $5.7 million—left Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin “puzzled.”

“The statistics I’ve seen mean that two out of 10 Catholic Christians support the Catholic Appeal,” he revealed in a recent interview. “Honestly, I’m really puzzled by that.”

Religious figures

In a recent address to Miter Society
Franciscans in Middle East inspired by pope, foundation leader says

By Sean Gallagher

The Church in the Holy Land and the broader Middle East has suffered grievously over the past several years from attacks by a variety of Islamic militant groups. The latest persecution has come at the hands of Islamic State soldiers attacking Christian communities this summer in Iraq. Franciscan Father Peter Vasko, founder and president of the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land, spoke with The Criterion on Oct. 8 about these trials during a recent trip he made to Iraq to meet with foundation donors there.

While decrying the pressure put on the Church in the Holy Land and other areas of the Middle East, Father Peter put them into a broader context. Franciscans, he said, have experienced persecution since beginning their ministry in the Holy Land 800 years ago, and some 100 of them have given their lives for Christ at that time.

Two days before the interview, Franciscan Father Hanna Jalil and a group of about 20 other Christians were abducted in Knaehev in northwest Syria by jihadist militants active in Syria’s civil war.

Although they were released on Oct. 7 following their abduction, Father Peter said, was part of a larger series of actions taken against the Church in Syria, where rebel groups have forced Christian women to wear veils, stopped church bells from being rung and removed crucifixes from Christian buildings.

Nonetheless, Father Peter said the Franciscans ministering in Syria are determined to remain there.

“They said: ‘No. We’re here to do God’s will.’” he said. “It really, in some ways, has inspired people who are close to death to maintain a spirituality of martyrdom, saying, ‘We’re here. We’re not going to leave. If we’re going to die, we’re going to have to die. It’s given the rest of the friars in other Middle Eastern countries the strength and courage to stand up for the faith.”

Father Peter noted that his fellow Franciscans are, in part, motivated to remain in place despite the threat of prosecution because members of their order and Middle Eastern Christians have faced such trials in the Middle East for centuries.

There is something new, however, in the most recent actions taken against the Church there, Father Peter said.

“What is new is when you have radical terrorist organizations like ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria], who are actually killing people and moving 100,000 people out of Mosul under threat of death,” he said of the militants.

Although they constantly face the threat of violence and discrimination because of their faith, he said that the Franciscans in the Middle East have been inspired by the example of Pope Francis, who has on several notable occasions sought to focus the world’s attention on the suffering of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East.

“It’s been very encouraging,” Father Peter said. “He’s open to all people. He’s a mediator. That’s what Franciscans are. That is part of his charism.”

He also noted that the growing pressure against Christians in the Middle East has brought the Catholic Church and the various Orthodox Churches in that region closer together in what Pope Francis has called “an ecumenism of blood.”

“’We’ve seen progress in that regard,” Father Peter said. “There have been more meetings together. When push comes to shove, we have to stay together. We’re only 150,000 out of 2.9 million Muslims [in the Holy Land].”

Programs sponsored by the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land have sought to stabilize the presence of the faithful in the Holy Land, which has declined sharply over the past century.

Since the foundation was established 20 years ago, it has given $7.4 million in college scholarships to 296 students; $1 million to students attending vocational schools and $500,000 in tuition assistance to families who have children enrolled in Catholic grade schools in the Holy Land.

“They’re staying here,” Father Peter said. “They’re not leaving. Getting an education, a good job, getting married and providing for one’s family is all the Christians want. And they’re getting it.”

“Their dreams are being realized by the generosity of so many American Catholics who are donating money for housing, college education, trade schools, for needy families, for orphanages.”

(For more information about the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land, log on to www.ffhl.org.)

Iraqi Christians from Qaraqosh, who were forced to flee from advancing Islamic State militants in Mosul, take a rest at a makeshift shelter at St. Joseph Shrine near Irbil, Iraq, on Oct. 9. Sister Marie Claude Nodatel, provincial leader of Lebanon and Syria for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, is still shaken by what she witnessed visiting Irbil. (CNS photo/Bruno Massa, EPA)
Former secretary says St. John Paul II shared his flock’s sorrows, joys

WASHINGTON (CNS)—On his first visit to a Washington shrine dedicated to the man he worked under for nearly 10 years, the former secretary to St. Pope John Paul II said he was “deeply impressed” by the tribute and could feel the late pontiff’s presence within the building.

Archbishop Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki of Livu, Ukraine, visited the St. John Paul II National Shrine on Oct. 22, the first celebration of the pope’s feast day.

During his visit, he toured the shrine’s new permanent exhibit, “A Gift of Love: The Life of St. John Paul II,” which features numerous artifacts, personal items and manuscripts that highlight the pope’s life and papacy. The archbishop called the exhibit “very telling.”

“For me, personally, that was a meeting with John Paul II, the person that I know,” Archbishop Mokrzycki said through an interpreter in an interview with Catholic News Service. “[It was] as if I were at home with him.”

Archbishop Mokrzycki began working as St. John Paul’s private secretary in 1996, and remained in that position until the pope’s death in 2005. His close relationship to the pope allowed him to gain a deeper understanding of St. John Paul’s devotion to his work and to his congregation, comprised of millions of people from all over the world.

“John Paul II knew that there were many people out there who would not be able to go to Rome to meet him,” he said. “That’s why I encourage the young people from the United States to come and visit this shrine … so that they can learn about the teaching of John Paul II.”

The shrine’s exhibit, which focuses a great deal on St. John Paul’s extensive travels, emphasizes the pope’s desire “to reach out to all the people on all the different continents, to … send them a message that he does care about them, that he wants to bring them to Christ,” Archbishop Mokrzycki said.

“Walking through the different galleries, you can learn a lot about him as a person and about what he’s done with his accomplishments, and all the aspects of his papacy,” he said. “It shows the whole pontificate, and the grandeur of his personality … and it reflects very, very accurately, his Popency.”

The official opening of the exhibit took place with a ribbon-cutting on the evening of Oct. 22.

Before the ceremony, Archbishop Mokrzycki was among concelebrants of a special Mass on the main floor of the shrine. Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, the succeeding chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, was the principal celebrant. The shrine is a special initiative of the Knights.

The Ukrainian archbishop processed through the congregation with a reliquary holding a vial of the late pope’s blood. The relic is a centerpiece of the shrine.

Archbishop Mokrzycki noted that the pope felt a unique connection with young people.

“John Paul II in a special way embraced the youth, the young people, because he didn’t want them to squander their life,” he said. “He knew the difficulties that every person has to go through, especially the young people. That’s why, which he said, ‘My Papacy’ did not know about until he was elected as the late pope’s successor.”

Archbishop Mokrzycki said that by the end of each day, around 10:30 p.m., he would go to the chapel, he would pray for a short period of time, then he would go back to his bedroom … “and dim the lights,” he said. “He would open the window, and then he would bless the world.”

“His love would bless everyone.”

(For more information about the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, visit www.jpshrine.org/.)

Nov. 4 to raise scholarship funds for Mother Theodore Catholic Academies

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis continues to fulfill its motto of “Shaping Spirits, Minds and Futures.” Dale says. “It starts with the academics and parents making that choice for their children,” he says. “Then you have the influence of the CYO [Catholic Youth Organization] on them—whether it’s the chess club, the music class or athletics. It all makes a difference in shaping their spirits and their futures.”

(To RSVP to the rally or to make a donation or a pledge for a Tax Credit Scholarship, contact Rosemary O’Brien in the archdiocese’s Office of Stewardship and Development at 317-236-1568 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1568. She can also be reached by e-mail at robrien@archindy.org. You can also learn how to help children receive need-based scholarships by visiting the website, www.archindy.org/stewardship/cscholarship.html. For more information about voucher eligibility, visit the website, www.i4qed.org.)

Vestments and a chalice of St. John Paul II are seen at a national shrine in his name in Washington on Oct. 7. The facility, a shrine and museum owned and operated by the Knights of Columbus, hosts exhibits and events relating to St. John Paul and to the history of the Catholic Church in North America. (Photo: Jon Pollock)
The vocation of the laity

If you are a lay man or woman reading this, how is your vocation to evangelize going? The Catholic Church in the United States will celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week from Nov. 2-8. When we see or hear that word “vocation,” it’s understandable why our first thought might be about vocations to the priesthood or religious life. And those vocations are vitally important.

However, all baptized Catholics have a vocation, a calling from God himself, to evangelize. Pope Francis made that clear when he wrote in his apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”). “All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization” (#120).

This doesn’t mean the call to evangelize is only for the priests or brothers or sisters. Those of us who are married, who are single, who are enrolled in ecclesiastical studies have a full and important calling as well. The whole idea is that the laity, not priests and religious, are living in the world, in our secular society, and it’s our task to evangelize it to the extent we can do so.

There is a longer history to this, something that Pope Francis said while he was still Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires. “We priests tend to clericalize the laity. We do not realize that the vocation of the laity is just becoming more active in our parishes. The number of people who are now involved in ecclesiastical ministries has skyrocketed since the days when priests and sisters did most of the work. These people have their own vocations, as do the parishioners who regularly serve as lectors, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and members of numerous committees.

However, the proper vocation of the laity is not in the Church but in the world. The tendency of some Catholics to confine their religion to their parishes has come to be known as “lay clericalism.” This is something we learn from something that Pope Francis said while he was still Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires. “We priests tend to clericalize the laity. We do not realize that the vocation of the laity is not in the Church but in the world. The tendency of some Catholics to confine their religion to their parishes has come to be known as ‘lay clericalism.’”

Reflection

Kimberly Baker

Precious in God’s eyes

Every year on Nov. 2, the Church observes the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls’ Day). This is a time when we remember all who have died and commended their souls to God.

