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Criterion

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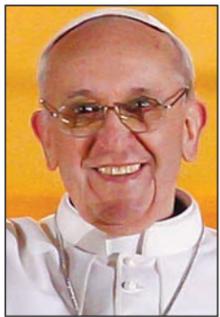
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In Turkey, Pope Francis got a look at Christianity on the margins

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Ankara and Istanbul were gray and cold, at least compared to Rome, during Pope Francis' Nov. 28-30 visit to Turkey. And the general



Pope Francis

reception, outside of the pope's official meetings, was hardly warmer. There were none of the enthusiastic crowds that usually greet him on his trips, no masses waving signs of welcome along his motorcade route or behind police barriers at the stops.

Pope Francis,

who seems to thrive on contact with the public, especially with the young, the aged and the infirm, seemed dispirited by the lack of it this time. Despite his relatively light schedule—six speeches over three days, compared to 14 during his three-day visit to the Holy Land in May—he looked attentive, but increasingly weary at his public appearances.

There was an obvious reason, unrelated to the pope himself, for the general indifference to his presence. An observer did not need to know that Turkey is 99.8 percent Muslim to see that both cities he visited are dotted with the domes and minarets of countless mosques, miniature versions of the great monuments, Hagia Sofia and the Blue Mosque, that he toured in Istanbul.

Even a brief experience of Christianity's marginality in that part of world makes it easier to understand why Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, whom Pope Francis traveled to Turkey principally to see, is the papacy's best friend in the Orthodox Church and an eager participant in ecumenical dialogue.

Although Patriarch Bartholomew is traditionally considered first among equals by Orthodox bishops, his Greek Orthodox flock in Turkey is estimated at no more

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Sharing the gift of Christmas

For more than 20 years, Ed Kirschner has been creating Nativity stables and Christmas memories in his small shop in Oldenburg. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Handcrafted Nativity stables reflect stories of the faith for longtime Oldenburg resident

By John Shaughnessy

OLDENBURG—Ed Kirschner knows there's one thing he can count on when people visit his small shop where he creates Nativity stables.

Before long, the visitors will start sharing stories about Christmases from their past, focusing on memories of the Nativity sets that their parents and grandparents displayed through the years.

And while Kirschner prefers listening to other people's stories, the reality is that he has his own heartwarming memories to share. Like the memories from his childhood when he and his mother would make Nativity scenes from boxes and brown paper.

"It was time we spent together when I was little," recalls the 75-year-old member of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg. "My mother had a very strong faith. As far as

she was concerned, setting up the Nativity was always a focal point of Christmas."

His stories also include one of the first wooden Nativity stables he ever made—a Christmas gift for his wife Joyce that he gave her shortly after they were married and moved into their first home.

"We used it for about 10 years as the kids came along," says the father of four grown children who has been married for 54 years. "It was kind of plain, and I replaced it with a new one. My wife didn't like that I did that. It had all the memories and traditions attached to it. That's the way it is for a lot of people. Those traditions and memories are important. She still mentions that one from time to time."

Then there's the Christmas story involving Nativity stables that just may be his favorite.

"When one of my grandsons, Alex, was 12, he came over to our house during the

summer, and we worked on making them together," says the grandfather of nine. "He made seven of them. That Christmas, he gave me the first one he ever made. We still put that one up for Christmas every year. He's almost 21 now. That one will always be special. We had a real good time that summer putting them together. Eventually, we'll give it back to him when he gets married."

Sharing the gift of Christmas

Kirschner shares those stories as he sits in The Creche Shop, in the heart of the village of Oldenburg in southeastern Indiana.

Some of his handcrafted Nativity stables are on display in an old ice locker that was once part of a general store. In his small workshop, the tools he uses are always close by: a skill saw, a miter saw,

See KIRSCHNER, page 10

'Hope has come to town' as Women's Care Center opens next to Planned Parenthood

By Natalie Hoefler

As a group of about 80 pro-life advocates gathered for the blessing of the new Women's Care Center on Nov. 19, another blessing happened, one the Catholic pro-life organization hoped for in building next to a Planned Parenthood facility—a woman came to the wrong door.

"We were right in the middle of the service when she came in," said Sarah Bardol, director of the new facility. "Lisa [a counselor] got her into one of the rooms to talk with her about what she was wanting, but her boyfriend realized they weren't at Planned Parenthood and came in and

got her."

The staff of the new Women's Care Center in Indianapolis, located just yards from the largest abortion provider in the state, hopes for many such "wrong-door" incidents as they seek to help women choose life for their unborn babies.

Founded in South Bend, Ind., in 1984, Women's Care Center is a 100 percent donor-funded organization that builds facilities near abortion centers. At its 23 facilities spread among seven states, they offer free counseling and ultrasounds to women considering abortion, and support women during and after

See CARE CENTER, page 9



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin listens as Sarah Bardol, director of the new Women's Care Center in Indianapolis, reads in the chapel during a service to bless the facility on Nov. 19. Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Spiritual Life and Worship, holds a book for Bardol. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

TURKEY

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than 4,000 people, fewer than in many American Catholic parishes. Turkish authorities have kept his Church's only seminary closed for more than 40 years. Just across the border, in Syria and Iraq, Christian minorities are being slaughtered or driven from their homes by militants of the Islamic State.

Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that Patriarch Bartholomew would tell Pope Francis on Nov. 30: "We no longer have the luxury of isolated action. The modern persecutors of Christians do not ask which Church their victims belong to. The unity that concerns us is regrettably already occurring in certain regions of the world through the blood of martyrdom."

In other words, necessity is the mother not only of invention but ecumenism, which also makes it easier to understand why Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, who leads tens of millions of Russian Orthodox and is closely allied with his nation's government, can maintain his predecessors' stance of refusing even to meet with the bishop of Rome.

Rome obviously is a far less lonely place than Istanbul to be a Christian. But Pope Francis follows St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI in recognizing that the West is, increasingly, Christian only in name. His Nov. 25 visit to the European institutions in Strasbourg, France, where he arrived to find the streets practically empty, was a recent reminder of that reality in the Church's traditional heartland.

The impressions of Christian culture that the Muslim world encounters through globalization are not the work of missionaries. Leaving Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs in Ankara after the pope's visit there on Nov. 28, reporters passed a luxury shopping mall decorated with lighted Christmas trees—reminding an American present that it was Black Friday in the U.S.

In response to the secularism of Europe and other wealthy societies, Pope Francis has taken a different tack than his two immediate predecessors. The current pope denounces a "throwaway" culture of abortion, euthanasia, unemployment, economic inequality and environmental pollution. But he rarely speaks of secularism, and his teaching focuses less on the failings of contemporary society and more on the Church's own shortcomings as impediments to evangelization.

Whatever the advantages of this pastoral strategy, Pope Francis clearly does not expect short-term results in Europe, which he described to the politicians in Strasbourg as a "grandmother, no longer fertile and vibrant" but "elderly and haggard."

To see the Church's future now, the pope must look elsewhere, such as the Philippines, where in 1995 St. John Paul celebrated a single Mass in Manila with a congregation of more than 5 million.

Pope Francis travels there in January. †



Pope Francis celebrates Mass in the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Istanbul on Nov. 29. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



Above, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople embrace during a prayer service in the patriarchal Church of St. George in Istanbul on Nov. 29.

(CNS photo/Paul Haring)



Right, Pope Francis meets with young refugees from civil wars in Syria and Iraq, a few hours after joining Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to denounce the plight of Christians there. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

Readers are invited to share their favorite Christmas memories in Dec. 19 issue

The Criterion invites readers to submit a brief story about a special holiday memory for possible inclusion in our annual Christmas issue, which will be published on Dec. 19.

Your favorite Christmas story may be written about a humorous or serious topic related to your faith, family or friends.

Submissions should include the writer's name, address, parish and telephone number.

Send your story to *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206 or by e-mail to criterion@archindy.org by the Dec. 10 deadline. †

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral announces Christmas liturgies

The Christmas liturgical schedule for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis is as follows:

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Dec. 24—5 p.m. vigil Mass.

Also, Midnight Mass with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin scheduled as the principal celebrant with prelude starting at 11:40 p.m.

Parking is available behind the cathedral for the 5 p.m. Mass and Midnight Mass. Parking is also available for Midnight Mass at the Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., from 10 p.m.-2 a.m.

Dec. 25—10:30 a.m. Mass. †

End 2014, begin 2015 with New Year's Eve Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Coming to downtown Indianapolis for New Year's Eve?

If so, you are invited to attend the Solemnity of Mary Mass that will be celebrated at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral at 5 p.m. on Dec. 31 for the holy day of obligation.

Parking is available behind the cathedral. †

Dec. 8 is holy day of obligation

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Dec. 8.

It is a holy day of obligation due to the fact that it is the patronal feast of the United States.

Call your local parish for Mass times. †

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Two Indianapolis east side parishes form a 'union in Christ'

By Sean Gallagher

The spiritual story that binds Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and the former St. Bernadette Parish, both in Indianapolis, can be traced back to an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Bernadette Soubirous on Feb. 11, 1858, in Lourdes in southwestern France.

That story inspired the building of a great shrine in Lourdes and brings countless pilgrims there every year.

Father Noah Casey, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, hopes that the story will strengthen the bond of the two faith communities that have come together as one.

The union of the two parishes came about through the *Connected in the Spirit* planning process. On May 21, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin announced his decisions regarding the process for the four Indianapolis deaneries.

Those decisions included the merger of St. Bernadette Parish into Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, which became effective on Nov. 30.



Fr. Noah Casey

Instead of referring to it as a merger, however, members of both faith communities seek to understand it as a union, a "union in Christ," said Father Casey. "This isn't

a banking deal," said Father Casey of the difference in terminology. "This is about people."

The union of the people of the two faith communities became a reality on the weekend of Nov. 29-30 when members of both parishes came together for Mass on the First Sunday of Advent at Our Lady of Lourdes Church and receptions after the liturgies.

Bob Eha, who served as president of St. Bernadette's parish council and was involved in the *Connected in the Spirit* process, said the liturgies and receptions were encouraging.

"Things that we tried to put into place seem to be bearing fruit," Eha said. "To a person, the people at Lourdes on Sunday were welcoming and sympathetic. It was sincere."

Nonetheless, Eha acknowledged that the members of St. Bernadette still have a

"long way to go" in coping with the fact that their parish has been closed.

Father Casey honored the feelings of St. Bernadette parishioners when he facilitated a three-hour "listening and reflection session" in August in which they shared a meal, and had the chance to speak about and share their emotions regarding the upcoming merger.

"It was very hard, but it was absolutely necessary," Father Casey said. "There were a lot of tears. I would encourage this in any of these situations. These people must be heard . . ."

The effort to bring members of both parishes together gained momentum on Sept. 7, when a Mass attended by approximately 400 people was celebrated on the grounds of St. Bernadette Parish.

It was the only Mass that weekend for both faith communities. Their fellowship was also fostered through a picnic meal that they shared after the Mass.

"It was extremely powerful," Father Casey said. "It was a beautiful day. The liturgy was great. People really got into it. There was good mixing, good mingling. People were saying, 'Why have we never done this before?'"

While he values the various meetings he participated in through the *Connected in the Spirit* process, Eha said having people from the two parishes come together in worship and a shared meal is what really brings them together as one community.

"You get to know people if you're carrying a table across a field or if you're in the kitchen flipping hamburgers," Eha said.

Colleen Kenney, 54, has lived her whole life as a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. As its current parish council president, she is glad to see her new unified parish enhanced by the gifts that former members of St. Bernadette are bringing to it.

"St. Bernadette was a small community," she said. "They had some very strong gifts in social outreach that weren't quite as strong at Lourdes. Those gifts will strengthen us."

She and other members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish made phone calls to every St. Bernadette household in the days following the Nov. 23 Mass that was the final parish Mass at St. Bernadette Church.

The calls were meant to be a sign of support and a chance to answer questions about Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.

"Most people haven't decided what



Members of the former St. Bernadette Parish in Indianapolis fill their faith community's church for Mass on Nov. 23. It was the final parish Mass in the church. Effective on Nov. 30, the parish was merged with nearby Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. The union of the two parishes came about as a result of the *Connected in the Spirit* planning process. (Submitted photo by Gary Yohler, St. Bernadette Class of 1959)

they're going to do, but they greatly appreciated that outreach," Kenney said regarding what parish the former St. Bernadette parishioners will join.