It also reminds us that we all will face death someday, yet hope that by God’s grace, we will be welcomed before the face of the Lord. This can be a motivation to reflect on the present duties of our lives, and how we are using our time in this world. It heightens awareness of the preciousness of our lives.

Every soul is precious to God, who creates each person to share in his love and goodness. The psalmist profoundly captures the beauty and mystery of each person’s origins under God’s watchful care: “You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made: wonderful are your works! My very self you know. … Your eyes have seen my actions; in your book they are all written down; days were marked before, one came to be” (Ps 139: 13-14,16).

When we reflect, for even just a moment, how precious we are to God, it changes our perspective on how we live out each day and use our time. What a beautiful and comforting thought to know that from all eternity, God was already thinking of us, that he knew our names, that he knew everything about our lives already.

Each one of us was created because of God’s love, and he has a special plan for the way each of us will use and love him in our own unique ways. The more we discover that plan and follow it, the happier we are and the more we become true selves, the person each of us was meant to be.

When we remember those who have died, we think lovingly of others and we personally have known, we are reminded how valuable each life was in our own experience. Imagine how much more so in God’s eyes.

With the heightened awareness of the gift of time we have in this world, we can also be mindful of those who are near death, such as the terminally ill and the elderly. We can be the face of God’s love to others by caring for their needs, assuring them of the healing and comfort of God’s merciful love and witnessing to the sacredness of their lives.

As we begin the month of November and observe All Souls’ Day, let us use this opportunity to remember those who have died and commend their souls to God. Let us reflect on the remaining time we have in our lives to focus on what truly matters—our loved ones, those we know, and those who may encourage us who are suffering, alone or broken in any way. Let us resolve to help everyone we meet, whether man, woman, child or stranger, to understand how precious they are in God’s eyes.

May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.”

(Kimberly Baker is programs and projects coordinator for the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. For more information on the bishops’ pro-life activities, visit www.usccb.org/prolife. )

Letter to the Editor

Column on ‘God’s children’ was beautiful, reader says

It isn’t often that I comment on articles in your newspaper, but Catholic schools’ superintendent Gina Fleming’s column, “These are God’s children,” in the Oct. 17 issue of The Criterion, really impressed me.

Her thoughts were truly beautiful and Christian.

Colette Zumstein

Floyds Knobs

The Criterion

Election issues, candidates and your vote this November

The Catholic Church teaches that government exists to promote and secure the common good, and that Catholics have a responsibility to participate in and fulfill their roles in the civic and public affairs of the community. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good” (Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching, #189). As one expression of this responsibility, most of us will be responsible and exercise our right and duty to vote this November. Yet this is not as simple as it would appear.

There is a constant rotation of ads on TV, in newspapers and on the radio. Social media, too, is clogged with campaign slogans and support for particular candidates. Many become numb to all the noise and tune it out. Others enter the fray and take sides in the debates and campaign activities.

Because we know we will have to make a choice when we vote in November, most of us, in the midst of taking care of family and work responsibilities, attempt to sort through the maze of contradictory comments and pledges, and the overstated assertions about the candidates, parties and issues. It is difficult; one can be lost in the detail and rhetoric. How does one sort through and determine what issues are substantive and which candidate is more likely to better promote the dignity of persons and the common good?

We must take on the role as teacher will not identify particular candidates, but it does contribute to the conversations about what is best for society by defending human dignity in all of its stages. And in doing so, it addresses related issues such as respect for all life, immigration, health care, marriage, religious freedom, economic justice, education and family.

Because campaign ads and candidates typically only speak in sound bites, it is important to focus on the salient issues that will have a long-lasting impact on our society when deciding on whom to support. One can do this by looking at candidates through the lens of Catholic social teaching, and to consider the moral dimensions of public issues.

Consider the candidates’ position on these significant issues:

• Climate change protection for individuals as well as religious institutions to serve the

See BECKE, page 7

Opinion

Be Our Guest

Glenn Tebbe

Editorial

Russell Shaw is a layman who has written articles in your newspaper, but Catholic school

The Criterion

—John F. Fink

MAY 2023
As holy men and holy women, we are all called to be saints

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during the first two days of November, the Church calls our attention to what the Second Vatican Council termed “the universal call to holiness.” We Catholics believe that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God, and all of us—no matter who we are or what our personal history may be—are called to be holy.

What does it mean to be holy?

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “the desire for God is written in the human heart” (#27). We human beings are meant to search for God, to find him and to become united with him—both here on Earth and in our heavenly home.

Holiness is the quality of our union with God, the indication of our closeness to him. Holy men and women are close to God. That’s why we call them “saints,” which comes from the Latin word sanctus or holy.

In his encyclical “Spe Salvi” (“Saved by Hope”), Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI writes: “Life is a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives.” They are the lights of hope, the Holy Father writes, because they point us to Jesus Christ. “The true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history” (#49).

Saints shine with the light of Christ. Many of the saints have been officially recognized by the Church through a process that results in the solemn proclamation (canonization) that they practiced heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God’s grace.

But during the last 2,000 years, many other holy women and men have given themselves wholeheartedly to Jesus Christ without being declared saints by the Church. These are the saints we celebrate on Nov. 1, the Solemnity of All Saints.

All of us are called to holiness, to closeness to God, but unfortunately most of us find ourselves further away from God than we would like to be. That’s why Christ gives us the sacraments—especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of penance—to help us in our daily struggles on the way to holiness. We are all called to be close to God, but for many of us (most of us?) the journey is a long and difficult one.

Thanks be to God, his grace and mercy are endless. Our loving and merciful God never gives up on us. Even after we die, we Christians believe that it is still possible to atone for our sins, to grow in holiness and come closer to God. That’s why we pray for those who have died.

It’s also why the Church celebrates the feast of AllSouls on Nov. 2. We are all called to become holy—both the living and the dead—and the grace of our Lord Jesus is not confined to this world, but can reach even into the state of being we call purgatory, to touch the hearts of those “poor souls” who must undergo a process of purification before being fully united with God.

In our desire to be united with God, we look to the saints to show us the way. How do saints model for us the way to be close to God?

Obviously, through the witness of their daily lives, the choices they make, their willingness to sacrifice for the sake of others, and their devotion to Christ. Their words and examples are helpful guides to daily Christian living. But what is the secret of their success in navigating the dark and stormy seas of life? Why are the saints successful at living good and holy lives when so many of us struggle and fail?

The answer, I believe, is prayer. Saints are men and women who know how to pray, to be close to God and communicate with him from the heart. They are people who in times of difficulty, as well as in good times, raise their minds and hearts to the Lord. The saints seek God’s will in their lives. They share with him their hopes and frustrations (and sometimes even their loneliness, anger and fear).

Through their prayer, their attentive listening even more than the words they speak, the holy men and women we call saints are in constant contact with God.

As we recall the holy people—living and deceased—who serve as stars guiding us to Christ, let’s pray for the grace to let God’s love and mercy touch our hearts and bring us closer to him who is our true heart’s desire.

Translated by: Daniela Guanipa

Como hombres y mujeres procedentes de la divinidad, estamos llamados a ser santos

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durante los dos primeros días de noviembre la Iglesia nos llama a reflexionar sobre lo que el Concilio Vaticano II denominó “el llamado universal a la santidad.” Los católicos creemos que cada ser humano está hecho a imagen y semejanza de Dios y que todos nosotros, sin importar quiénes sean o cuál sea nuestra historia personal, estamos llamados a ser santos.

¿Qué significa ser santos? De acuerdo con el Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica: “el deseo de Dios está inscrito en el corazón del hombre” (#27). Los seres humanos estamos destinados a buscar a Dios, encontrarlo y a unirnos Él, tanto aquí en la Tierra como en nuestro hogar celestial.

La santidad es la calidad de nuestra unión con Dios, la señal de nuestra cercanía con Él. Los hombres y las mujeres santos están cerca de Dios; es por ello que los llamamos “santos”, que proviene de la palabra latina sanctus.

En su encíclica “Spe Salvi” (“Salvados por la esperanza”), el papa emérito Benedicto XVI escribe: “La vida es como un viaje por el mar de la historia, a menudo oscuro y borroso, un viaje en el que escuchamos el sonido que nos indican la ruta. Las verdaderas estrellas de nuestra vida son las personas que han sabido vivir rectamente.” El Santo padre continúa diciéndose que estas personas son luces de esperanza porque nos guían hacia Jesucristo, “la luz por autonomaía, el sol que brilla sobre todas las tinieblas de la historia” (#49).

Los santos brillan con la luz de Cristo. Muchos de ellos han sido oficialmente reconocidos por la Iglesia a través de un proceso que conlleva a la proclamación solemne (canonización) de que llevaron vidas virtuosas y fieles a la gracia de Dios, aun a pesar de las vicisitudes.

Pero en el transcurso de los 2,000 años anteriores, muchos otros hombres y mujeres santos se han entregado en cuerpo y alma a Jesucristo sin que la Iglesia los declarara como tales. Estos son los santos a quienes rendimos tributo el 1 de noviembre durante la Solemnidad de Todos los Santos.

Todos estamos llamados a la santidad, a acercarnos a Dios, pero desafortunadamente la mayoría de nosotros nos alejamos de Dios más de lo que quisieramos. Es por esto que Cristo nos entrega los sacramentos—especialmente en la Eucaristía y el sacramento de la penitencia, para ayudarnos en nuestras batallas cotidianas, camino a la santidad. Estamos llamados a estar cerca de Dios, pero para muchos de nosotros, “acaso para la mayoría?” la travesía es larga y difícil.

Pero, por ventura, la gracia y la misericordia de Dios no son infinitas. Nuestro amantísimo y misericordioso Dios nunca nos abandona. Incluso después de morir, los cristianos creemos que todavía podemos expiar nuestros pecados, ser santos y acercarnos a Dios. Es por ello que rezamos por nuestros difuntos y por lo que la Iglesia celebra la festividad de los Fieles Difuntos el 2 de noviembre. Todos estamos llamados a ser santos, tanto los vivos como los muertos, y la gracia de nuestro Señor Jesús no se limita a este mundo, sino que puede llegar incluso al estado del ser que denominamos purgatorio, para tocar los corazones de esas “pobres ánimas” que deben someterse a un proceso de purificación antes de unirse completamente a Dios.

En nuestro deseo de unirnos a Dios tomamos como ejemplo a los santos para que nos muestran el camino. ¿De qué forma los santos actúan como modelos para acercarnos a Dios?

Obviamente, a través del testimonio de sus vidas cotidianas, las escogencias que hacen, su voluntad de sacrificio por el bien de los demás y su devoción a Cristo. Sus palabras y sus ejemplos representan guiás muy útiles para la vida cristiana cotidiana.

¿Pero cuál es su secreto para navegar con éxito las oscuras y turbulentas aguas del mar de la vida? ¿Por qué los santos pueden llevar vidas correctas y santas, en tanto que muchos de nosotros nos esforzamos y fracasamos?

Piensan que la respuesta está en la oración. Los santos son hombres y mujeres que saben cómo rezar, cómo estar cerca de Dios y comunicarse con Él desde el corazón. Son personas que, tanto en los momentos difíciles como en los buenos, elevan sus mentes y sus corazones hacia el Señor. Los santos buscan la volunta de Dios en sus vidas, comparten con Él sus esperanzas y sus frustraciones (y, a veces, incluso su soledad, su ira y su temor). A través de la oración, de escuchar atentamente incluso más allá de lo que dicen las palabras, los hombres y mujeres divinas que llamamos santos se encuentran en comunicación constante con Dios.

Mientras recordamos a estos santos—vivos y difuntos—que actúan como estrellas que nos guían hacia Cristo, recemos para recibir la gracia de que el amor y la misericordia de Dios toquen nuestros corazones y nos acerque más a Él. El verdadero anhelo de nuestros corazones.

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa
Pregnant women invited to retreat

• Monday, “A Covenant for Loving,” 6:30-9 p.m., presentation by Father Tony and Archbishop Edward Egan of New York, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. Information: 812-535-2952 or e-mail proctr@spsmw.org.

The Sisters of Providence to host grief retreat

• Tuesday, “Healing Our Grief,” session on understanding and embracing the process of grief through the group setting. Providence Sister Connie Kramer will facilitate the retreat. She has 40 years of experience in ministry, dealing with those who are grieving and ministers as a professionally certified group counselor/facilitator, grief specialist and spiritual director. The registration deadline is Nov. 1.

For more information or to register, call 317-632-0619 or e-mail 317-632-0619. †

Missionaries of the Precious Blood

Father Clarence Williams of Columbus, Ohio, blesses the Tent revival • Monday, “A Covenant for Loving,” 6:30-9 p.m., presentation by Father Tony and Archbishop Edward Egan of New York, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. Information: 812-535-2952 or e-mail proctr@spsmw.org. †
‘Bludgeoned by all sides,’ family needs Church for help, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The family is under attack now more than ever because of today’s culture of division that wants to break from and be free of all everlasting bonds and forms of solidarity, Pope Francis said.

“Talking about problems of the family, for example, bonds are being destroyed, instead of created. Why? Because we are living in a culture of the provisional, of conflict, of the inability to make alliances,” he said.

What is needed is a Church and Christians who are willing to “waste time” on people, not just principles, and accompany face-to-face those needing to discover the truth in Jesus Christ, he said.

The pope’s comments came during a 90-minute encounter with about 8,000 lay members of the international Schoenstatt movement on Oct. 25 in the Vatican audience hall. The movement, founded by the late German Father Joseph Kentenich, was celebrating its 100th anniversary.

Representatives asked the pope five questions, ranging from how to help strengthen families to his secret for maintaining a sense of hope and happiness in such a trouble-plagued world.

“I haven’t got the faintest idea,” he said with a smile.

Part of it comes from his personality and being a bit “impulsive,” which makes him a bit of a daredevil, he said. But that courage is also rooted in prayer and abandoning himself to God’s goodness, he added.

Knowing that God is always there, even “in moments of major sin,” gives him great confidence and faith, he said, in remarks that were entirely unscripted.

Something else that helps, he said, is perspective. Jesus Christ is and must always be at the center of everything, which means oneself, one’s parish, the associations one belongs to. Even the Roman Curia cannot become the center of one’s life, he said.

“Each and everyone is an instrument of God’s grace, not the center of the action. We are instruments.”

The truth is grasped better from the periphery,” from the outside looking in, he said. One striking example came to light in a recent conversation with a criminal defense lawyer who told him he often cries with the prisoners he visits in jail.

“He sees the world of law, of what he has to judge as a criminal lawyer, but also from the wounds that he finds there,” which allows him to see the actual situation better, the pope said.

Therefore, I would say a healthy recklessness—that is, letting God do things; praying and abandoning oneself; courage and patience; and going to the peripheries. I don’t know if this is my secret, but it is what it comes to mind,” he said.

In response to a question about how to help families, Pope Francis said he believed “the Christian family, the family, marriage have never been attacked as much as they are right now.”

The family is “betrayed and the family is bastardized” and debased, since almost anything is being called a family, he said.

The family faces a crisis “because it is being bludgeoned by all sides, leaving it very wounded,” he said. There is no other choice than to go to the family’s aid and give them personal help, he said.

“We can give a nice speech, declare principles. Of course we need to do this, with clear ideas” and statements saying that unions that do not reflect God’s plan are formally of a permanent union between a man and a woman are forms of “an association, not a marriage.”

However, people must also be accompanied “and this also means wasting time. The greatest master of wasting time is Jesus. He wasted time accompanying, to help consciences mature, to heal the wounds, to teach,” the pope said.

He said the sacrament of matrimony is becoming just a ceremony or social event for some people, who do not see its sacramental nature as a union with God. Part of the problem is a lack of formation for engaged couples, and “this is a sin of omission on our part,” he said.

But there also is the problem of a culture that is shortsighted, where everything is temporary or “provisional,” he said, and “forever has been forgotten.”

He said he sees the same thing even in his own family with couples living together “part time: Monday through Friday with my girlfriend and Friday to Sunday with my family. They are new forms, totally destructive and limiting of the greatness of the love of marriage.”

When asked about the best way to share the faith with others, the pope said going out into the world and living as true witnesses of Christ and his message is the only way.

“There is no other way. To live in a way that others become interested and ask, ‘Why?’ This is witness,” he said. Missionaries don’t save people; they are “transmitters of something that saves us,” which is possible only if people have made Jesus a full part and the heart of their lives.

Everyone, however, is weak, makes mistakes, has problems “and we don’t always give a good witness; but the ability to become humble inside, to ask for forgiveness when our witness is not what it should be,” this is part of being good Christians.

The Church also needs to “go out,” he said, “to help, to share, to let people see what we do and how we do it.”

If a lay association or the Church itself doesn’t “go out, it is a Church of snobs,” and instead of looking for people and helping them, attracting them to Christ, “they spend time combing their doll’s hair in little groups, they are ‘spiritual hairdressers.’ This is not good.

“A community that goes out makes mistakes. Mistakes are made, but it is so wonderful to ask forgiveness when one makes a mistake,” he said.

“Do not be afraid!”

—Pope Francis

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public in accord with religious principles and values:

- Social and economic policies that support jobs with good working conditions and just wages.
- Comprehensive immigration reform and support of refugee resettlement for unaccompanied children.
- The definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.
- Opposition to legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide.
- Respect for all life, including rejection of violence and the death penalty.
- Affordable health care for low- and moderate-income individuals and families.
- Support of policies to protect vulnerable persons; prisoner rehabilitation and re-entry programs.
- Support of “child benefit” as principle for participation in education programs and parental choice in education of their children.
- Opposition to abortion, also including support for mothers and children during pregnancy and infancy.
- Stewardship and care of the Earth for this and future generations.

No candidate will perfectly comport to Church teaching, and all issues do not carry the same weight. Opposition to intrinsic evils has a special claim on our conscience. Often one has to choose which candidate is more likely to do the most good or the least harm.

Voting decisions should include the candidate’s commitments, character and integrity because there will be circumstances and issues arise that now are not known, on which the official will have to make a decision.

At those moments we, the electorate, are relying on our representatives and public servants to use their prudent judgment in determining the best course of action that will promote and secure the common good, the primary purpose and role of the position, which he or she is seeking.

(Glenn Tebbe is executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, the public policy advocate for the Church in Indiana. He can be reached at gtebbe@archindy.org.)
At Vatican gathering, Pope Francis says ‘Pope Benedict XVI was a great pope’

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Retired Pope Benedict XVI was a perfect example of a man who was both intellectually curious and scientifically curious, and his love for God and for his human creatures, Pope Francis said.

“Benedict XVI was a great pope. For the power and penetration of his intellect, great for his considerable contribution to theology, great for his love for the Church and for human beings, great for his virtues and his religiosity,” he said.

Pope Francis praised his predecessor on Oct. 27 at a meeting of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. The academicians invited Pope Francis to unveil a bronze bust of Pope Benedict at the academy’s headquarters in the Vatican Gardens.

The pope said he was pleased that the statue’s face and particularly its eyes captured the spiritual, intelligence and love of Pope Benedict.

This spirit, far from crumbling with the passing of time, will appear greater and more powerful to generation to generation,” the pope predicted. With his intellectual curiosity and his love for science, Pope Benedict especially enjoyed conversing with scientists at the Pontifical Academy, Pope Francis said.

“No one could ever say of him that study and science made him and his love for God and his neighbor wither. On the contrary, knowledge, wisdom and prayer enlarged his heart and his spirit,” the pope said.