Our Lady of Lourdes members continued that outreach during the First Sunday of Advent Masses and the receptions that followed.

Kenney said that one of her fellow Our Lady of Lourdes parishioners came up to her after one of the receptions and said that she must be glad to have all that work completed.

"I said, 'Now the real work begins,'" Kenney replied. "Now, they're going to be with us. We can't say, 'OK. We're done now.'"

Although Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Bernadette are now a unified parish, work still continues, said Eha, because of the uncertain future of ministries sponsored by St. Bernadette Parish.

Those ministries included the retreats that take place in parish facilities, an annual Christmas dinner the parish hosted for people in need, and the parish festival that took place annually on the second weekend of June.

The question about the future of these ministries is still an open one, said Eha.

"The best answer at this point is, we don't know," he said. "That's pretty painful. Right now, the decisions are probably being made as fast as they can be made."

Father Casey acknowledged that there are challenges to members of both



Pins highlighting the union of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and the former St. Bernadette Parish, both in Indianapolis, were given to worshippers at Mass on the weekend of Nov. 29-30 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. (Submitted photo)

faith communities as they come together as one. At the same time, he has seen the blessings that have come out of the process.

"It's challenging," Father Casey said. "Everyone has to change a little. [But] something new is about to happen."

(For more information about the *Connected in the Spirit* planning process, including the decrees regarding the parishes that have been involved in it thus far, log on to www.archindy.org/connected.) †

Pope, religious leaders pledge to work together to end slavery by 2020

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Pope Francis and leaders of other churches and religions signed a declaration pledging



Pope Francis

to work together to help end modern slavery in the world by 2020, he urged governments, businesses and all people of good will to join forces against this "crime against humanity."

Tens of millions of people are "in chains" because of human trafficking and forced labor, and it is leading to their "dehumanization and humiliation," the pope said at the ceremony on Dec. 2, the U.N. Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

Every human person is born with the same dignity and freedom, and any form of discrimination that does not respect this truth "is a crime, and very often an abhorrent crime," the pope said.

Inspired by their religious beliefs and a desire "to take practical action," the pope and 11 leaders representing the Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox, Anglican, Buddhist and Hindu faiths made a united commitment to help eradicate slavery worldwide.

The leaders signed the joint declaration at the headquarters of Pontifical Academy of Sciences in the Vatican Gardens. The signatories included: Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury; Rabbi David Rosen, international director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee; Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi al-Modarresi, an influential Shiite scholar; and representatives signing on behalf of Ahmad el-Tayeb, the grand imam of Al-Azhar University—a leading Sunni Muslim institution in Cairo—and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

The declaration recognized that any action that fails to respect every person's freedom and dignity "is a crime against humanity."

"We pledge ourselves here today to do all in our power, within our faith communities and beyond, to work together for the freedom of all those who are enslaved and trafficked so that their future may be restored," it said.

"Today we have the opportunity, awareness, wisdom, innovation and technology to achieve this human and moral imperative," said the joint declaration, which was read aloud in English by a man from Ghana and in Spanish by a woman from Mexico, both of whom had been victims of human trafficking and forced labor.

The initiative was organized by the faith-based Global Freedom Network, which was launched in March after a joint agreement by the Vatican, Al-Azhar University and the Anglican Communion.

Pope Francis thanked the men and women religious leaders for this "act of fraternity" on behalf of the countless numbers of women, men and children who are exploited for personal or commercial gain.

Despite global efforts, the scale of this "atrocious scourge" is on the rise, and it often "disguises itself behind apparently acceptable practices" in tourism and different forms of labor, he said.

"It hides behind closed doors, in homes, on the streets, in cars, in factories, in the fields, on fishing boats," in the biggest cities or smallest villages and in the richest and poorest countries of the world, he said.

The pope asked that people of faith join together in the fight to end slavery, and he called for the "steadfast support" of the world's governments, businesses and people of good will to "join this movement."

"We cannot tolerate that the image of the living God" present in every human being "is subjected to this most abominable form of trafficking."

Each of the religious leaders present was asked by the moderator—CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour—to give "an appeal" to the world to support an end to human exploitation.

Hindu leader Mata Amritanandamayi said she has heard the stories of hundreds of victims, and "if we fail to do something, it will be a travesty against future generations," she said through an interpreter.

Values are skewed, she said, when a man can sell his sperm or a woman her eggs for a huge amount of money, but yet a child can be sold "for as little as 20 dollars."

"We need laws without loopholes" to stop traffickers and their activities, she said.

Thich Nhat Hanh, a Zen Buddhist leader, said in a message read by his representative that activists also must have compassion for the traffickers, to see that they, too, have suffered in some way, and to "help them wake up" from the wrong they are committing.

Contemplation must be accompanied by action, he said, and a greater detachment from material things will let people "have a lot more time" to work to bring freedom to the world.

Archbishop Welby said people can avoid the exploitation of others with their "own actions and choices as consumers and users of financial services whose managers can put great pressure on companies in which they invest."

Communities can welcome and support those who are freed from traffickers, and businesses worldwide can "ensure robust systems for slave-free supply chains," he said.

According to the 2014 Global Slavery Index, almost 36 million people are currently caught in some form of modern slavery; the International Labor Organization estimates that organized crime networks reap about 150 billion dollars a year from trafficking in persons, about 80 percent of that from prostitution. †



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Editorial

Advent is the season of hope, Mary is the star

Advent is the season of hope, a time of eager anticipation or longing for Christ. During this blessed season, we have a chance to connect with our deepest desires. Above all else, whether we recognize it or not, we human beings long to be united with God, the source and summit of all our aspirations, the joy of our desiring.

This inner longing, which we try to hide or suppress most of the year with no great success, bubbles to the surface during Advent. The hymns we sing, the prayers we say, the readings proclaimed to us in the liturgy, all evoke our heart's deepest desires like no other time of year. "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," we sing, "and ransom captive Israel." Free us from the slavery of sin and fill us with the light of your presence!

If Advent is the season of hope, the Blessed Virgin Mary is the star. Star of Hope, she is called. *Ave maris stella* ("Hail, star of the sea"). Light our way to the heavenly homeland that is our deepest destiny, our true hope. Show us the way to your son, Jesus, the joy of all our desiring.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in his encyclical, "*Spe Salvi*" ("Saved in Hope"), tells us that Mary's "yes" to the father's will "opened the door of our world to God himself; she became the living Ark of the Covenant, in whom God took flesh and pitched his tent among us" (#49, cf. Jn 1:14). Mary's life was "thoroughly imbued with the sacred Scriptures of Israel, which spoke of hope, of the promise made to Abraham and his descendants (#50)." The intense inner longing that every man or woman feels, Mary knew intimately. She was waiting for the Lord (although she had no idea he would come the way he did), and her "yes" to him opened the door to God and to us. It dispelled our darkness and lighted the way to hope.

Indianapolis Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein writes about hope in his memoirs, *Surprised by Grace*. Archbishop Buechlein writes, "There is no lasting hope anywhere else [except in God]. If we place our hope in material things, in political systems, in charismatic leaders or in our own abilities, we will always be disappointed. God alone justifies absolute confidence and trust. To come to know God—the true God—means to receive hope."

Archbishop Buechlein continues, "Because we hope in God, we can live well. Hope does not remove life's difficulties; it allows us to endure them. Hope does not prevent us from sinning, from turning away from God. But supernatural hope allows us to see beyond our own sinfulness to the mercy of God. It allows us to seek forgiveness and to begin again."

With this wonderful gift of hope comes an awesome responsibility, the archbishop writes. "As best we can, we must reject the darkness of sin and death, and live in the light. And we must be evangelizers—people who proclaim and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are to share our hope



Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus are depicted in a wooden crèche at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Rochester, N.Y., in this Nov. 24 photo. (CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier)

with others." This is the true meaning of Advent—sharing our hope with others.

Pope Francis has been speaking about God's mercy since he was elected. There is no hope without mercy, no chance of experiencing our desire for God unless he forgives us our sins.

Mary, who was without sin, gives us hope. She affirms that each one of us has been created by a God who loves each one of us individually, and who invites us to share his life fully. We are not the random result of some evolutionary accident. We are the family of God, and we have a future filled with hope.

Mary's hope is not naive. She stood beneath the cross. As Pope Benedict says, Mary "saw the growing power of hostility and rejection which built up around Jesus until the hour of the cross, when you had to look upon the savior of the world, the heir of David, the Son of God dying like a failure, exposed to mockery, between criminals (#50)." Mary's hope is not superficial. It goes to the heart of our longing to break free from the insidious power of sin and death.

In Mary, hope never died. Deep down, she listened again and again to the words of the angel, "Do not be afraid, Mary!" (Lk 1:30). How many times has the Lord said the same thing to us, his disciples? "Be joyful. I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).

Advent is the season of hope, and Mary is its star. Let's look to Mary, Star of Hope. She will show us the way.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Sisters of Providence

After Ferguson decision, Sisters of Providence encourage ongoing dialogue

(The following was submitted by the Anti-Racism Team of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana)

Most Americans could be found glued to a television during the evening of Nov. 24, as a decision by a grand jury in Ferguson, Mo., was announced.

That grand jury, through St. Louis County Prosecutor Robert McCulloch's words, decided not to indict Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson for shooting and killing 18-year-old Michael Brown in August.

The grand jury met for almost a full month, and listened to approximately 60 witnesses before reaching a decision.

The decision not to indict Officer Wilson sparked peaceful demonstrations—and violent riots. People from all across the nation also protested. The entire process has proven to be both frustrating and disappointing.

It is difficult to imagine the pain the Brown family is suffering as they move forward without their loved one.

Members of the Anti-Racism Team of the Sisters of Providence closely watched the situation unfold. And despite having a profound respect for law enforcement and its duty of keeping peace and protecting the citizens of the United States, the team has come to the conclusion that the decision may not have been the correct course of action.

According to 2010 statistics provided by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana, approximately 34 percent of the persons in prisons and jails are African-American. Of the state's population, African Americans make up only 9 percent.

These statistics are quite disturbing and are also a continuing trend. We do live in a culture of gun violence, ongoing racial profiling and increasing militarization of law enforcement, as well as a criminal justice system rampant with human rights violations.

However, there are solutions, and more can be acted upon. More dialogue is needed to further educate ourselves on these issues.

Events like "National Night Out" can shine a light on interactions between a

community and its police force. All can get a better understanding of what law enforcement officers do regularly.

Perhaps law enforcement officials can visit—more regularly—with a younger generation, and hopefully begin taking steps to reverse this trend of mistrust.

Perhaps law enforcement should be reflective of the communities they serve. Perhaps Congress should pass the End Racial Profiling Act.

Continued interaction among law enforcement and communities is a step in the right direction. It is a step that should be taken.

Following the announcement of no indictment, Cornell William Brooks, President and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) issued a statement alluding to the fact that the decision does not mean "we are done fighting for Michael Brown."

Brooks stated the NAACP stands "united with the community and other activists groups."

The Anti-Racism Team of the Sisters of Providence encourages all to attend the 2015 Terre Haute Human Rights Day, scheduled for March 10. This could be considered another "step in the right direction" of further education.

Indiana State University hosts the annual event, which features a keynote speaker and others, interactive workshops, a diversity march, dramatic performances and other activities. Perhaps attendance can help further educate not only students, but all people, including law enforcement.

The purpose of the Anti-Racism Team of the Sisters of Providence is to transform the congregation into an open, inclusive and anti-racist congregation. The members of the team work to dismantle systemic racism within the Sisters of Providence, our sponsored institutions, places of ministry and the larger society.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Ongoing dialogue regarding the statistics mentioned above and more is encouraged. The Anti-Racism Team plans to continue dialogue regarding these ongoing issues and hopes others will join the chorus.

Letter to the Editor

Papal audience photo shares enlightened spirit of ecumenism, reader says

This is to thank the editorial staff of *The Criterion* for their inclusion of the very inspirational photograph featured on page 14 of the Nov. 28, 2014, issue.

The picture captured the participation of Anglican and Episcopal bishops at Pope Francis' general audience at

the Vatican on Nov. 19. It included Bishop Catherine Waynick, leader of the Episcopal diocese of Indianapolis.

I found it a hopeful witness of the bishops' enlightened spirit of ecumenism, as well as their belief in the truth of Genesis, "So God created humankind in God's image, in God's image God created them, male and female God created them" (Gn 1:27).

Helen Weber-McReynolds
Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters

from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to critterion@archindy.org.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO JOSEPH W. TOBIN



REJOICE IN THE LORD

ALÉGRENSE EN EL SEÑOR

Staying close to Mary, mother of Jesus, our mother

Two powerful incidents frame the Gospel according to St. John. Chapter 2 contains the hope-filled story of the wedding at Cana, and Chapter 19 provides St. John's perspective on the crucifixion of Jesus. Both incidents involve Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother.

The wedding at Cana is a situation nearly everyone can relate to. A mother and her adult son disagree. There's a problem—not enough wine—and Mary wants Jesus to intervene. He resists. "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come" (Jn 2:4).

Mary pays no attention. She tells the servers, "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5). A domestic miracle is the result—the wedding guests will have plenty of wine (and the best wine at that!).

Mary's presence during the crucifixion of her son is one of the saddest moments in all of biblical literature. She follows him on the Way of the Cross, the *Via Dolorosa*, unable to do anything to assist or comfort him. Then she stands before the Cross—supported by John, the disciple that Jesus loved—and watches

and waits.

"Woman, behold your son," Jesus says. And to the disciple, "Behold your mother" (Jn 19:26-27).

From that moment, Mary became our mother, the one who intercedes for us before the throne of God. She is the one who shares with us her confident hope in the fulfillment of all God's promises.

As Pope Francis says, "Silent at the foot of the cross, [Mary] heard the essence of her life: *Behold your son. Behold your children!* And from that moment, she began still more to hold us in her care."

Mary says to us now, "Do whatever he tells you." She gives profound personal witness to the liberating power of saying yes to God's will. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord," she says to the angel (and to us). "May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38).

We might say that by his death on the cross, Jesus gave us two gifts. First and foremost, he gave us the gift of everlasting life. He sacrificed himself for us—dying so that we might live with him forever. And then, in yet another sign of God's abundant generosity, Jesus gave us

his mother. She who gave human life to him by the power of the Holy Spirit now helps us to say yes to divine life, and to follow her son on the way to happiness and peace.

The Church gives us two wonderful feasts in December to celebrate this great gift.

On Dec. 8, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a mystery of God's grace that allowed Mary to enter our world without the burden of sin. On Dec. 12, we rejoice in the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the sign of our Blessed Mother's oneness with all the peoples of the Americas.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception calls attention to the way that Mary, who was born without original sin, is different from us.

But as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI observes, "This privilege given to Mary, which sets her apart from our common condition, does not distance her from us, but on the contrary, it brings her closer. While sin divides, separating us from one another, Mary's purity makes her infinitely close to our hearts, attentive to each of us and desirous of our true good."

Mary's difference does not separate her from us; her purity makes her more open and accessible to all of us, her children.

The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe emphasizes Mary's closeness to us. In 1531, a "Lady from Heaven" appeared to St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, a humble Native American at Tepeyac, a hill northwest of what is now Mexico City. She wore native dress, and she spoke his language—letting it be known to him, and to all of us, that she is one-with-us. "Do not be afraid," the beautiful Lady said to Juan Diego. "Am I not here, your Mother?"

During this special time, as we begin a new Church year and prepare for Christmas, we are invited to stay close to Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother. Mary points the way to her son. She reminds us of the miracles Jesus works in our daily lives, and she invites us to respond with open hearts: "May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38).

What a marvelous, undeserved and unexpected gift! The mother of our Lord becomes our mother and shares her life with us! May we always be close to Mary—as she is one-with-us. †

Mantengámonos cerca de María, la madre de Jesús, nuestra madre

En el contexto del Evangelio según San Juan ocurren dos poderosos incidentes: el capítulo 2 contiene la esperanzadora historia de las bodas de Caná, y el capítulo 19 ofrece la perspectiva de San Juan sobre la crucifixión de Jesús. En ambos incidentes se encuentra presente María, la madre de Jesús y nuestra madre.

Las bodas de Caná es una situación con la que casi todos nos podemos sentir identificados. Una madre y su hijo adulto están en desacuerdo; hay un problema puesto que no hay suficiente vino, y María desea que Jesús intervenga. Él se opone. "—Mujer, ¿eso qué tiene que ver conmigo? —respondió Jesús—. Todavía no ha llegado mi hora" (Jn 2:4).

María no le hace caso y le dice a los sirvientes "—Hagan lo que él les ordene" (Jn 2:5). Como resultado, ocurre un milagro doméstico: los invitados de la boda disponen de suficiente vino (y no cualquier vino, sino del mejor!).

La presencia de María durante la crucifixión de su hijo es uno de los momentos más tristes de toda la literatura bíblica. Ella lo sigue en el Vía Crucis, la *Via Dolorosa*, sin poder hacer nada para ayudar o aliviarlo. Entonces, se para frente a la cruz y, sujetándose de Juan —el discípulo amado de Jesús—, observa y aguarda.

"—Mujer, ahí tienes a tu hijo," le dice Jesús y luego, al discípulo: "—Ahí tienes a tu madre" (Jn 19:26-27).

Y a partir de ese momento, María se convierte en nuestra madre, la que intercede por nosotros ante el trono de Dios. Es ella quien comparte con nosotros su esperanza llena de confianza de que las promesas de Dios se cumplirán.

Tal como lo expresó el papa Francisco: "En silencio, al pie de la cruz, [María] escuchó la esencia de su vida: *Ahí tienes a tu hijo. ¡Ahí tienes a tus hijos!* Y, a partir de ese momento, comenzó a cuidarnos todavía más."

María nos dice ahora: "Hagan lo que él les ordene" y nos da un testimonio increíblemente profundo del poder liberador de decirle "sí" a la voluntad de Dios. "—Aquí tienes a la sierva del Señor" le contesta María al ángel (y a nosotros). "Hágase en mí según tu palabra" (Lc 1:38).

Podríamos decir que con su muerte en la cruz, Jesús nos entregó dos obsequios: primero y principal, nos entregó el don de la vida eterna. Se sacrificó por nosotros y murió para que nosotros pudiéramos vivir para siempre con él. Y después, como otra señal de la generosidad abundante de Dios, Jesús nos entregó a su madre; aquella que le

dio vida humana por el poder del Espíritu Santo, ahora nos ayuda a aceptar la vida divina y a seguir a su hijo en el camino hacia la felicidad y la paz.

En el mes de diciembre, la Iglesia nos da dos estupendas festividades para celebrar estos maravillosos obsequios.

El día 8 de diciembre celebramos la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción, el misterio de la gracia de Dios que permitió que María se encarnara en este mundo sin la carga del pecado. El día 12 de diciembre festejamos a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, el símbolo de la unidad de nuestra Santa Madre con los pueblos de toda América.

La Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción resalta el hecho de que María, concebida sin pecado original, es distinta de nosotros.

Tal como señala el papa emérito, Benedicto XVI: "Este privilegio otorgado a María, que la distingue de nuestra condición ordinaria, no nos distancia sino que, al contrario, nos acerca a ella. Si bien el pecado divide y nos separa, la pureza de María la coloca infinitamente cerca de nuestros corazones, atenta a cada uno de nosotros y deseosa de que alcancemos el verdadero bien."

Lo que distingue a María no la separa de nosotros; su pureza la predispone y la

hace más accesible a nosotros, sus hijos.

La festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe hace énfasis en la cercanía de María con nosotros. En 1531 una "Señora del cielo" se le apareció a San Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, un humilde indígena en Tepeyac, en una colina al noroeste de lo que hoy en día es la Ciudad de México. Vestía un traje típico y hablaba en su idioma, para que tanto él como todos sepamos que ella es una con nosotros. "No temas," le dijo la hermosa Señora a Juan Diego. "¿No estoy yo aquí que soy tu madre?"

Durante esta temporada tan especial, mientras comenzamos un nuevo año litúrgico y nos preparamos para la Navidad, se nos invita a mantenernos cerca de María, la madre de Jesús y nuestra madre. María señala el camino hacia su hijo. Ella nos recuerda los milagros que obra Jesús en nuestra vida cotidiana y nos invita a responder con corazones abiertos: "Hágase en mí según tu palabra" (Lc 1:38).

¡Qué obsequio tan maravilloso, inmerecido e inesperado! ¡La madre de nuestro Señor se convierte en nuestra madre y comparte su vida con nosotros! Que siempre estemos cerca de María, pues ella es una con nosotros. †

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

Events Calendar

December 5

St. Joseph Parish, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **First Friday exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary and Benediction**, 4-6 p.m., Mass, 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

December 6

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary, confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

Helpers of God's Precious Infants Prayer Vigil, Terre Haute. 7:30 a.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery at 59 Allendale, 9:25 a.m. parking on Ohio Blvd., 9:30 a.m. assemble on sidewalk in front of Planned Parenthood at 30 S. 3rd St. for prayers, 10:00 a.m. travel to St. Patrick Adoration Chapel at 1807 Poplar St. for Divine Mercy Chaplet, completed around 10:30 a.m.

St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Craft fair**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., bring a canned good to help St. Vincent de Paul. Information: 317-313-5534.

December 7

All Saints Catholic Academy, St. Paul Campus School, gymnasium, 9788 N. Dearborn Road, New Alsace. **Annual Christmas breakfast and open house**, Santa Claus will visit 9-11 a.m., school tours 8 a.m.-noon, free will offering for breakfast. Information: allsaintscatholic.net/school.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, gym, 21 N. 16th St., Beech Grove. **Women's Altar Society Bazaar and Chili Luncheon**, crafts, holiday and baked goods, 30-40 exhibitors, raffle for cash, free admission, adult luncheon \$6, kindergarten-8 years old \$4, preschool and under free, 12:30-4:30 p.m.

December 8

St. John Paul II Parish, 2605 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **St. Gianna Pro-Life, National Night of Prayer for Life**, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Information: 812-246-2252 or pburk@twc.com.

December 9

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, Christmas party and pitch-in, noon. Information: 317-888-7625 or vlgmimi@aol.com.

Sacred Heart Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Euchre party**, seniors and retirees, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-788-0522.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany. **"Sacred Relics of the saints: Treasures of the Church,"** exposition of sacred relics, 7 p.m., no charge. Information: 812-944-1184 or lslusser@olphna.org.

December 11

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Cenacle (house on parish grounds), Indianapolis. **Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide support group**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-851-8344.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, White Violet Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Christmas open house**, 3-5 p.m. Information: 812-535-2932 or wvc@spsmw.org.

December 12-14

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 Mt. St. Francis Drive, Mount St. Francis. **Christmas Pottery Sale featuring artists from the Mary Anderson Center**, Fri. 6-8 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 13

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

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Owens Hall, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Christmas Fun at the Woods**, cookie baking, sleigh rides, sing-a-long, visit with Santa, 1-4 p.m., children and adults, \$5 per person, registration deadline Dec. 6. Information: 812-535-2932 or wvc@spsmw.org.

December 14

St. Michael the Archangel

Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Mass in French**, 1 p.m. Information: 317-523-4193 or acfadi2014@gmail.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Class of '63 monthly gathering**, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-6396.

December 17

St. Joseph University Parish, 113 S. Fifth St., Terre Haute. **Divine Mercy Chaplet and Pro-Life Mass**, chaplet 4:30 p.m., Mass 5:15 p.m., pro-life ministry meeting 6-7 p.m. Information: Connie Kehl Fitch, drmeathead@yahoo.com or 812-232-6517.

December 18

St. Joseph Parish, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

December 19

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange Mass**, breakfast and program, "Faith in the Fast Lane," Ed Carpenter, race car driver and owner, Verizon IndyCar Series, 7-9 a.m., \$15 members, \$21 non-members, breakfast included, bring an unwrapped toy for the annual Toys 4 Tots campaign, wear your best Christmas outfits. Reservations and information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

December 20

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Precious Infants**, Mass and Divine Mercy Chaplet at 8:30 a.m., followed by prayer at a local abortion center, and continued prayer at the church for those who wish to remain.