“At Vatican gathering, Pope Francis says ‘Pope Benedict XVI was a great pope’ — Pope Benedict XVI was a great pope. For the power and penetration of his intellect, great for his considerable contribution to theology, great for his love for the Church and for human beings, great for his virtues and his religiosity.”

—Pope Francis

Nurse released from NIH, thanks God and doctors for recovery

BETHESDA, Md. (CNS)—Nina Pham, a Dallas nurse who was the first person known to have contracted the Ebola virus in the United States, thanked God and her medical team for their recovery on Oct. 24.

Pham held a news conference in Bethesda after she was declared virus-free and released from the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center (NIH). “I feel fortunate and blessed to be standing here today. I would first and foremost like to thank God, my family and friends,” she said. Throughout this ordeal, I have put my trust in God and my medical team.

“I am on my way back to recovery even as I reflect on how many others have not been so fortunate,” added Pham, 26, who grew up in Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Fort Worth, Texas, where she and her family have been longtime members.

She was “thankful for everyone involved in my care,” she said, “from the moment I became ill and was admitted to Texas Health Presbyterian Health Dallas up to today,” when she was being discharged from NIH.

After she was released from the hospital, she said a visit to President Barack Obama in the Oval Office at the White House.

Pham was involved in the care of Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan prior to his death on Oct. 8. Duncan contracted Ebola in his home country of Liberia, and had traveled to the Dallas hospital where he was being treated.

The Centers for Disease Control initially said Pham’s contact with the virus was likely a protocol breach, but the nurse is said to have worn the required protective gear and is believed to have followed the hospital’s procedures.

She was kept in isolation at Texas Health Presbyterian. Pham received a blood transfusion on Oct. 12 from Ebola survivor Dr. Kent Brantly, who had been working with Ebola patients in Liberia when he contracted the virus in the summer. He recovered in an Atlanta hospital.

On Oct. 16, the nurse was transported to NIH.

Pham is a 2006 graduate of Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth. When the school community found out she contracted Ebola, it organized a rosary service at the school’s chapel.

The pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Father Jim Khoi, also asked for prayers for her. “She knows that everybody knew to pray for her, especially in this difficult time,” he told The Dallas Morning News daily paper shortly after Pham was found to have the virus.

“She is very calm and trusts everything to God’s hands,” he noted.

Pham’s apartment was thoroughly cleaned after tests confirmed she contracted the disease. Her dog, Bentley, was put into isolation to be cared for and tested for Ebola. The dog has since been found to be virus-free. Pham said she looked forward to returning to Texas, and being reunited with her family and her dog.

A second nurse who contracted Ebola, Amber Vinson, also has been declared virus-free, but news reports said she would remain in treatment in Atlanta until further notice. On Oct. 23, a U.S. doctor who just returned from treating Ebola patients was found to have Ebola, and he is now in isolation at a New York City hospital.

In Arizona, the Crosier Fathers and Brothers announced on Oct. 24 the community would offer a novena of intercession for person from Texas in conjunction with St. Theresa Church in Phoenix.

The novena began on Oct. 28 and continues for nine consecutive Tuesdays. Each evening service, lasting 30 to 40 minutes, was to have “a different theme of deliverance,” a news release said.

It said the novena is built on a prayer service featuring the solemn chanting of the "Hosanah Praeclaram Hym" which was sung by the Crossers in the Middle Ages to ward off the threat of the bubonic plague. That chant continued daily for centuries thereafter in Crosier communities.

"Given the widespread concern and fear of this deadly virus, we invite people to come together and pray for protection. We are praying on an age-old Crosier tradition of reflection and intercession to Our Lady of Protection," said Father Robert Rossi, a member of the Crosier Community of Phoenix and chair of the community’s Apostolic Presence Commission.

The Crosier mission is to accompany people in their suffering, to stand with them and assure them that God has not abandoned them but is bringing about new life in some mysterious way," he said. "We touch suffering with hope."

Father Chuck Kieffer, pastor of St. Theresa Parish, added: “While this type of prayer service is rooted in our ancient traditions, it is very relevant to what’s happening today.”

Cardinal Pell calls for ‘no doctrinal back-flips’ at next family synod

ROME (CNS)—Looking ahead to the October 2015 world Synod of Bishops on the family, Cardinal George Pell called for “no doctrinal back-flips” at the next Synod of Bishops.

The cardinal was unable to celebrate the liturgy, part of the traditional preparatory phase for a synod, because of a hot water accident.

Pell commended the efforts of the College of Cardinals in preparing for the synod, but said that “pastoral practice and teachings can only be changed by a consensus of the college of bishops and all synods work by consensus,” he wrote.

The cardinal’s comments came after the conclusion of the 2014 extraordinary synod on the family, which debated making it easier for divorced and civilly remarried Catholics to receive Communion.

“We will be counterproductive if we have anger or hate in our hearts. If we lapse into sterile polemics against a suspect number of Catholic opponents,” the cardinal wrote.

Cardinal Pell’s remarks came in a homily he had prepared for a celebration of the Mass in the extraordinary form on Oct. 24 at Rome’s Church of the Most Holy Trinity of the Pilgrims.

The cardinal was unable to celebrate the liturgy, part of the Populus Summorum Pontificum pilgrimage to Rome for devotees of the traditional Latin Mass, on account of burns. In an adversarial prepared text, he assured those present that his sickness was the only reason he was unable to attend.

In the cardinal’s absence, his personal secretary Father Mark Withoos celebrated the Mass and read the homily.

“The college of bishops and all synods work by consensus,” Cardinal Pell wrote. Before next October, Catholics have to work to build a consensus “out of the present divisions,” he wrote.

“Pastoral practice and teachings can only be changed by consensus,” he wrote.

Next year, “develop, we understand truth more deeply, but there are no doctrinal back-flips in Catholic history,” the cardinal wrote. “The apostolic tradition announced first by Christ and founded in the Scriptures is the touchstone for truth and genuine pastoral practice.

“We, and especially you young people, must live this in faith, reflecting seriously on the Gospel. It is a unique opportunity, which we must seize in God’s name.”

Cardinal Pell also wrote about the importance of the papacy, governing and the hierarchy.

“The role of the successor of St. Peter has always been vital to Christian and Catholic life, especially as thetouchstone of doctrinal fidelity and as a resolver of disputes, pastoral as well as doctrinal,” the cardinal wrote.

“The Church is not built on the rock of Peter’s faith,” he wrote. “But on Peter himself, despite his faults and failings.

“Pope Francis is the 266th pope, and history has seen 37 false or antipopes,” he wrote.

“The story of the popes is stranger than fiction,” the cardinal wrote, and today “we have one of the more unusual popes in history, enjoying almost unprecedented popularity. He is doing a marvelous job backing the financial reforms,” he wrote.

Cardinal Pell concluded his written remarks with a prayer: “I was taught as a child: May the Lord preserve and protect your Life, especially your health, forever,” he wrote.

“Joseph, be my helper!”

U.S. President Barack Obama talks with Dallas nurse Nina Pham at the Oval Office in Washington on Oct. 24. Pham contracted Ebola while treating a man who later died of the disease and was admitted late on Oct. 16 to a clinic at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md. She visited the White House after she was discharged from NIH, CNS (Pablo Martinez Monsivais, AP Photo).
Promoting vocations and missionary discipleship

By Fr. Eric Augenstein

In addressing vocations directors from around the United States at a recent conference, Cardinal Edwin O’Brien, the Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, shared what he believes is the gift that Pope Francis is offering to vocations: the gift of missionary discipleship.

A missionary goes to a place where he or she is not wanted, and speaks a message people don’t want to hear. A disciple grows daily in relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer and service. These two realities come together in the vision that Pope Francis has set before the Church and the world: a vision of missionary discipleship.

While all Christians share in this missionary discipleship, priests, deacons and consecrated religious are called in a particular way to go to the outskirts of our communities carrying the message of Jesus Christ. We are called to live the alternative to the self-centeredness of our times and to be generous in loving all those we encounter. We do so grounded in prayer, rooted in community, and nourished by the sacraments.

This vision of missionary discipleship guides not only the lives of clergy and consecrated religious, but also the work we do in promoting these vocations in the Church. Cardinal O’Brien challenged vocational directors to broaden their engagement with culture in order to present a vision of ordained ministry and consecrated life beyond those who would naturally be drawn to these vocations.

Here in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, we are trying to take seriously both the call to missionary discipleship that comes from Pope Francis, and Cardinal O’Brien’s challenge to broaden our engagement with culture and the young Church.

While we continue to offer regular discernment programs such as retreats, dinners with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and peer discernment groups, we also spend considerable time forming relationships and being a visible presence wherever the young Church gathers—at Theology on Tap programs sponsored by the archdiocesan Young Adult and College Campus Ministry, on college campuses and in our high schools, at the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., and through various opportunities for evangelization and service.

Vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life grow and blossom in countless ways and at varied places—and we hope to be a presence and provide resources to families, parishes, schools and individuals at any point along the journey.

But we also need your help. Those of us who minister full time in vocations cannot do this task alone. We cannot reach all the places where the seeds of a religious vocation are being planted. We must work together as an entire Church to be missionary disciples who walk with one another along the journey of faith in discovering God’s call for each of us.

Parents, catechists, teachers, family members, parish leaders, youth ministers, priests, deacons and consecrated religious—both individually and as a community—can reach out to all corners of our culture to reflect the light of Christ and help to illumine the path to holiness. This shared missionary discipleship can hold up the variety of Christian vocations—marriage, priesthood, diaconate and consecrated religious life—as authentic paths to holiness.

Will you join me in being a missionary disciple? Will you join me in raising up the next generation of priests, deacons and consecrated religious for the Church and the world?

(Father Eric Augenstein is vocations director of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. For more information about the ministry of the archdiocesan vocations office, log on to www.HeartGodsCall.com)

Heavenly desserts and unexpected ingredients add a sweet taste to Franciscan sister’s faith journey

By John Shaughnessy

The natural temptation is to describe her chocolate-laced desserts as heavenly.

While the rave reviews were incoming, she may have set a record for the least amount of time it took her to go from being someone who had fallen away from her faith to being someone who seriously began to consider a religious vocation.

In fact, she may have set a record for the least amount of time it took her to go from being someone who had fallen away from her faith to being someone who seriously began to consider a religious vocation. It all took place on a weekend 10 years ago when she was 22 and a recent college graduate. Knowing she had a degree in broadcasting and a plan to work for a television station, she had a St. Paul moment,” Sister Madeleine says. “Suddenly, it clicked that Christ was in the Eucharist, Father Jonathan Meyer gave on Christ’s presence in the Eucharist.

That reality began to change on the Friday night of the retreat. As she stood in “the back corner of the gym with an old VHS recorder,” she videotaped the talk that Father Jonathan Meyer gave on Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. “I had a St. Paul moment.” Sister Madeleine says. “Suddenly, it clicked that Christ was in the Eucharist, and he loved me. It hit me like a ton of bricks. I knew I wanted to be thanking me,” says a laughing Sister Madeleine Schumacker, a Batesville native who professed perpetual vows earlier this year.

Sister Madeleine professed perpetual vows earlier this year.

New Albany priest seeks to remind people of God’s presence

By Sean Gallagher

Priests might learn about the meaning of their vocation through prayer or from the wise words of a spiritual director or seminary professor.

Father Daniel Atkins gained insight into his calling at a football game, he was confused by a stoppage in play and then started talking about medical terminology, I really don’t get ratted,” he said. “I am not there to be a translator for a doctor. I’m just there to help the people remember that God is with them.”

Currently, Father Atkins serves as the pastor of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, not far from Floyd County. His sister, Jackie Vetter of Family Parish in New Albany, poses on Sept. 18 with students at the parish’s school during a walkathon sponsored. (LaVende photo)

Father Daniel Atkins, pastor of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, poses on Sept. 18 with students at the parish’s school during a walkathon sponsored. (LaVende photo)
Seminarian sees childhood desires fulfilled in priestly formation

By Sean Gallagher

God willing, seminarian James Brockmeier will be ordained a transitional deacon for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis next spring. He would then be expected to become a priest a year later.

It's a vocation that he started thinking about when Brockmeier, 24, was in grade school. But the steps he has taken along the way were always measured, never going beyond where he felt God was calling him to be at that moment.

Those steps began in the Catholic home in which Brockmeier grew up in Covington, Ky.

"We always went to church on Sunday. That was a constant," he said. "I remember my parents gave me a lot of little pieces of religious art. I would hang them up in my room. That was a little status of Mary or of the Sacred Heart of Jesus around our house that I always knew was there."

Brockmeier responded positively to this Catholic environment, he mentioned at an early age by the faith.

"There was an importance and homeyness to going to church and being a member of the Church that always struck me," he said. "Everywhere I would go, there was the Church and I could appreciate that. I was receiving a lot from the Church when I was growing up. I wanted to be a part of handing it on."

The possibility that handing on the faith could involve the priesthood occurred to Brockmeier at a young age.

"I can remember being in the fourth- or fifth-grade religion classroom," he said. "I can see it [in my mind] today, the pages in the religion book where it talked about priesthood going to church life. I just thought that it was so interesting that there were people who were replacing those people who dedicated their whole life to the faith. That really struck me.

"Nonetheless, as Brockmeier continued to embrace his faith as a teenager and became involved in a helpful youth group, he'd discern a particular call to the priesthood but more to ministry in the Church in general, to teaching religion in a Catholic high school. That's why he was attracted to Mariano University in Indianapolis, whose San Damiano Scholars Program for Church Leadership trains lay young adults for ministry in the Church. He was accepted into the program and enrolled at Marian in 2007.

"The fact that this campus had young people who wanted to study and work for the Church, as well as young people who were thinking about the priesthood really attracted me," Brockmeier said. "There seemed to be so much going on." During his four years at Marian, he became involved in catechetical ministry at St. Mary and St. Mark the Evangelist parishes in Indianapolis. Between these experiences and getting to know several seminarians, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis began to feel like home for him.

"There was a lot going on in the archdiocese," Brockmeier said. "I kind of sensed a lot of excitement all over the place about where the Church was going and what the Church was doing."

At the same time, he showed leadership among his fellow students at Marian, according to Mark Erdosy, director of Mariano's San Damiano Scholars program.

"By the time that he was a senior, he had a great grasp of philosophy and theology," Erdosy said. "He was very approachable. The one person students could always count on to be able to help them understand the main things that they were taking, philosophy or theology. James had a knack for taking complicated concepts and simplifying them so people could understand them."

Throughout most of his time at Marian, the priesthood remained in the back of Brockmeier’s mind. That began to change during the fall semester of his senior year when he began to consider more seriously the possibility of becoming a seminarian.

"Over Christmas break, he shared his thoughts with then-archdiocesan seminarian Benjamin Syberg, a friend of Brockmeier from Syberg’s days at Marian and Bishop Simon Brutté College Seminary in Indianapolis."

"In a moment of sheer joy, I hugged him," said Father Syberg, who was ordained a priest last spring. "We both were very excited. We had hoped he would. But to finally hear that he was going through it with it was a big moment for us."

That affirmation helped Brockmeier along his path of discernment.

"Seeing him and his enthusiasm about the thinking about it more," he said.

He later sought out Erdosy’s advice.

"Instead of talking to me about it, he picked up the phone and called the vocations office," Brockmeier said. "For this day, I thank him for that. [He said] ‘You should absolutely have this conversation with the vocations director.’ He really nudged me along the road."

Brockmeier has also found that the priestly identity that is being formed in him will be centered on bringing other people closer to Christ and the Church, something he has wanted to do since he was a child.

"I’ve learned that the priestly call is that you daily bring people back to prayer, the prayer of the Mass," said Brockmeier. "I’m attracted to teaching and preaching and pastoral care. But these things are vehicles to draw people more closely to the Mass and the sacraments where God is waiting to give them grace."

All information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.HearGodsCall.com. ☞

‘Consistent path of discernment’ leads Sister of Providence to vocation

By Jason Moon

Special to The Criterion

Since she was a young child, Providence Sister Regina Gallo had the sense there was more to life than just getting up, breathing in and moving forward. As she got older, Sister Regina continued to have these feelings even though she had started down a “normal” path. She had a well-paying job she enjoyed, had just been promoted and was dating.

She then graduated from high school, she began to feel something she had not felt since she was young: A call to religious life.

When she thought about entering religious life entered my mind, I did all I could to dismiss that and push it under the carpet," said Sister Regina, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. "That motherhouse is in St. Mary-of-the-Woods."

"I was happily dating at the time, and my dream was always to get married and have children. I dismissed the thought for about six months, and after about six continuous months of constant nagging, I finally decided to talk with someone about it."

"My feelings were part confusion: Why me? Why am I getting these feelings? This is just not what I had planned for my life," she continued. "The thought of closing the door on all that I dreamt was not only frightening, but painful.

"Things seemed to be going well ... and then one morning I woke up to the smell of my neighbor cutting his grass—and boom—the literal and clearest words came to me: ‘Regina, why don’t you think of becoming a sister?’ My response, literally, was, ‘Why don’t you just go away.’ Well, I guess we know who won on that end."

"Sister Regina admitted the feelings of a possible religious life scared her."

"What will my family think? Will I be supported and accepted? Will I be good enough? What would I do if I have to offer?" she said.

When Sister Regina was a young child, she felt a spiritual sense clung to every fiber of her being, but she wasn’t sure how to react to it.

"I always knew and was consciously aware at such a young age that there was something so much bigger than me," Sister Regina said.

"Despite some reservations, Sister Regina met with Providence Sister Kay Manley, who helped her during four years of discernment."

Still, Sister Regina questioned the call and through the assistance of the Sisters of Providence’s vocation director, entered into therapy to make sure she wasn’t doing something for the “wrong” reasons. This counseling, along with the guidance given by Sister Kay and participation in vocations retreats, gave Sister Regina confidence that her motivations were good and helped her move down “a consistent path of discernment,”

"Sister Regina said she did look at other communities, but her relationship with the Sisters of Providence ran deep. She attended Guerin College Preparatory High School in River Grove, Ill., where several Sisters of Providence taught.

"I looked into several different communities, or as I referred to it: ‘I ordered shopped,’ "Sister Regina said. "I looked at about eight different communities."

"I did not find within those other communities the connection that I felt with the Sisters of Providence," Sister Regina said. "They were all wonderful communities, but there was a lack of connection or something that pulled me away from them and pushed me toward the Sisters of Providence."

After finally confirming her belief to join the Sisters of Providence on Sept. 13, 2001, Sister Regina said she felt “relief.”

"It was a long, tough four years of discerning," she said. "I also honestly felt a peace that I never felt before. I can’t quite describe it, but it was really a cleansing feeling, as if something washed right over me. I do believe I had the nerves and ‘butterflies’ in the stomach, but that would be normal for any major life change."

Sister Regina professed perpetual vows on June 26, 2011.

"I feel we all continue to discern," she said. "That never ends once we enter community. We, and I, are continuously listening to and sitting through how and where the spirit is calling us in our life and ministry."

(Jason Moon is the media relations manager for the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. For more information on the Sisters of Providence, log on to www.spmw.org)
Beech Grove Benedictine sisters help each other to seek God

By Katie Chrisman

Religious life in a monastery is a portmouir of personalities. The young and elderly and those in between, pray and live in a community. They commit themselves to serving God and helping one another on the path of holiness. Although monastic life has changed over the centuries, one thing remains the same: God continues to call people to this way of life.

Two members of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove answered this call to monastic life decades apart. Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, 52, and Benedictine Sister Jennifer Heathcote Foltz, 31, have different backgrounds. Despite their differences, God called each one just the same.