December 27

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary procession**, Mass, 12:10 p.m., procession following Mass. Information: faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com. †

Retreats and Programs

December 19-21

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Jesus, Savior and Son,"** Benedictine Father Jeremy King presenter, \$235 for single, \$395 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or ormzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

December 21

Benedict Inn Conference and Retreat Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Blue Christmas Service (or Service of Solace)**, Annie Endris leading, 1-2:30 p.m., free will donations accepted, registration requested. Information: 317-788-7581 or www.benedictinn.org.

December 22

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 Mt. St. Francis Drive, Mt. St. Francis. **Mondays at the Mount**, Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 27

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Bird Count**, meet at Michaela Farm, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., \$10 for lunch. Information and RSVP: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Mindfulness for the New Year**, Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind and Clair Sherman, PhD. presenting, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$45 includes lunch, \$65 includes CEU. Information and RSVP: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

December 27-January 1

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Vocations Office, **"A Monastic Observance,"** for single Catholic men, ages 20-40. Information: 812-357-6585 381 or vocations@saintmeinrad.org.

December 29

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 Mt. St. Francis Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Mondays at the Mount**, Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

December 31-January 1

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 65th St., Indianapolis. **"A Journey of Gratitude,"** Father Keith Hosey and Sister Mo Mangen, presenters, \$138 per person or \$256 per couple, includes elegant dinner, champagne toast at midnight, overnight accommodations, brunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or archindy.org/fatima.

January 2

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center, 101 Mt. St. Francis Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **First Friday devotions and lunch**, 11:45 a.m. Information: 812-923-8817 or retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org.

(For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.) †

Sisters of Providence announce Advent prayer service times

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods have announced a schedule of Advent services as a prelude to the Christmas season.

All liturgies and prayer services are open to the public, and to people of all faith traditions.

Eucharistic Liturgies on the remaining Sundays of Advent—Dec. 7, Dec. 14 and Dec. 21—are at 11 a.m. in the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Advent Vespers are scheduled at 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 14 and 21.

At 3 p.m. on Dec. 7, the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Chorale and Madrigals will present their annual Christmas concert, "An American Noel," in the church, beginning at 3 p.m.

The regularly scheduled Sunday Brunch at the O'Shaughnessy Dining Hall will not take place on Dec. 21.

Linden Leaf Gifts, located in the Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, will be open from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. for the remaining three Sundays of Advent. †

Saint Meinrad Seminary hosting Advent Lessons and Carols service in chapel on Dec. 7

Seminarians from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad will present an Advent Lessons and Carols service at St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel, 200 Hill Drive in St. Meinrad, at 7 p.m. central time on Dec. 7.

The service, titled "From Eden to Heaven: The Story of Salvation," tells the story of Christ through alternating

Scripture readings and singing hymns and carols. The service is expected to last an hour and 15 minutes and is free and open to the public.

Parking is available in the Guest House and student parking lots.

For more information, contact Mary Jeanne Schumacher at 812-357-6501. For updates on the day of the performance, call 812-357-6611. †

Benedictine Father Anthony Vinson receives national vocation award

Benedictine Father Anthony Vinson, administrator of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad and St. Boniface Parish in Fulda, received the 2014 Recognition



Fr. Anthony Vinson, O.S.B.

Award from the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC), at its anniversary banquet on Nov. 9 in Chicago.

Father Anthony has served two terms on the NRVC national board and has served on

various committees, including as chair of the finance committee. In 2013, he was one of the NRVC site coordinators for the English-speaking venue for World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro.

During his tenure on the

board, Father Anthony was instrumental in strengthening the collaboration between NRVC and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, which led to NRVC's successful participation in the National Catholic Youth Conference.

He also served on an advisory group to study the establishment of a fund to assist religious institutes in their welcome of candidates with student loans. The culmination of this group's work was the recent development of the National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations.

Father Anthony will serve as secretary-treasurer of the new fund's board of directors.

In addition to serving as administrator for two parishes in the archdiocese, Father Anthony also serves as the director of pastoral formation for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and as a chaplain at St. Xavier High School in Louisville, Ky. †

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany to hold Mass of Consolation on Dec. 19

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Scheller Lane in New Albany, will host The Longest Night: A Mass of Consolation at 7 p.m. on Dec. 19.

While Christmas and the holiday season is generally a time of merriment and good cheer, many people struggle with loss and stress.

The Longest Night: A Mass of Consolation provides spiritual comfort to those who find themselves experiencing

loss or significant stress at this time of their life.

The Mass allows for reflection on the mysteries of the faith, and offers a consoling message while respecting one's need to sit or wrestle with the grief and loss in their life.

This Mass is open to all. For questions or more information, contact Tom Yost at tyost@olphna.org or 812-945-2374. †

Parish men's group uses flair for frying to feed people in need

By Monty Shields

Special to *The Criterion*

GREENSBURG—For a men's group at St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, Thanksgiving wasn't just an opportunity to count their blessings, it was a day to share their blessings with others.

And being men who like to cook as much as they like to eat—well, almost—they once again took a day off from work to fry, wrap and deliver 46 turkeys that would contribute to a Thanksgiving feast for people in need in Decatur County.

This year's contribution marked the 10th straight year that the men of Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) team 4 at St. Mary's came together to assist Bread of Life, a community effort to feed the hungry.

The men's group first tapped into their flair for frying in 2005 when Bread of Life faced the challenge of providing enough turkeys for families in need.

That same year, the men of CRHP team 4 had just completed their year of formation. They were ready to be God's hands within the parish and community. One of the members, Mike Mentz, had already been assisting at the Decatur County Bread of Life. So the connection was made.

On the day before Thanksgiving that first year, seven men took a day off from work to cook for others. Within six hours, 18 fried turkeys had been delivered to Bread of Life for their annual Thanksgiving meal.

This year's effort began two days before Thanksgiving when the men put the turkeys in a brine to make sure they were thawed, and to help moisten the birds. The next morning, the 46 turkeys were ready to be cooked in 12 fryers. By 3 p.m., the turkeys were ready for Bread of Life.

The cooking crew has changed through the years to include members from other CRHP groups, confirmation students earning hours and even second generation members.

This year's team included original members Mike Mentz, Monty Shields, Ernie Stephens and Glenn Tebbe. Their efforts were supported by Brandon Butz, Larry Bishop, Jeremy Effing, Isaiah Kuntz, Josh Shields, Jake Stephens and Jeremiah Westerfeld.

The Decatur County Bread of Life was able to feed 350 people in need this Thanksgiving. And yes, they even had some leftovers.

(Monty Shields is a member of St. Mary Parish of Greensburg.) †



Members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg prepare to start cooking Thanksgiving turkeys for needy families in Decatur County. Pictured, back row, from left, are Jeremiah Westerfeld, Jeremy Effing, Josh Shields, Brandon Butz, Glenn Tebbe, Ernie Stephens and Jake Stephens. Standing in the front row are Mike Mentz, Isaiah Kuntz and Larry Bishop. (Photo by Monty Shields)

Archdiocesan parishes to host Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations

Special to *The Criterion*

Masses and special events for the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe are scheduled at the following parishes in central and southern Indiana.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin will be the principal celebrant for a Spanish Mass at midnight on Dec. 11 at St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., in Indianapolis.



A mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe decorates a side altar in the Church of Santa Maria della Famiglia at the headquarters of the office governing Vatican City State. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood.

- Dec. 12—5 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade) and Mass, 6:30 p.m. bilingual Mass.

St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour.

- Dec. 11—noon, *mañanitas* (serenade), 5 p.m. *mañanitas* with mariachi.
- Dec. 12—8:45 a.m. school Mass, 6 p.m. bilingual Mass, 7 p.m. reception.

St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—7 p.m. Mass, 8:15 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade) with mariachi, 9:15 p.m. folkloric dances, 11 p.m. all-night vigil with different devotions.
- Dec. 12—6:30 a.m. *mañanitas* (serenade) with mariachi, 6 p.m. Mass, 7:45 p.m. procession, 9:30 p.m. reception.

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus.

- Dec. 11—10:30 p.m. procession and *mañanitas* (serenade).
- Dec. 12—6 p.m. Mass of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—9 p.m. folkloric dances, 11 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade), midnight Mass (*misa de gallo*), 1:15 a.m. refreshments (to go).
- Dec. 12—7 p.m. procession and bilingual Mass, 8:15 p.m. reception, 8:30 p.m. representation of the apparitions, 9:45 p.m. folkloric dance.

St. Joseph Parish, 125 E. Broadway St., Shelbyville.

- Dec. 12—5:30 p.m. folkloric dance, *mañanitas* with Zenaida Gonzalez, 7 p.m. Mass.

St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 12—4:30 a.m. *mañanitas* (serenade), 6 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade), 7 p.m. Mass, 8:30 p.m. Aztec dance.

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—8:30 p.m. procession at Monument Circle, 9:10 p.m. folkloric dances, 11 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade) with a music band, midnight Mass with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin.
- Dec. 12—noon English Communion service, 7 p.m. Spanish Mass.

St. Mary Parish, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany.

- Dec. 11—7 p.m.-midnight rosary and *mañanitas* (serenade).
- Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass, 8 p.m. reception.

St. Michael Parish, 101 St. Michael Drive, Charlestown.

- Dec. 11—7 p.m. to midnight, rosary and *mañanitas* (serenade).
- Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass, 8 p.m. reception.

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—9 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade), midnight Mass (*misa de gallo*).
- Dec. 12—6 p.m. representation of the apparitions, 7:15 p.m. Mass, 9:15 p.m. dance and dinner.

St. Patrick Parish, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—8:30 p.m. Aztec dance, 9:30 p.m. representation of the apparitions, 10 p.m. Mass, midnight *mañanitas* (serenade).
- Dec. 12—6 a.m. *mañanitas* (serenade), noon procession and Mass, 7 p.m. folkloric dance, 7:30 p.m. Mass.

St. Philip Neri Parish, 550 N. Rural St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11—8 p.m. folkloric children's dance, 8:30 p.m. representation of the apparitions, 10:30 p.m. *mañanitas* (serenade) with mariachi, 11 p.m. Mass (*misa de gallo*) and refreshments.
- Dec. 12—4 p.m. Mass with mariachi, 7 p.m. Mass, 8 p.m. folkloric dance. †

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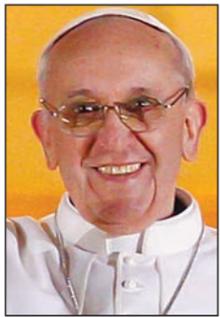
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In letters to pope, young women share joys and hopes, grief and sorrows

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (CNS)—Even cloudy skies and showers could not dampen the spirits of a senior from St. Mary's College in Indiana, a 2014 alumna of the school, its president and an Indiana bishop as a handmade stole, art and letters collected by the college titled "Voices of Young Catholic Women" were presented to Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square.

On Nov. 26, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend accompanied St. Mary's senior Kristen Millar of Dillsburg, Penn., recent graduate Grace Urankar of San Francisco, as well as St. Mary's President Carol Ann Mooney and her husband, George Efta, to the pope's general audience to make the presentation.

Students, supported by St. Mary's Center for Spirituality and the college's Campus Ministry, organized a national letter-writing response to Pope Francis' outreach to young people to encourage the millennial generation—those born between 1981 and 1995—to write to the pope about their love for Catholic tradition and offer ideas how the Church might better reach their demographic.



Pope Francis

The Center for Spirituality advertised the Voices project in *America* magazine, and sent letters and posters to campus ministry offices at colleges and universities across the U.S.

The women who took part in the project were instructed to send letters, prayers, poetry, art and other forms of creative expression to the center at St. Mary's in Indiana.

Both Millar and Urankar worked on the Voices project.

Mooney described how she and Millar had reserved seats for those who would be able to speak with Pope Francis. The others had close seats and could see very well, she told *Today's Catholic*, the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocesan newspaper.

"Bishop Rhoades was able to join us when Pope Francis approached us," Mooney related, "and the bishop introduced us. Kristen and I presented the stole and the letters.

"We told Pope Francis that the letters contained the joys and hope, grief and sorrows of our young women," she said. "The interchange was brief, but truly moving. He asked us to pray for him, he said that he needs our prayers."

Millar said, "I am honored to be able

to advocate on behalf of the women of the millennial generation and am hopeful that the pope will hear our message. It is truly wonderful to be an outspoken and truly inspired St. Mary's woman.

"I am very blessed to be a part of a project as wonderful as this," she added. "This is not about me, but is truly about the Church and for all women struggling to maintain their Catholic identity in a time when religion is not deemed as necessary. I am here to give a voice."

Millar said she was thankful for all of the support in the project. "It has been much appreciated and it's awesome to see everyone at home as excited as we are."

Urankar said, "It was really incredible to be in St. Peter's Square and so close to the pope himself. I'm sure anyone who goes to an audience would say this, but it was such a testament to the universal Church.

"Pilgrims from all over the world were present, and the pope's reflection was summarized in at least 10 languages after he read it in Italian," Urankar added.

"I was really struck by what a small group we were in the presence of so many, but I had to focus on all the women we were representing," she emphasized. "I really hope the pope reads our letters and takes the concerns of young American Catholic women to heart."

Elizabeth Groppe, director of St. Mary's Center for Spirituality, reported 225 contributions to the project, including 10 students and three alumnae from St. Mary's. Fifteen other Catholic-affiliated organizations, including Catholic and secular colleges and universities and Newman Catholic communities from across the country, participated.

There also were some letters from women with no affiliation with any particular school.

One St. Mary's alumna sent a poem, "My Church, My Home." She gave voice to the caring relationships and bonds of communion that flow from the worship of God and sharing of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

According to Groppe, another woman had shared that she was sexually abused in high school and developed an eating disorder. In the aftermath of this, she attended a Kairos retreat that renewed her relationship with God and enabled her to discover her leadership abilities.

Through the community of women in the Catholic campus ministry program at her college, she found hope, focus, meaning and direction. She recommended the Catholic Church provide all young women in parishes, including teens, with the opportunity to have an adult woman as a mentor. †



75 years of faith

Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville celebrated its 75th anniversary on Sept. 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Father Michael Fritsch, pastor, concelebrated the liturgy. Pictured with them is master of ceremonies Lorai Tansy. In his homily during the Mass, Archbishop Tobin noted the faithful members, past and present, who have enabled the parish to grow and prosper. (Submitted photo)

Support Catholic men and women religious in their mission, ministries, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—During the Year of Consecrated Life, all Catholics are called to thank God for the gifts members of religious orders have given the Church and the world, to join them in prayer and find practical ways to support them and their ministries, Pope Francis said.

"Let them know the affection and the warmth which the entire Christian people feels for them," the pope said in a letter issued for the special year, which opened on Nov. 30 and will close on Feb. 2, 2016, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

The Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court, issued a note on Nov. 28 specifying that both lay and consecrated people can receive an indulgence for participating in events related to the Year of Consecrated Life by going to confession, receiving the Eucharist and offering prayers for the intentions of the pope.

In his letter, Pope Francis also offered greetings to Orthodox communities of monks and nuns, and to members of Protestant religious orders, who also take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and are "expressions of fraternal communion and service." Dialogue between Catholic religious and those of other traditions "can prove helpful for the greater journey toward the unity of all the Churches," he said.

The bulk of the pope's letter and video messages he sent for a Nov. 29 prayer vigil in Rome and the year's opening Mass the next day in St. Peter's Basilica were addressed specifically to the world's more

than 900,000 Catholic religious priests, brothers, sisters and consecrated virgins.

"Leave your nests and go out to the peripheries," he told those at the vigil in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. "Live on the frontiers" where people are waiting to hear and understand the Gospel.

"Wake up the world, enlightening it with your prophetic and countercultural witness," he said in the message to those at Mass in St. Peter's the next morning.

"Being joyful," he said in the message, "being courageous" and "being men and women of communion" are the common traits of the founders of religious orders and are the key to their future.

The pope's letter for the year explained that while he was writing as pope, he was also writing as a Jesuit, "a brother who, like yourselves, is consecrated to the Lord."

Knowing the gifts and challenges of religious life from the inside, Pope Francis urged religious to "look to the past with gratitude," rediscovering the way their predecessors read "the signs of the times" and responded with creativity. However, it also involves recognizing the difficulties and inconsistencies resulting from human weakness and learning from them.

Religious are called "to live the present with passion" and "embrace the future with hope," he said, knowing that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire new responses to the needs of the Church and the world and to give religious the strength to be faithful servants of God. †

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CARE CENTER

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pregnancy.

The facility in Indianapolis is their newest. As of the open house on Nov. 19, there were already three counseling appointments scheduled for the center's first official day of business on Nov. 20.

'It's about taking care of the family'

Lisa Lance, a counselor at the new center and a member of Trader's Point Christian Church in Indianapolis, compared the facility with the Planned Parenthood building next door.

"You look over there, and it's like they're hiding," she said. "They have these tall trees in the front so you can't see the building, and they have an iron fence around the building.

"But then you look over here and we're open, we're inviting. The contrast is amazing."

Bardol, who is a member at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis with her husband and five children, explained the reason for the difference.

"We function under a Mother Teresa model of loving unconditionally and serving without judging," she said.

The home-like look and feel of the building extend beyond the interior.

"The counseling rooms are very nice, warm and inviting, non-threatening," Bardol said, pointing to a room painted in soft colors with large, overstuffed couches and chairs. "The women meet with one of our counselors to gauge where the person is—pregnant, not pregnant, in a relationship—then we know what kind of literature to give them."

Even the ultrasound room is cozy, with all attention focused around a large screen where the ultrasound image is displayed.

"It really makes it real for them, seeing their baby and hearing the whoosh-whoosh of the heartbeat," said Bardol. According to the Women's Care Center website, 97 percent of women who receive counseling and an ultrasound choose life for their unborn children.

Help for women does not stop after the baby is born, said Bardol.

"We offer parenting classes from baby basics, like bathing and diapering, to breastfeeding, discipline, nutrition, budgeting, relationships, goal-setting," Bardol said. "It's not just about taking care of the baby, it's about taking care of the family."

The class offerings will begin in January. Each time they attend a session, women earn coupons to purchase new items—such as clothing, cribs, car seats and strollers—in the center's "Crib Club" store, located in the facility.

"It's important that [the items] are new because they're learning how to earn and to provide so they can buy new things for their baby," said Bardol.

'Hope has come to town'

Just how effective is this "Mother Teresa" model?

Quite effective, according to Bobby Williams of South Bend, president of the Women's Care Center Foundation.

"In Fort Wayne, within 10 years [of the opening of the Women's Care Center], abortions were down 63 percent," he said. "We went to Peoria, Ill., just a year ago, and within the first six months abortions dropped over 24 percent.

"In Milwaukee, about the same size city as Indianapolis, within our first two years of being there, abortions dropped 23 percent.

"So what's 23 percent? That's over 1,000 babies a year saved from abortion."

With figures like that, said Williams, the new Women's Care Center means that "hope has come to town."

Such a percentage would be on par for the corner of 86th Street and Georgetown Road in Indianapolis, where more than 4,000 abortions are performed each year at the Planned Parenthood facility. According to Women's Care Center literature, there are more abortions performed at that facility than in the other 91 Indiana counties combined.

That is why the location for the new Women's Care Center is so crucial.

Prior to construction, the vacant lot looked to have been a gas station at one time. That the lot was still vacant after the Planned Parenthood facility opened in June 2006 is the work of an anonymous doctor in Lafayette, Ind.

"[He] just bought it to hold for some good purpose, knowing that something like [Women's Care Center] might come along," said foundation board member John Tippmann of South Bend.

Since the Women's Care Center Foundation funds were restricted, Tippmann loaned the organization the money to purchase the property.

"I told them whenever they raise the funds for the whole facility, then they can pay me back if they want."

In a little over a year, Williams has raised most of the funds for the \$2 million building project.

"A lot of help from the Lord made this all happen," Tippmann admitted.

'A complement' to existing organizations

Before the property was acquired, the Women's Care Center board approached Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin for permission to build within his archdiocese.

"Women's Care Center will not come in without the approval of the bishop," the archbishop said. "In fact, they prefer to have the bishop as sort of the honorary chairman of the board," which is a role he now serves for the new Indianapolis facility.

Archbishop Tobin visited the facility in South Bend and was impressed by what he saw.

"Part of [their] ethos is not to be a violent presence, but to say [to women considering an abortion], 'There's an alternative to what you are going to do,'" the archbishop explained.

After several meetings with officials from the Women's Care Center and his own advisors, Archbishop Tobin offered his support of the project.

"I think this is a very good way of channeling [the community's] enthusiasm for respecting life without in any way denigrating all the other efforts that already happen, especially the sidewalk ministry here at 86th and Georgetown," he said.

"Before I gave final permission, I [made an effort] to make sure the Gabriel Project understood that this was in no way disrespect for their work, but rather a complement, and I think the good people that have been doing that work for so long understand it that way," Archbishop Tobin said.

He was referring in part to 1st Choice for Women, a crisis pregnancy center operated by the Great Lakes Gabriel Project located less than a mile away from the Women's Care Center.

"How can you not be supporting of something about women?" asked Eileen Hartman, executive director for Great Lakes Gabriel Project. "I don't feel like it's competition. It's like an emergency room. Sometimes the ER needs to refer someone to another place that can better meet their specific needs."

During the open house, Hartman met Sarah Lattire, an ultrasound tech at the new Women's Care Center facility.

"I told her, 'If it turns out you need anyone in the evening or on Sunday, we'll do ultrasounds on any day of week.' She was very excited," said Hartman, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

'Choose life'

Lattire, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, is also excited about the Christian Catholic environment she'll be working in.

"Having a chapel here, so close to the Planned Parenthood—God is present here, which is such a blessing," she said.

But faith is not a requirement for employees or clients, said Bardol.

"We're Catholic-based, but all-welcoming," she explained. "We don't preach the Gospel, we meet [the women] where they're at, discuss what they're feeling. If they bring [religion] up, then we will discuss it."

But the Catholic presence was strong



The Women's Care Center in Indianapolis, with a chapel in the pentagonal room at the front and landscaping set to be completed in the spring, was designed to look like a home—warm and inviting—compared to the fenced-in Planned Parenthood abortion facility just yards away on the left. The Women's Care Center held its open house on Nov. 19 and officially opened on Nov. 20.

(Photos by Natalie Hoefer)



The Crib Club baby store at the new Women's Care Center in Indianapolis allows mothers to earn coupons to purchase new items for their babies.



Above, this photo of one of several counseling rooms in the new Women's Care Center in Indianapolis shows the warm environment where women considering abortion receive counseling.

Left, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin listens to Dolores Clarke, a member of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, in the chapel named for her and her deceased husband, Paul, after the blessing ceremony on Nov. 19 at the new Women's Care Center.

on the day of the facility's blessing by Archbishop Tobin.

In a short homily he offered during the service, the archbishop spoke of choices.

"There are choices that are life and death," he said. "Here, the location of this wonderful home very graphically makes that choice clear."

Those women and men considering abortion are not the only ones with choices to make, the archbishop said.

"I think we who support life in all of its dignity from conception to natural death, we make choices, too," he said. "I think it's important for us to eschew any choice for violence—for violent words, hateful words, hateful actions.

"What attracted me to the Women's Care Center, from the first time I visited it in South Bend, was the life-affirming gentleness and respect that underlies everything that will be done here. We realize that poor people are faced with sometimes overwhelming encouragement to choose death."

One Scripture read during the blessing

service, which was held in the chapel at Women's Care Center, summed up the choice now so clearly presented to women considering abortion at the Planned Parenthood facility next door:

"Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. ... Choose life" (Dt 30:15, 19b).

(The Women's Care Center is located at 4901 W. 86th St. in Indianapolis.

It is open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays

except Wednesday, when it is open

8 a.m.-3 p.m. Volunteers are needed

for the Crib Club baby store, providing

child care during parenting classes,

answering phones and greeting clients.

For more information, to volunteer

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Sarah Bardol at 317-829-6800 or e-mail

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KIRSCHNER

continued from page 1

a drill, a screwdriver and a box cutter.

Figurines of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, the baby Jesus, angels, shepherds and the Three Wise Men watch over him.