Sister Nicolette, the fourth of six children raised in a “close-knit” family in Tell City, was always close to the Church. She considered the priests and religious sisters at her home parish role models and her heroes.

“I loved them. They helped form who I am today,” she said.

God and the St. Paul Parish in Tell City were always at the heart of her family’s life. Three of her brothers ended up being ordained priests, including Bishop Paul D. Etienne of Cheyenne, Wyo.

She admitted she had thoughts of religious life in the fifth grade, and later had a profound spiritual moment on her senior retreat in 1980, but it wasn’t until she completed her master’s degree in her early 20s that she began to seriously discern her vocation.

She was frequently around Benedictine sisters. Her aunt, Sister Jeanne Voges, is a member of Our Lady of Grace.

Sister Nicolette knew she wanted to be a teacher—married or religious. “I really didn’t care which one, whatever God wanted.”

While teaching at St. Anthony School in Clarksville, she found herself around Benedictine sisters who invited her to share meals with them.

She entered Our Lady of Grace in July 1986 as a postulant, and 28 years later, she was almost close-knit. She professed temporary vows in 1988 and final vows in 1991.

“I’ve gone through phases. It took me awhile to adjust,” she said.

Sister Nicolette recalls a profound period of time in her life, many years after entering the community. “For a long time, I felt like I was on the periphery, looking in at this life, many years after entering the community. “For a long time, I felt like I was on the periphery, looking in at this life, many years after entering the community.

“I had to let go of my expectations of what a religious life was going to be and realize that my vocation is much broader than I thought it was going to be,” she concluded.

Sister Nicolette knew she wanted to be a teacher—married or religious. “I really didn’t care which one, whatever God wanted.”

While teaching at St. Anthony School in Clarksville, she found herself around Benedictine sisters who invited her to share meals with them.

She entered Our Lady of Grace in July 1986 as a postulant, and 28 years later, she was almost close-knit. She professed temporary vows in 1988 and final vows in 1991.

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Sister Nicolette recalls a profound period of time in her life, many years after entering the community. “For a long time, I felt like I was on the periphery, looking in at this life, many years after entering the community.

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Monastic life offers distinctive gifts to the Church and the world

By Brother William Sprauer, O.S.B.

A charism is a spiritual gift given by God and, if properly recognized and cultivated, is shared for the benefit of others, giving life to the Church. The ancient tradition of monastic life, as one of many forms of consecrated life offers the Church its own unique charism.

**Distinctive vows**

Religious orders follow Christ in a particular way by binding themselves to the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Monastic vows, while they include these three, are expressed in a slightly different manner. St. Benedict directs new monks to “...come before the whole community in the oratory and promise stability, fidelity to the monastic life, and obedience.” We certainly share the vow of obedience, yet stability and fidelity are particular to the monastic life.

Monastic poverty takes the form of “holding all things in common.” While we are not expected to exhibit radical poverty, like that of St. Francis of Assisi, we are called to live a simple, unmaterialistic life, recognizing that ultimately we personally do not own anything. Monks strive to live a life of continuing conversion, or conversatio morum (conversion of manners) as it is called in the Rule of St. Benedict. We strive each day, through prayer, work, community (and ultimately, self-discovery), to let go of those things that inhibit us from loving, from willing the good of another. The relentlessness of daily monastic life slowly wears on us, until our hard edges are smoothed and we more closely resemble Christ.

Monks pursue the formation of “another place,” away from the hustle and bustle of the world, a space to encounter Christ. The Rule of St. Benedict, says, “...let nothing be alien to the community.” Community is a key word in the vow of stability. While we may live and work as individuals, the community shapes us and we allow the community to shape us. We are called to “be” and not just “act” as monks. We strive each day, through prayer, work, and community (and ultimately, self-discovery), to let go of those things that inhibit us from loving, from willing the good of another. The relentlessness of daily monastic life slowly wears on us, until our hard edges are smoothed and we more closely resemble Christ.

**Distinctive place**

Traditionally, monasteries are often found in a “deserted place,” away from the hustle and bustle of the world. Monks choose to leave “the world,” putting themselves on the fringe of society, while still connected to the Church at large, in order to seek Christ above all else.

This “flight” from the world is not because monks are running from something. Rather, they “step aside” to gain better perspective. Living apart in a cloister allows the monk to view the world from a distance, offering a fresh perspective while living a simple, quiet life of prayer and work within a close-knit community.

**Distinctive prayer**

Each monastery’s daily schedule brings the monks together several times a day to sing the praises of God through the Liturgy of the Hours, or “Work of God” as St. Benedict called it. Gregorian chant is the preferred monastic method of praying the psalms, and its use makes the liturgy reverent and dignified.

This constant returning to public prayer strengthens our relationship with Christ so that we become more attentive to his voice speaking to us in our daily lives.

Our private prayer comes in many different forms, be it locuto divine (contemplative praying of the Scriptures), the rosary, centering prayer or the Jesus Prayer. Although the form itself may differ, the goal is the same, to simply “rest in God.” Whatever devotion or prayer practice used to achieve this state of quiet contemplation is certainly up to the individual monk. And so, our prayer does not cease, but follows us into our various tasks around the monastery. Our prayer bleeds into other areas of our lives, and begins to manifest itself in charitable works in the community and the Church at large.

While the Rule of St. Benedict doesn’t specify any particular type of work, monks tend to take on apostolates that allow for these regular intervals of liturgical and private prayer, so that prayer becomes the primary and persistent focus of a monk’s life.

Work is secondary to prayer, but is still a necessary part of the daily life of a monk. As St. Benedict says, “Idleness is the enemy of the soul.”

Monastic life offers a unique witness to the Church and to the world. Monks strive to cultivate Gospel values by living the Kingdom of Heaven this side of death, in a quiet and simple life. We believe that by living in continuing conversion through our contemplative prayer and work, we can change the world around us and make it a more loving place.

This is our charism. This is our received gift from God and, in turn, continue to cultivate it, offering ourselves in prayer and witness for the Church and for the world, so that nothing will be preferred to the love of Christ.

(Benedictine Brother William Sprauer is a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. For more information about Saint Meinrad Archabbey, log on to www.saintmeinrad.org)
New deacon candidates come from varied backgrounds

By Sean Gallagher

On Sept. 27, 21 men from across central and southern Indiana were accepted by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin as candidates for the diaconate during a Mass in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

They have completed one year of formation. Over the next three years, they will continue participating in the four dimensions of deacon formation: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral.

Eight of the 11 archdiocesan deaneries are represented in the new class of deacon candidates. This includes the Tell City Deanery, which has not had a candidate in the previous two classes.†

David Bartolowits
Age: 57
Wife: Leslie
Children: 2
Parish: St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis
Occupation: Professional musician

Joseph Beauchamp
Age: 53
Wife: Shelly
Children: 3
Parish: St. Ann, Indianapolis
Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

Robert Beyke
Age: 51
Wife: Beth
Children: 2
Parish: St. Monica, Indianapolis
Occupation: Environmental Affairs Manager

Gary Blackwell
Age: 54
Wife: Lynn
Children: 4
Parish: Most Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove
Occupation: Firefighter

Paul Fisherkeller
Age: 66
Wife: Sandra
Children: 4
Parish: St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis
Occupation: Retired

Wilfredo de la Rosa
Age: 63
Wife: Melinda
Children: 2
Parish: Holy Angels, Indianapolis
Occupation: Self-employed

Martin Ignacio
Age: 50
Wife: Avigay
Children: 2
Parish: St. Mary, New Albany
Occupation: Occupational Safety and Health Manager

Charles Giesting
Age: 58
Wife: Gwen
Children: 3
Parish: St. Ambrose, Seymour
Occupation: Business Owner

John Hosier
Age: 58
Wife: Ada
Children: 3
Parish: Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis
Occupation: Quality Engineer

Anthony Lewis
Age: 46
Wife: Angie
Children: 3
Parish: St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
Occupation: Operations Supervisor

Jerome Matthews
Age: 65
Wife: Cathy
Children: 3
Parish: St. Barnabas, Indianapolis
Occupation: Teacher Assistant

Oliver Jackson
Age: 66
Wife: Cora
Children: 3
Parish: St. Rita, Indianapolis
Occupation: Retired

John Jacobi
Age: 44
Wife: Carmen
Children: 3
Parish: St. Michael, Bradford
Occupation: Director of Religious Education

John McShea
Age: 60
Wife: Regina
Children: 3
Parish: St. Monica, Indianapolis
Occupation: Telecommunications

Reynaldo Nava
Age: 47
Wife: Lorena
Children: 4
Parish: Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Occupation: Warehouse/Hispanic Ministry Coordinator

Matthew “Tom” Scarlett
Age: 44
Wife: Kathy
Children: 3
Parish: St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
Occupation: Program Manager

Nathan Schallert
Age: 62
Wife: Kathy
Children: 2
Parish: SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis
Occupation: Retired

Kenneth Smith
Age: 62
Wife: Carol
Children: 3
Parish: St. Paul, Tell City
Occupation: Director of Solid Waste Management

Steven Tsuleff
Age: 52
Wife: Kara
Children: 2
Parish: St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
Occupation: Video Editor

Joseph Godecker serves as the director of spiritual formation for the deacon program. During that time, they will meet as a group for classes or on retreat one weekend a month for 11 months each year. Additionally, they will participate in various ministries of charity in parishes to which they will be assigned as well as other places outside of parishes (e.g., jails, hospitals, etc.).

This third class of deacon candidates ranges in age from 41 to 67. They have been married as few as 15 years and as many as 46.

Most continue to work at careers in the secular world, although two are retired. Their occupations vary from professional musician to firefighter to video editor.