"I've been doing this for close to 20 years. I started doing it in my garage after I retired young at 54," says Kirschner, who worked as a buyer for a department store in Cincinnati.

"After I started making some, my wife thought they were good enough that somebody would want them. I didn't see that, but she talked me into taking about 10 of them to a craft show. They all sold. I was really amazed. It's something when people like what you do."

For Kirschner, it's also special that he gets to do something that reflects his faith.

"Faith is a very important part of my life," he says. "My wife and I both attend Mass two or three times a week, and on Sunday, of course. Our faith ties into what we think."

And what he does in making his creations.

"It's the celebration of Christmas. It's the anticipation of Christmas," he says. "I see it every day, and I think about it every day when I'm making them."

"I hope they make a difference for people. For most people, the Nativity scene is a very important part of their Christmas. A lot of people get them for their children and their grandchildren. People give them to couples who are getting married so they can have that tradition."

Pat Kuntz is one of his loyal customers. One Christmas, she gave each of her six children a Kirschner crèche. And when one of her grandchildren is getting married, she sends the couple to The Creche Shop to choose a Nativity scene as a wedding gift.

"I just love them," Kuntz says about Kirschner's Nativity stables. "There's something different about them, and he's a very good, honest man."

Franciscan Father David Kobak admires Kirschner both as an artist and a man of faith.

"His crèches are just beautiful," says Father Kobak, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg. "I like them so much that I got them for everybody in my family and one for myself. How he lives his life and how he creates his work is a huge testament to his faith."

The stories of Christmas—and the cross

As he carves the Nativity stables by hand, Kirschner tries "to make everything look like it was made of hand-hewn logs." He also adds a cross to each one of the stables.

"I just thought the cross should be an important part of the Nativity," he explains. "Without the death and the



Ed Kirschner's handcrafted Nativity stables always have a signature "cross" on them. Including the cross reflects his belief that "Without the death and the resurrection, there wouldn't be much of a reason for the Christmas story. It's part of the whole narrative."

(Photo by John Shaughnessy)

resurrection, there wouldn't be much of a reason for the Christmas story. It's part of the whole narrative."

Kirschner also strives to make each Nativity stable different—in a way reflecting the variety of people from across the country and around the world who have stopped by his small shop.

Visitors have come from many of the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. They have also hailed from Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Ireland and Venezuela.

"My wife loves the stories of people who come in, and I really enjoy them, too," says Kirschner who works year-round in the shop, averaging about 40 to 50 hours a week there. "I feel very blessed at my age that I have something to do, that I enjoy doing it, and I get to meet a lot of people and hear their stories."

One of Kirschner's favorite stories involves an elderly man who kept eyeing one of his Nativity stables at a craft fair.

"He kept coming up to my booth, and then he'd go

away and come back again," he recalls. "He did that three or four times. Before the afternoon was over, he said, 'I want to buy that one.' He told me his family left Germany when Hitler was coming into power. He remembered having a stable when he was a little boy in Germany, and he said that one reminded him of it. He was close to 80."

Keeping the tradition alive

Visitors also share their traditions, including how they display the Nativity figures that some of their immigrant parents and grandparents brought with them when they came to America.

Kirschner and his wife have had their own traditions through the years.

"Since we were married, the Nativity has always been a focal point of Christmas for our children and grandchildren," he says. "The kids would always get around the crèche and have a little parade singing 'Silent Night' as they put the baby Jesus into the crèche. That's the way we always ended Christmas Eve."

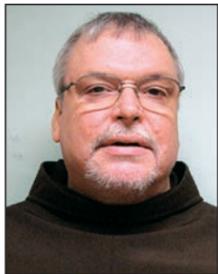
Now, the Christmas Eve celebration is held at the home of one of their sons. And the couple still makes sure to attend midnight Mass on Christmas.

"I've been going to it since I was a little boy," Kirschner says. "It's a tradition."

So is remembering the woman who started his love of the Nativity scene.

"My mother's faith was yearlong," he says. "It wasn't just focused on Christmas. She was a very religious woman. Advent and everything associated with the Church was important to her."

He looks around his shop and adds, "I think she would like that I'm doing this. I think she would be pleased." †



'His crèches are just beautiful. I like them so much that I got them for everybody in my family and one for myself. How he lives his life and how he creates his work is a huge testament to his faith.'

—Franciscan Father David Kobak, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg

What was in the news on December 4, 1964? Editorials note the reaction to the 'new Mass,' and the launching of an important space mission

By Brandon A. Evans

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

Here are some of the items found in the December 4, 1964, issue of *The Criterion*:

- Record throngs greet Pope Paul on India trip
- An over-all appraisal: Third session brought council to maturity
- Jordanian Catholics answer press attack
- Tiara made gift to U.S. Catholics
- Dedication slated at Ritter High
- Pope consecrates 6 bishops in India
- Saw 'faults' in statement on freedom
- Orthodox to hear Providence nun
- Urges Bishops' Board to help rule Church
- Sees no suppression of Marian devotions
- Britain preparing vocations exhibit
- Archdiocesan program: Course is held for catechists
- Sought prelate's freedom: Tells of dramatic Khrushchev interview
- Editorial: Bon voyage

"Man poked his finger deeper into the cosmos last week. If all goes well, the next Fourth of July should find Americans and the whole world in a dither. The rocketing of the interplanetary spaceship, Mariner 4, from Cape Kennedy toward Mars is a long-shot effort

to get some fairly close television photos and other data about the intriguing planet 325 million miles away, as spacecraft fly."

• Editorial: Meaningful Mass

"An elderly parishioner wept as she uttered the words of the Kyrie, the ancient cry for mercy. But her faltering voice joined the swelling intonation of the vernacular as liturgical history was made throughout the archdiocese. Whether she wept for the 'old ways' or for what she had been missing all these years, we shall not venture to guess. The sweeping reforms of the Vatican Council came to churches in cities, towns and villages last Sunday. To expect changes in centuries-old customs and traditions to meet with unqualified approval is foolish. No doubt many clergy and laity still have misgivings about the inception and future of the updated Mass. To have disturbed the perfect prayer, the perfect sacrifice, they deem unwise. Precisely because the Mass was not the perfect prayer for a majority of Catholics, the council stepped in with a solution for what some Church leaders have called the 'Sunday-morning crisis.' Meaningful worship must not only be acceptable to God, but intelligible to the worshiper. In too many congregations, the Mass had become a communication between God and the clergy, with too many laity being detached, often disinterested, bystanders. The changes are spiritually wholesome. As they are more fully implemented and more fully understood by both priest and layman, the Vatican

council harvest will be reaped in joyful abundance."

- Question Box: Should I buy a new missal?
- 'Obsolescence' seen threatening K of C
- Shipboard college group sees pope
- Benedictines plan microfilming of rare manuscripts
- Allocate funds for mission work in Latin America
- Snowstorm interferes with Quiz
- Chatard musicians will entertain
- Detroit University gives up football
- New stamp honors Chinese scholar
- Musical comedy set by Theatre Guild
- Vicar general for laity named
- Franciscan Brother leads farmer's life
- Magdalen Sisters announce change in their name
- Nun tells grim story of Congo atrocities
- Denies charges Pius XII had sympathy for Nazis



Read all of these stories from our December 4, 1964, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com. †

Partnership help Morris parish build community in Haiti

By Mike Krokos

MORRIS—The children's smiles and waves are among the first things that draw the pilgrims.

Even the adults greet the foreigners with a kindness that is sincere and heartfelt.

But the photographs that the visitors from Indiana show from their mission trips to Haiti share another story: Extreme poverty, severe malnutrition, skin diseases, other serious health issues and a lack of infrastructure that cripple a rural community still recovering from the effects of a devastating earthquake that shook the country in 2010.

Since the fall of 2005, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris have had a twinning relationship with St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gandou, which is approximately 40 miles—but a six-to 10-hour drive—from the capital city of Port-au-Prince, where Indiana pilgrims fly into, then use vehicles to get to the isolated, mountainous community in southwest Haiti.

The increasingly popular practice of "twinning," or partnering a U.S. parish with one in the developing world, enables diverse communities to get to know their brothers and sisters in Christ.

'Floored by their poverty'

Twice a year, St. Anthony Parish leads a group of missionaries—including some from nearby parishes who take part in their ministry—to Gandou, where they provide medical care, food, educational and financial assistance, and build spiritual friendships with a community that reflects why Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Eighty percent of the people live under the poverty line, and 54 percent live in abject poverty. Two-thirds of Haitians are unemployed.

St. Anthony's outreach is one of many twinning efforts of parishes in the archdiocese with parishes in Haiti.

"When you go to Haiti the first time, it just blows you away," said Joe Rennekamp, a member of St. Anthony Parish, who with his wife, Jennifer, has made the pilgrimage several times. "You leave here thinking, 'This place is a third the size of Indiana, they've got some problems, we'll go down and fix it all up real quick, and be done with it.' You go down, and you're floored by the poverty, and how crippling it is."

There is no access to clean water, and the rocky soil that abounds in Gandou makes farming, which provides a living for many of the population, a challenge. About 10,000 people live in the village and surrounding area, and the medical assistance that some pilgrims provide is necessary because the nearest doctor is a five-hour walk from the village, and the nearest hospital is a six-hour walk. It is very difficult for sick patients to reach care. Many people in the area suffer needlessly—some even die—from easily treatable conditions.

Dr. Mary McCullough, a member of nearby St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, has been travelling to Gandou yearly since 2007, bringing her medical expertise to a community that sorely needs it.

"Seeing the extreme poverty and the poor medical condition of patients, the malnutrition of kids, that's something I had learned about but I had never seen," she said of her first visit there. "There are certain things you see with severe, severe malnutrition, and you saw it over and over again [in Gandou]. It wasn't very isolated. I think that was the thing that struck me the most. ... That, and things like scabies and other skin infections."

Dentists are part of the medical team, too. Like doctors and nurses, they see hundreds of patients—many with serious dental issues—during the eight- or nine-day pilgrimages to Gandou.

Since they cannot be there year-round, St. Anthony now funds a full-time Haitian nurse who operates the clinic they opened in the village, and pays for the salaries of five full-time local health workers, too. Because there is a high infant mortality rate, the parish also funded the training for 25 midwives.



Students at St. Francis Xavier School in Gandou, Haiti, enjoy a meal made available by the school lunch program sponsored by St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris. (Submitted photos)



Above, children carry chairs to Mass. The people of Gandou will walk in the dark on Sunday morning for two hours to get to church, carrying a chair with them to sit on during the two-and-a-half hour liturgy.



Above, pictured is St. Francis Xavier Church in Gandou, Haiti, in late June. Members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish are raising funds to rebuild the church after a 2010 earthquake severely damaged it.

Left, nurse Valarie Hoff and her 17-year-old daughter Michaela, both members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, are pictured in June with Gefte, a young resident of Gandou. Gefte's mother died when he was 2 months old, and he lived on sugar water for a year because there was no breast milk to give him. He didn't have the strength to raise his head when he came into the clinic, but after the team worked with him for a week, he was looking much healthier.

Sponsoring children in a school of faith

Addressing educational needs is also a priority.

Through its outreach, St. Anthony sponsors 155 of the 280 students who attend the parish's elementary school. The Indiana parish sponsors the salaries of six teachers there, and sponsor three local youths, now in their final year of university studies in Port-au-Prince. Once they get their education degrees, those three will return to Gandou to help offer a high school curriculum.

Currently, it costs \$135 per year to sponsor one elementary school student.

"Seventy-five dollars pays for tuition, books and for the uniform for one child," explained Jennifer Rennekamp, "and an additional \$60 provides them food [during school] for a year. For many of the children, that will be their only meal of the day."

Ed King, a member of nearby St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan, made his first mission trip to Gandou in March of 2010.

A retired educator, he said the journeys have had a profound influence on him.

"Even though they are poor ... I remember how friendly they were, and that

was refreshing," he said of his initial visit. "It was life-changing. It gave me a whole different perspective on looking at life."

"It's made me wonder about where I put my money," he continued. "With these school programs, it just opens the opportunity [to help others]."

Rebuilding their church

Faith and family are at the heart of the Gandou community, and that faith is tested every day.

"It's so hard to make sense of the suffering there," Joe Rennekamp added.

"Their trust in God is far beyond ours."

"Family is everything to them,"

Ed King added.

The situation in Gandou only got worse when a 7.0-magnitude earthquake shook Haiti in January of 2010. One of every three homes in the village was crushed or damaged by the quake. So was Francis Xavier Church, located in the Diocese of Jacmel, where the people of Gandou gather to worship.

The cost to repair the church is \$230,000. St. Anthony has raised \$100,000 and hired local people in Gandou to begin to rehabilitate it.

Nearly five years after the earthquake,

there is still no new roof on the damaged church, but St. Anthony members are hopeful donors will help with fundraising efforts to complete the repairs.

"This church is extremely important to them," Joe Rennekamp said. "The church is the center of education for their kids, for their spiritual worship, for their social gatherings, for everything. Their whole life is built around the church, as it should be."

The people of Gandou will walk in the dark on Sunday morning for two hours to get to church, carrying a chair with them to sit on during the two-and-a-half hour liturgy.

"They come to Mass every week," Joe Rennekamp added.

'God gives abundantly, but he doesn't share'

It is commonplace to see women and children walking up and down steep hills with five-gallon water buckets on their heads to bring back to their families.

Farmers do their best but struggle to feed their families because of the poor, eroded soil on the mountains.

"It is amazing how hard-working the people are," Jennifer Rennekamp said.

See HAITI, page 12

HAITI

continued from page 11

Yet, suffering is a staple of the people of Gandou.

“There is a Haitian proverb that says: ‘God gives abundantly, but he doesn’t share,’” Joe Rennekamp said. “What that means is that God has put enough resources on this world that everybody can have the basic necessities that they need. It’s all here. There’s plenty for everyone, but he left it up to us to share it, and that’s where it’s gone wrong.”

“When I go [on these trips], I realize God is clearly calling us to help these people.”

Pilgrimages affect people in different ways, Jennifer Rennekamp noted.

“I think it’s really easy to go, especially on your first trip or two, to come back, [and] your whole take home is: ‘Wow, I’m really blessed,’ and you’re really grateful,” she said. “But then when you get more into it, it turns into more: ‘Wow, I’m really blessed, so I must give back.’”

“We’re all called to feed the poor, to give water to the thirsty, to do whatever,” she added. “Not everyone is called to continue working in Haiti, but everyone is called to do something, to give somewhere.”

McCullough agreed. “This ministry allows so many people to give,” she said. “This is a way people can share their abundance. I think it’s making such a huge difference in this small, little corner of the world.”

Looking to January ... and beyond

When a group of St. Anthony missionaries return at the end of January, they will be met by four or five interpreters who will help translate Creole, the language spoken in Gandou, and three to four Haitian dentists who will help with that ministry.

Donations are being accepted to help

the ministry. One-hundred percent of the money collected goes directly to the St. Francis Xavier outreach program. The trips are also open to anyone of high school age (with a parent) or older who is willing to pay their own way—as all missionaries do.

The world they experience will probably be like nothing they have ever seen. And any donations to the effort have a tremendous impact.

“[It’s unbelievable], the magnitude of the suffering that is happening an hour-and-a-half off the coast of Florida,” Joe Rennekamp said.

“We don’t need one great big donor, we need a whole bunch of small donors—\$5 here or \$10 there makes a huge difference,” he continued. “It lessens the suffering down there when they know they have someone that cares for them. ... It gives them hope, and that hope may be all they have for the future.”

As for the future, it is not only about hope, but building community. And encouraging other parishes to do what St. Anthony Parish is doing.

“Our goal is to help build economic development and education [in Gandou] ... but also here in the States, to help keep spreading the word about Haiti and how a little parish here in Morris, Indiana, can have a sister parish,” Joe Rennekamp said. “I think every parish in the United States can have a sister parish. ... If there’s anything we can do to help people get started, help them ... doing this, that would be great.”

(For more information on St. Anthony of Padua’s Haiti outreach, visit www.gandouministry.com. If you’d like to make a tax-deductible financial donation, mail it to: St. Anthony Haiti Ministry, P.O. Box 3, Morris, IN, 47033. Please write “Haiti” on the check memo line, and specify if your donation is for a specific project. Call 812-934-6218 for more information.) †



Children use their hands—and heads—to transport water up a steep hill in Gandou. (Submitted photos)



Pictured are members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish’s June mission trip and their interpreters in Gandou, Haiti.

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Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

- Dec. 5, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at All Saints, Dearborn County, at the Yorkville campus
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
- Dec. 9, 6-7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- Dec. 14, 1:30 p.m. for Immaculate Conception, Millhouses; St. Charles Borromeo, Milan; St. Maurice, Napoleon; and at St. John, Osgood, at St. John, Osgood
- Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
- Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright
- Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, at the Enochsburg campus

Bloomington Deanery

- Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. at Our Lady of the Springs, French Lick
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
- Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer
- Dec. 18, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery

- Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
- Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville
- Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m., following 5:15 p.m. Mass for Richmond Catholic Community at St. Mary, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield
- Dec. 11, 6 p.m. for Holy Angels and St. Rita at St. Rita
- Dec. 14, confessions will be heard in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Confessions are also heard in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel from noon to 1 p.m.

each Friday.

- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
- Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Mary

Indianapolis North Deanery

- Dec. 14, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Simon the Apostle
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery

- Dec. 7, 2 p.m. at Good Shepherd
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
- Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
- Dec. 18, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas
- Dec. 22, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
- Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield

New Albany Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
- Dec. 14, 3 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
- Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. John Paul II, Sellersburg
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. St. Mary, Navilleton
- Dec. 21, 4 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery

- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
- Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon; and



Advent resources are available on archdiocesan Web site

During the season of Advent, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will have a special webpage at www.archindy.org/advent.

The page contains various Advent resources, including links to the daily readings, past reflections from Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, penance service schedules, images of past *Criterion* Christmas issue covers and links of interest to other Advent websites. †

A priest hears the confession of a pilgrim on April 28 before a Mass of thanksgiving for the canonizations of Sts. John XXIII and John Paul II in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

- Dec. 14, 2 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- Dec. 21, 4 p.m. for American Martyrs, Scottsburg and St. Patrick, Salem at American Martyrs, Scottsburg

Terre Haute Deanery

- Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. deanery service at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m., deanery service at St. Patrick, Terre Haute
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m., deanery service at Sacred Heart, Clinton †

Sisters Elizabeth Mary (left), 79, Carolyn (center), 99, and Bridget, 96, have together devoted more than 200 years to religious life. They and some 35,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests benefit from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your gift helps furnish medications, nursing care, and more.

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Photo (left to right): Sister Elizabeth Mary Knight, ASCJ; Sister Carolyn Capobianco, ASCJ; Sister Bridget Esposito, ASCJ.

Religious in Formation 2014-2015

“Religious should be men and women who are able to wake up the world.” -Pope Francis

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Saint Mary of the Woods
Temporary Professed



Sr. Hannah Corbin, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary of the Woods
St. Thomas Aquinas
Indianapolis, IN
Temporary Professed



Sr. Ariane Whittaker, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary of the Woods
Temporary Professed



Sr. Joni Luna
Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary of the Woods
Canonical Novice



Anna Fan
Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary of the Woods
Postulant



Tracey Horan
Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary of the Woods
Postulant



Sr. Heather Jean Foltz, OSB
Sisters of St. Benedict
Beech Grove, IN
St. John the Evangelist
Indianapolis, IN
Temporary Professed



Sr. Susan Elizabeth Rakers, OSB
Sisters of St. Benedict
Beech Grove, IN
Second Year Novice



Sr. Susan Nicole Rouber, OSB
Sisters of St. Benedict
Beech Grove, IN
St. Jude, Indianapolis, IN
Novice



Sr. Gayla Marie Aspromonte, OSB
Sisters of St. Benedict
Beech Grove, IN
Novice



Sr. Susan Marie Pleiss, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis
Oldenburg, IN
Temporary Professed



Jennifer Harber
Cistercian Nuns, WI
St. Monica
Indianapolis, IN
Postulant



Sr. Maria Kolbe Zapfe
Dominican Sisters
of Hawthorne
St. John the Apostle
Bloomington, IN
Novice



Sr. Mary Xavier Winterrowd
Dominican Sisters
of St. Cecilia
St. Christopher
Indianapolis, IN
Novice



Evelyn Lobo
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters
St. Monica
Indianapolis, IN
Postulant



Sr. Amy Catherine Joseph Hagedorn
Little Sisters of the Poor
St. Mark, Perry Co.
Temporary Professed



Sr. Mary Joseph Prickel
Sisters of Reparation to
the Most Sacred Heart
of Jesus, OH
St. Anthony of Padua
Morris, IN
Temporary Vows



Sr. Maria Kolbe Elstro, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis
of Perpetual Adoration
St. Andrew, Richmond, IN
Temporary Vows



Sr. Cora Marie Worden, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis
of Perpetual Adoration
St. John the Evangelist
Indianapolis, IN
Novice



Sr. Gabriel Marie Trimble
Slaves of the Immaculate
Heart of Mary, MA
Ss. Philomena and
Cecilia Church, Oak Forest
Novice



Sr. Marie Therese of the Holy Name of Jesus, SOLT
Society of Our Lady
of the Most Holy Trinity
Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, IN
Temporary Professed



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Saint Meinrad
Archabbey
Saint Meinrad, IN
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Br. James Jensen, OSB
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Br. William Sprauer, OSB
Saint Meinrad
Archabbey
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Br. André De Deckert, OSB
Saint Meinrad
Archabbey
Saint Meinrad, IN
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Novice



Novice John Avery
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Novice Joseph Fussner
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Novice



Br. Pierce Cavanaugh, OP
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of St. Albert the Great -
Central US Province
St. Pius X/St. Paul Catholic Center
Bloomington, IN
Novice



Mr. Geoffrey Mooney
Congregation of Holy Cross,
United States Province
of Priests and Brothers
Our Lady of Perpetual
Help, New Albany, IN
Postulant



Mr. James Henke
Congregation of Holy Cross,
United States Province
of Priests and Brothers
Our Lady of the Greenwood,
Greenwood
Old College



Br. Joseph Michael Kraemer
California Province
of the Society of Jesus
St. Andrews, Richmond, IN
Novice



Br. Michael Matthews
Legionaries of Christ
Holy Rosary
Indianapolis, IN
Novice



Br. Eric Knott
Marmion Abbey
St. Roch
Indianapolis, IN
Novice

Not Pictured
Sr. Mary Joseph of Jesus
Carmel of Jesus, Mary
and Joseph, CA
St. Anthony of Padua,
Morris, IN
Temporary Professed

Sr. Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, OCD
Carmel of Jesus, Mary
and Joseph, NE
St. John the Apostle,
Bloomington, IN
Junior Professed Nun

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www.mothersofcharity.org

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www.thedome.org

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MEN'S COMMUNITIES

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Conventual Franciscan Friars
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Marian Friary- Franciscans of the Immaculate
www.maryschildren.com

Order of Friars Minor, Cincinnati Province
www.franciscan.org

Order for Friars Minor, St. Louis Province
www.thefriars.org

Dominican Friars, Central Province
www.domcentral.org

Society of Jesus, Chicago-Detroit Province
www.jesuits-chgdet.org



John the Baptist was the last of a long line of prophets

By Daniel S. Mulhall

Prophets played unique and essential roles in the history of the Jewish people. They served as God's messengers, bringing words of wisdom, wonder and especially warning at auspicious times. We know many of their names because their stories and messages were saved for us in the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians know as the Old Testament.

So we know the name Hosea, who described richly the nuptial relationship between God and his people. Jeremiah counseled faithfulness to God rather than political alliances. Isaiah foretold a bright future for an enslaved people if they would but put their trust wholeheartedly in God.

At the end of this long and distinguished list, we find the name of John, who was known as the Baptist. He, too, was one of God's prophets. John the Baptist accompanies us during Advent in our readings, exhorting us to prepare the way for the Lord. From God's point of view as revealed in Scripture, preparedness was important, and John the Baptist offers us food for thought as we prepare to welcome Christ.

While the Old Testament prophets have books that bear their names, what little we know about John the Baptist comes from the synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Mark begins his Gospel account with the story of John the Baptist, the messenger of God: "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: 'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths''" (Mk 1:2-3).