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married and have a huge family with a lot of kids. I kept during the weekend.

the retreat had thought of a priestly or religious vocation decision to move forward and live my faith.”

there, I knew I had to change. It was the beginning of the with her tears and wiped his feet with her hair. From that, I learned something about myself. I loved my classes, especially Scripture.

“After the talk, there was time for private prayer. I I went to daily Mass and I slowly, I’m growing in my teaching the faith to his students.

archdioceesan vocations office and become a seminarian in the fall of 1984. Father Atkins received his priesthood formation at Saint Meinrad. In the fall of his final year at the seminary before he became a priest in 1987, he began to feel a confirmation in prayer that the priesthood truly was the calling that God had given him.

I did a lot of walking at night, praying, just asking God. ‘Do you really want me to do this?’” Father Atkins said. “I knew I was very happy and energized about my studies. I loved my classes, especially Scripture.

After ministering at Roncalli, Father Atkins served at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington in 11 years starting in 1994. Ministering in the University community, especially among the faculty members, was intimidating at first.

I learned a lot about a priest can’t just pick and choose where he’s going to go simply based on where he feels comfortable,” Father Atkins said. “Sometimes a priest’s presence is needed where he would normally not choose to go.”

According to Mark Erdosy, however, Father Atkins was “personable, open and genuine” among the students and faculty at IU.

‘He always looked for the good in other people,’ said Erdosy, who assisted Father Atkins in his ministry at St. Paul. ‘Even when he really disagreed with people, he would still try to find that one thing that he could hang on to and bring it forth.’

What attracted students to Father Atkins, Erdosy said, was his availability and his warm desire to bring them close to Christ.

‘He invested himself 100 percent in his ministry there,’ Erdosy said. ‘He loved the students, loved their questions. He wanted to help them grow in their faith. When they encountered difficulties in their life, he wanted to be Christ’s healing presence for them.”

That availability has continued in his parish ministry at Holy Family, says Day, who preceded his friend as pastor of the New Albany Deanery faith community.

‘As soon as you call, if he can, he’s there,” he said. ‘That’s Father Day, who now serves as pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight. ‘He’ll respond as best he can to the gifts he has.”

The selflessness he shows in caring for his parishioners when they are in need is related to the Eucharist for Father Atkins.

‘Every celebration of the Eucharist, for me, reminds me that I’m not a priest for myself,” he said. ‘I’m a priest for God’s people. My being a priest for them reminds me that I belong, that I have a family. It’s an experience of love and unity.”

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, log on to www.HearGodsCall.com)
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- Revelation 5:12
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www.SistersofProvidence.org
liberty at the Council, and a debate about birth control

What was in the news on October 30, 1964? Talk of religious liberty at the Council, and a debate about birth control

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:  October 30, 1964

Men place a headstone at a graveyard at the site of Scream Mehmud Cumo, 44, at a cemetery in Suruc, Turkey, on Oct. 11. The man was a People’s Protection Unit fighter who was killed during clashes with the Islamic State militant group in Kobani, Syria. Muslim leaders worldwide have issued a stern rebuke to the militant group, known as ISIS. (CNS photo/Umit Bektas, Reuters)
MARRIAGE
continued from page 1

The children of Steve and Theresa Hartley have always been at the heart of the couple’s marriage of 25 years. Here, the Hartley children—Dane, left, Colay, Tommy, Pete and Zach—pose for a photo at their parish church, St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

continued from page 1

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The children of Steve and Theresa Hartley have always been at the heart of the couple’s marriage of 25 years. Here, the Hartley children—Dane, left, Colay, Tommy, Pete and Zach—pose for a photo at their parish church, St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)
Families grow through courtesy, gratitude and forgiveness

By David Gibson

Do you know any families who do not hope for happiness? I don’t. But most of us have trouble defining “happiness” precisely. Though we relentlessly pursue happiness, it is difficult to state precisely what we’re pursuing. Perhaps happiness has to do with what is not, and that could help:

“Happiness comes to us indirectly as the fruit of defeating the causes of our unhappiness,” Benedictine Father Christopher Jamison wrote in Finding Happiness. But when it comes to happiness, he cautioned, “careful work is needed to discern the real thing.” It seems Pope Francis agrees that it is vital to defeat the causes of unhappiness. Consider his October 2013 remarks to a huge crowd in Rome participating in a Year of Faith celebration of the family.

“I have felt the pain of families living in situations of poverty and war,” he told them. He observed that “life is often wearisome, and many times tragically so.” Moreover, “work is tiring,” and “looking for work is exhausting.”

But “what weighs more than all of these things is a lack of love. It weighs upon us never to receive a smile, not to be loved. There are other attributes they found in happy families, including belief in God and belief that God cares for their families; unconditional love for each family member; a strong sense of intimacy; a willingness to share oneself freely and fully; a safe environment in which to share the family’s gifts with others; praying together; opening one’s heart and reaching outside the family to help others in need; admitting errors freely; offering forgiveness and reconciliation even more freely; joy and celebration at the gifts of daily life; a commitment to justice and respect for all.

By Daniel S. Mulhall

The Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy wrote in Anna Karenina: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.”

The first line of Tolstoy’s classic novel is widely familiar. While quoted often, the statement isn’t necessarily true. Every family is different. However, there are certain qualities that can be found in every happy family, and that may well be missing in every unhappy family.

In 1994, Catholic bishops in the United States prepared a pastoral message to families shared in “Follow the Way of Love.” There, they addressed some of the qualities that exist in happy families. They started by noting that in happy families God is revealed in unique and personal ways through the sharing of love and affection that takes place: “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him” (1 Jn 4:16). These families “create a community of love,” helping each other to grow in service to others.

The bishops also recognized that fidelity is an essential virtue for happy family life as people “follow the way of love.” When people are true to each other and to what they believe in, their lives will be filled with joy.

There are other attributes they found in happy families, including belief in God and belief that God cares for their families; unconditional love for each family member; a strong sense of intimacy; a willingness to share oneself freely and fully; a safe environment in which to share the family’s gifts with others; praying together; opening one’s heart and reaching outside the family to help others in need; admitting errors freely; offering forgiveness and reconciliation even more freely; joy and celebration at the gifts of daily life; a commitment to justice and respect for all.

The bishops noted that “a committed, permanent, faithful relationship of husband and wife is the root of a family,” while also recognizing that happy families can take many different forms. The bishops wrote that “an enduring marriage is more than simply endurance.” It is grown into an intimate friendship.

Many couples who have been married for years will say that their spouse is also their closest companion and best friend. They are bonded together in friendship through common interests and attitudes about life. They think of each other first, and look out for the other’s best interest.

The pastoral message recognized that challenges and problems, arguments and hurt feelings happen in every relationship, even the closest friendships and marriages. What allows these families to thrive when others fail on hard times is that they have learned the importance of humility, of recognizing the value of the other person’s gifts and talents.

But healthy families have also learned to communicate, to compromise and to take everything that happens with a sense of humor. Finally, the bishops recognized that healthy families grow stronger when they spend time together, share experiences and seek guidance.

By David Gibson

We need to focus on the fact that we have great families, and that families bring joy and happiness to their members.”

—Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin

“Happy families communicate well, have mutual respect for each other and that happens to them with a sense of humor.”

(CNS photo/Karenavea Hope, EPA)
Effie Caldarola writes for Catholic News Service.

### Co-worker's gift was God’s answer to author's prayer

Debra Tomassi

I first met Dorothy when I started working at Insurance by Ken Brown on Arlington Street in Back Bay. Soon after I arrived, she moved away to Portugal and she got to go. Dorothy, a single mom with meager resources, was thrilled. She generously offered to buy me lunch, for everyone.

I didn’t want her spending money on me. I had every penny on hand. I didn’t really need it, but I didn’t want to be anything. Generally, tourists traps sell garbage coffee. So off she went on her trip. At the time, I was struggling with how to spend my time. My dad had just been diagnosed with cancer, and since my husband’s income was adequate, I didn’t really need to work. I prayed constantly, asking God for direction.

One day in particular, I parked at the curb outside the office and paused. Was I really supposed to be in the insurance field? Should I quit, making more time available for my family? Did I need to volunteer more at the church? I prayed. “What do you want me to do?” That day, Dorothy, having returned from Portugal, met me in the office foyer. We exchanged greetings, and then she said, “I want to see Debbie’s face when you got for you!”

I cringed, assuming she wanted me on some summer soiree, or with a Irish soldier in full battle regalia. The soldier was looking for the Irish child’s parents to bring him to the office. He was a child besieged by Islamic State fighters. The baby was cradled against a gun slug across the soldier’s chest. I should have known the baby ever find his mom? That picture brought the war to my kitchen table in a way that statistics can’t. Members of Syria have watched the dots, left home, some have left for neighboring countries such as Turkey or Lebanon. Additionally, millions more have been left struggling wars in countries throughout the world. Live in millions, sometimes in decades, in refugee camps established by the United Nations, and many will never have a chance to go home.

A few “lucky” ones will be sent by the U.N. to countries like ours, and to cities like mine. They come from Hultan, Iraq, or Congo, South Sudan. They come to a strange place, to live among strangers in a culture, customs and language foreign to them.

For many, the apartments they will be allowed to afford will be in tough neighborhoods. The adjustment will be hard, the loneliness deep.

There are few fairy-tale endings here. But I believe, change, one family at a time, to tell them we care about a suffering world.

(Debra Tomassi writes from Alhambra Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.)

I knew I would want this?” She added, “I want to see Debbie’s face when you got for you!”

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(Debra Tomassi writes from Alhambra Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.)
Almost 1,000 years ago, the feast of commemorating all the departed souls was initiated at the great Benedictine abbey of Cluny in France, situated roughly two-thirds of the way from Paris to Genoa. At the time, Cluny was a major center of learning and of missionary outreach. It is no wonder that a feast celebrated at Cluny would be observed throughout Europe. Eventually, the feast of All Souls, which is celebrated annually on Nov. 2.

Only a handful of feasts can replace a Sunday during the liturgical season of Ordinary Time. When that happens, the Church intends to teach an important lesson for all the faithful.

The Church’s message is simple. Only through Jesus can we be pure, and God will give us life and peace forever.†

The Church is the theological explanation of how sinners overcome these ill effects. The lesson is about us as humans, about God and about our own love for God—even if we have sinned.

The first reading is from the Book of Wisdom. The purpose of this book is to give testimony and eulogies as spiritual sustenance. Survivors come together in fond remembrance of a life that enters the heavenly realm free of strife.

The Church, however, does not leave us in despair but rather in great hope. We are sinners. Nevertheless, God loves us. In this love, God sent the Son of God as Redeemer, dying in sacrifice on Calvary, so that we might have life forever.

God never imposes anything upon us, even for our own good. The ancient prophets and Christian mystics over the centuries have known quite well that sin injures humans. As sinners, we are wounded. We must seek God’s pardon, but even if forgiven, we bear the scars of the injuries of sin. Our resolve has been weakened, our vision further blurred.

Purgatory is the Church’s theological explanation of how sinners overcome these ill effects. The lesson is about us as humans, about God and about our own love for God—even if we have sinned.

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Purgatory is the opportunity to be purified, for the scars of the wounds of sin to be erased. It is a state of longing and of intense reedition to God. The souls in purgatory understand the folly of their sins but also the beauty of God. They yearn to see God—and they will not be disappointed.

On this feast, we pray that God will hurry the process of purification so that the souls in purgatory soon fully will live with God. We also must think of ourselves, recommitting ourselves to God. Sin has hurt us, but its wounds can be healed; we can be pure, and God will give us life and peace forever.†

The Church’s guidelines for the celebration of the Eucharist are to be found at the beginning of the Roman Missal, the large prayer book on the altar that the priest reads from during Mass. There, in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, it is stated that “even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence is to be observed in the church, in the sanctuary, in the vesting room and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner” (#45).

It would seem, then, that the public recitation of the rosary in church during the sacred moments before the beginning of Mass should be avoided.

Instead, as you point out, this should be a time for “silence and private prayer.”

As for the inclusion of the rosary during Holy Hours, which are intended to help worshipers prepare for the liturgy of a Holy Hour, which takes its inspiration from the days of the second century. St. Ignatius of Antioch, who was bishop of that city in Syria, was arrested and brought to Rome by armed guards. Shortly before his martyrdom, he wrote a letter to his fellow Christians in Asia Minor (the city of Izmir in modern-day Turkey) in which he said, "Where the bishop is present, there is the Catholic Church." The word "Catholic" comes from the Greek root meaning “universal.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that the Church is Catholic because “she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She is sent out to all peoples. ... She encompasses all times” (868).

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle or askfathersdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St. Albany, N.Y. 12208.)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for column consideration.

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

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

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to askfathersdoyle@gmail.com.†

A period of silent prayer before Mass helps worshipers prepare for the liturgy.

Although on occasion I enjoy praying the rosary privately, I have a problem with being “forced” to do so. My perception is that many people are now saying the rosary aloud before Sunday Masses and even during holy hours. I believe that these should be silent times for solitude and private prayer. The most annoying aspect is that, when they finally do finish the rosary and I think that I can get back to my own praying, then they proceed to recite still other prayers publicly—to Mary, the angels and the saints. Do I have the wrong attitude here? (Houma, Louisiana)
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state Thursday before the week of publication.


MCGUIRE, Mary E., 88, St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus (Little Flowers), Indianapolis, Oct. 17. Aunt of several.


WYNE, Ann, 70, former member of St. Malachi, Brownsburg, Sept. 22. Sister of Kathleen Givan, Theresa Plouffe, Lawrence and Patrick Wynne. †

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• building relationships in an online community with other women around the world
• discovering their God-given purpose
• living out their God-given destiny
Chicago’s new archbishop to live in rectory at Holy Name Cathedral

CHICAGO (CNS)—Archbishop Blase J. Cupich, who will succeed Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George in mid-November, told the priests of the Archdiocese of Chicago that his successor decided he will live in the rectory at Holy Name Cathedral.

He said on Oct. 22 that he made the decision in consultation with Cardinal George. Msgr. Dan Mayall, who is the cathedral’s pastor, and several Chicago priests.

The rectory is the former residence of retired Auxiliary Bishop Timothy J. Lyne, who died in 2013 at age 94. The living quarters are named for the late bishop.

Archbishop Cupich said that among other considerations, he wanted to live in a place where he can be most effective in serving all the people in the Archdiocese of Chicago. When his schedule permits, the archbishop intends to say daily Mass at the cathedral. The location also provides easy access to his office at Archbishop Quigley Center.

In deciding to live at the cathedral, the newly named archbishop said he also recognized the historical significance of the Archdiocese’s Residence on Chicago’s North State Parkway. The three-story, red-brick manse has been the home of Chicago archbishops since it was built in 1885 by Archbishop Patrick Feehan. Cardinal George has made his home there since 1997.

The residence is on the National Register of Historic Places as “a structure of significance.” It hosted St. John Paul II and two of his predecessors before they were elected pope—Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the Vatican secretary of state who became Pope Pius XII in 1939, and Cardinal Giovanni Montini, who worked closely with Pope Pius XII and became Pope Paul VI in 1963.

Archbishop Cupich, who will be installed on Nov. 18 during a Mass at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, said he plans to use the North State Parkway manse as a teaching and administrative archdiocesan functions and to host guests.

He also announced that he will establish the Archbishop’s Residence Committee, which will study the best uses of that facility for the benefit of the archdiocese’s mission.
members—those donating $1,500 or more to the United Catholic Appeal—Archbishop Tobin revealed some statistics demonstrating how UCA funds make celebrating the sacraments possible in the archdiocese. “Your contributions are helping to educate our 26 seminarians,” he said. “This past June 7, we ordained four men to the priesthood, and next year we will ordain three more priests.” 

“In 2016, God willing, we will ordain six more men to the priesthood. That will be one of the largest ordination classes we’ve had in many years.”

Archbishop Tobin noted that UCA funds help “in every stage of a young man’s formation, preparing him for the ministry of the future.”

“Those are a virtual lifeline. They’re a way for the archdiocese to reach out to young adult Catholics to make it possible for us to keep those future priests in formation, preparing them for the ministry of the future.”

“By your generosity, we’re able to recruit young men who are as a witness to the priesthood and the whole church. They’re able to do this because of the generosity of those who support the diocese.”

To assist priests in their role as shepherds, 21 men are on track to be ordained permanent deacons in 2017. Alongside those numbers is an additional figure: 45 percent of the pastors in the archdiocese today will be of retirement age in 10 years, according to Father Stephen Giannini, archdiocesan vicar for clergy and parish life coordinators.

Archbishop Tobin points out that those retiring priests will rely on UCA funds to help “subsidiize [their] retirement so that they can live a modest but fulfilling life in their later years.”

With such a large number of pending retirements looming in the future, archdiocesan vocations director Father Eric Augenstein notes the need for annually replenishing UCA funds to assist in promoting vocations and the formation of future priests.

“With an aging clergy, it is more and more important that our vocations outreach is able to be broad and comprehensive throughout the archdiocese,” he said. “United Catholic Appeal funds help the Vocations Office coordinate with other archdiocesan and parish leaders to provide opportunities on college campuses, in our Catholic high schools, with youth groups, and in families.”

“We must be present wherever young people are as a witness to the priesthood and religious life, and to be able to help them discern God’s call.”

“At the same time,” he said, “UCA funds provide for high-quality seminary formation so that our future priests are good, holy, pastoral men who are able to be leaders in the new evangelization as missionary disciples.”

The difference four years can make

In his recent address to the Miter Society, Archbishop Tobin had good news to report in the area of proclaiming the word of God, another essential activity supported with UCA funds.

“Our Catholic grade schools and high schools are educating more than 23,000 students, and at least another 15,000 kids are receiving religious education through our parishes,” he noted.

He also pointed out that United Catholic Appeal funds make “our many youth ministry and young adult and campus ministry programs possible.”

“We have been putting extra focus on these particular ministry programs, because from high school into college and young adulthood, many young people fall away from the Church.”

Matt Foley, archdiocesan director of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry, sheds light on the extent of that loss.

“By the time a student starts his or her freshman year and ends their senior year, we lose about 75-80 percent of them,” he said. “They’re not actively involved in the Church by the time they graduate from college.”

To turn that around, said Archbishop Tobin, “We need to keep our young people engaged in their faith, and give them the support that will help them remain Catholic despite the many challenges that come with living in today’s secular world.”

“Providing clothing, meals and shelter”

In terms of exercising charity, Archbishop Tobin noted that “the number of people who need our help is growing each year.”

Last year, he said, 180,000 people within the boundaries of the archdiocese—regardless of faith, race or creed—received aid from Catholic Charities in Tell City, “If you donate $25 to the United Catholic Appeal, that’s going to provide two cans of formula that will feed a baby for maybe a month. If 12 people did that, we’ve taken care of that baby for a whole year.”

“In light of the need for annually replenishing the funds to accomplish the ministry of celebrating the sacraments, proclaiming the word of God and exercising charity in central and southern Indiana, Archbishop Tobin put forth a request.”

“I’m knocking. I’m asking the people of the archdiocese to make it possible for us to care for each other, and the United Catholic Appeal will do that.”

(For more information on the United Catholic Appeal or to view the video highlighting the impact that financial support has on ministry, log on to www.archindy.org UCA. For questions, contact the Office of Stewardship and Development at 317-236-1415 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1415 or uca@archindy.org.)

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For this year’s United Catholic Appeal, please watch the video above to see how your prayerful gift is making a difference throughout the archdiocese. Stay tuned for more videos in this series.

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