John the Baptist challenged people to acknowledge their sinfulness and be baptized as a sign of repentance. He apparently was an effective preacher because, as Mark tells us, the population "of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him" (Mk 1:5).

John the Baptist even looked the part of a wild-eyed Old Testament prophet. He is described as wearing "camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist" (Mk 1:6), a comparison that links him to the prophet Elijah, and eating "locusts and wild honey" (Mk 1:6).

The Gospel of Matthew says that John the Baptist preached that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 3:2). In Matthew, we see that John the Baptist has nothing but disdain for those who consider themselves righteous, saying to them: "'You brood of vipers! Who

warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. ... Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire'" (Mt 3:7-8, 10).

His words sound harsh, but John the Baptist called for his listeners to change their hearts. If they did so, he believed, they would then change the way they lived. By doing so they would be preparing themselves for the time when God's rule would encompass the Earth.

The notes in the New American Bible explain that the phrase "kingdom of heaven" stands for the kingdom of God because pious Jews did not say or write the word "God." John the Baptist envisioned a kingdom where sinners would be condemned. John the Baptist's preaching, then, was meant to keep people from damnation.

But there is another part of God's revelation that comes to us through John the Baptist that is only found in the Gospel of Luke. According to Luke, John the Baptist was chosen by God to be his prophet before he was conceived, in the same manner as some Old Testament prophets. John the Baptist is a gift from God given to his parents in their old age, but he also turned out to be a gift to the whole world.

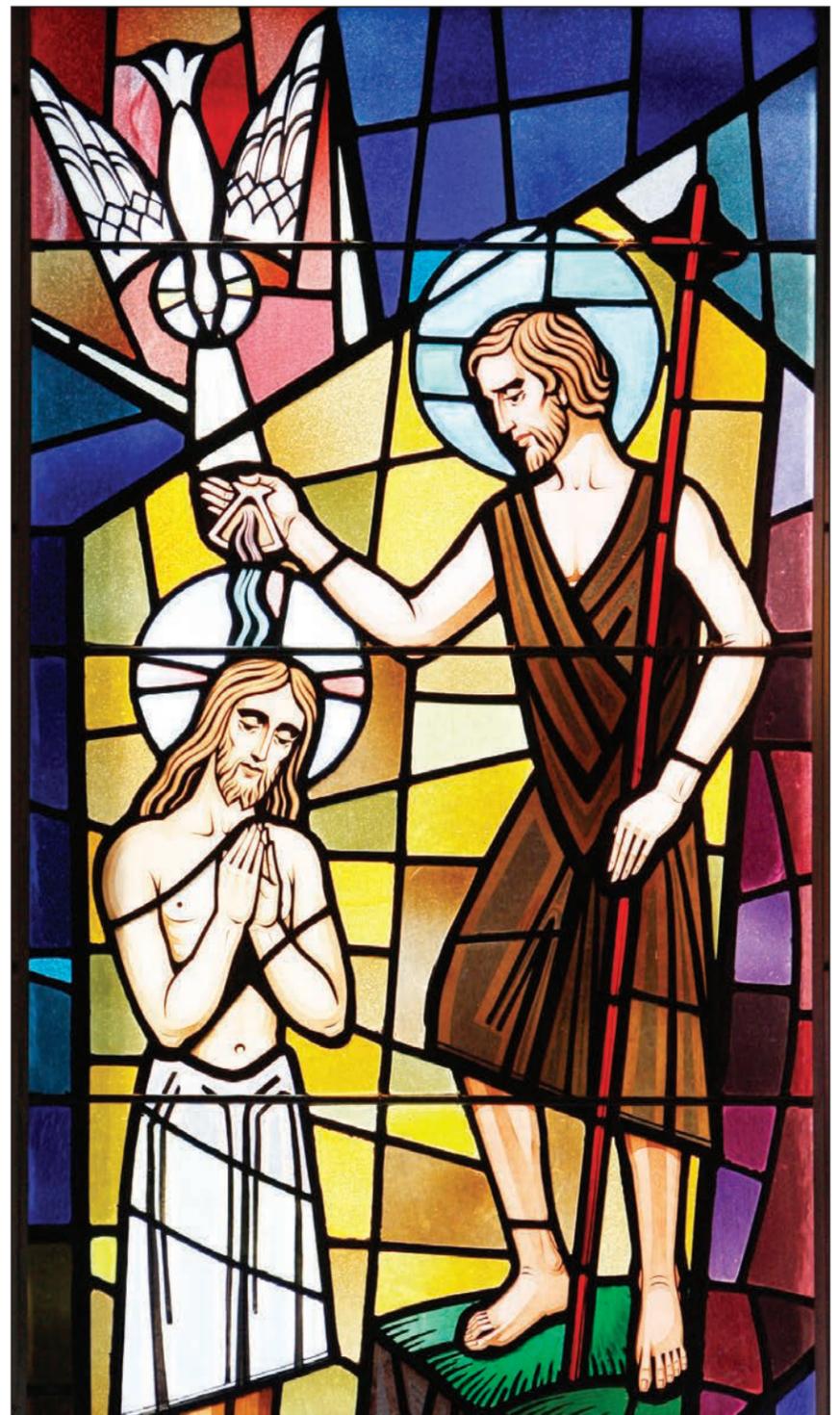
In the Canticle of Zechariah (Lk 1:67-79) we come to understand more fully the meaning of John the Baptist's message of repentance as a message of hope. John the Baptist's very existence is a sign that God is in control of all of creation, whether we realize it or not.

Through his life, John the Baptist calls us repeatedly to return to God and be joined once again to God's bountiful love for us. This is not just a matter of changing what we do. We have to realize that John the Baptist is calling us to a radical new way of life.

He tells us that God can bring forth new life even from people too old to give birth naturally. What can God bring forth in the lives of people whose souls are fertile soil in which his seed can be planted?

John the Baptist's message, which we hear proclaimed at Mass during the Advent season, still applies to us today. We are to prepare our hearts and minds so that God can enter our lives freely and easily, so that we will be transformed by it. In preparing ourselves to receive the Lord, we will become witnesses to the wonders that God can create in human beings.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a freelance writer and a catechist for adults. He lives in Laurel, Maryland.) †



Christ's baptism by John the Baptist at the Jordan River is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Greenlawn, N.Y. John the Baptist, considered by Catholics as the last in the line of prophets of the Old Testament, is prominently featured in Mass readings during Advent. (CNS photo/ Gregory A. Shemitz)

Conversion is at the heart of the message of John the Baptist

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

Every year, on the second and third Sundays of Advent, we hear from the last of the Old Testament prophets: John the Baptist. He stands as a fulcrum at the junction of the Jewish covenant and the Christian era.



A woman prays at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. John the Baptist's message is proclaimed at Mass during the Advent season, urging us to turn away from sin so as to experience the joy of God's kingdom. (CNS photo/ Bob Roller)

John's role is to be a forerunner. His message calls people to prepare the way of the Lord.

That message reminds us that God does not force his gifts upon us. We have to be open to God's gifts, and be willing to welcome him into our heart and lives. The season of Advent reminds us each year of the importance of examining our lives to see what might be blocking the way of the Lord who comes to us, or perhaps more accurately, what is blocking us from coming to the Lord.

Describing himself in St. John's Gospel, John the Baptist quotes Isaiah, saying, "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'" (Jn 1:23). We hear that passage this year on the Third Sunday of Advent.

The text from Isaiah that he quotes is heard on the Second Sunday of Advent, and it makes clear what preparing the way means: "Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley" (Is 40:4). It means removing whatever obstacles stand in the way of a clear path between the Lord and our hearts.

St. Mark's Gospel on the second Sunday tells us that John "appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk 1:4). This is a key dimension of preparing the way for the Lord.

Sin, above all, prevents us from welcoming Christ fully. Most of our sins may seem minor, but even those sins keep us from opening our hearts completely to the Lord.

While we may want to welcome Christ, our attachment to sinful behavior often stands in the way. That's why parishes usually offer additional opportunities for confession as we move toward Christmas. Facing and changing our sinful habits is essential to welcoming Christ, just as it was for those who heard John the Baptist preach.

The Baptist might seem like a harsh and fearsome person, but it is important to remember that he was inviting people to turn their lives around to share in the kingdom of God and the joys that it offers. He was a key figure in God's long-term plan to bring all people into the realm of his love and mercy.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, we also hear Isaiah proclaim, "He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord" (Is 61:1-2a). That's the promise that underlies John the Baptist's call to repent and prepare the way for the Lord.

(Father Lawrence Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Old Testament: Suffering is not a sign of wickedness

(Forty-eighth in a series of columns)

The Book of Job is the first of seven Wisdom Books in the Old Testament. These books, which date back to the



10th century B.C., were an attempt to answer some of the fundamental questions of life. The Book of Job is widely regarded as one of the literary masterpieces of all time.

Sometimes we hear that someone has “the patience of Job,” meaning that she or he is an extremely patient person. I wonder if the person who coined that expression ever read past the second chapter of the Book of Job.

In the first two chapters of this folktale, Job indeed is patient. After God permits Satan to afflict him severely, Job says merely, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I go back again. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;

blessed be the name of the Lord” (Jb 1:21). And later he says, “We accept good things from God; and should we not accept evil?” (Jb 2:10).

The first two chapters, though, are the prologue to the book, just as the last chapter, which tells of the restoration of Job’s prosperity, is the epilogue. What makes this a literary masterpiece is the cycle of speeches from chapters 3 to 42. And there we find that Job is not patient at all. He curses the day he was born, and longs for death to end his sufferings. He frequently cries out to God in complaint, and blames God for allowing him to be afflicted even though he has always been a righteous man.

This is the age-old problem expressed in the modern book by Harold S. Kushner, *Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?* Why does God allow injustice to occur? Job’s friends, who originally came to comfort him, are convinced that he must be guilty of some great wrong since his suffering is so intense, and they become annoyed with Job’s protestations of his innocence.

Job pleads for God to explain why he

has permitted his sufferings. God finally answers. But not in the way Job wanted. God doesn’t try to justify his actions; he doesn’t answer the question “Why?” Rather, he refers to his own omniscience and almighty power. He shows Job that happiness and success are not rewards for living righteously, and neither are grief and failure punishments for evil-doing.

This is enough for Job. He quickly recovers his attitude of humility and trust in God. In fact, his humility and trust are strengthened by the suffering he endured. Thus, over the 2,500 years since this book was written, this poor man has stood as proof that suffering is not a sign of wickedness.

From this book, we learn that we do not know why bad things happen to good people and that innocent people can be afflicted for no apparent reason. Their sufferings are a test of their fidelity. They will be rewarded in the end, but not necessarily in this life. Meanwhile, our human, finite minds cannot understand the depths of God’s divine omniscience and omnipotence. †

It’s All Good/Patti Lamb

This Christmas, view the Nativity scene with new eyes of faith

Growing up, I never quite understood it. Only now, am I beginning to grasp it a little better.



Each year at Christmastime for as long as I can remember, my dad would go to great lengths to display a beautiful nativity set in our home. He took great care to keep it lit with candles, perfectly

illuminating the scene.

Back then, I thought that was a lot of work for something that very few people saw. The part I particularly didn’t understand, however, was how my dad would sit quietly, at the end of a long day, in front of the Nativity. He made a marked effort to stop and reflect on the wonder of it all.

I, on the other hand, find myself trapped year after year in the snares of a commercial Christmas. I focus my energy on shopping, baking, decorating and bustling in general. On my mad dash from store to store, I rarely say words like “Advent” and “Savior.” Instead, I find myself talking excessively of “sales” and “coupons.” I relish the thought of checking tasks off my holiday “to do” list.

Faith, Hope and Charity/David Siler

Look around: Does hope have an address near you?

John Etling, agency director of Catholic Charities in Terre Haute, likes to say that “hope has an address.” He will



explain that at the corner of 14th and Locust streets—where all of the programs of the Terre Haute agency can be found—that, for those who have lost everything, including hope, this precious gift is available there.

There are many ways to describe poverty, but perhaps the poverty of hope is the most devastating. All of us will, at one time or another, lose a job, our health or a loved one, but when hope is gone, there is really nothing left.

While recently visiting one of Catholic Charities marquee programs in the archdiocese, Ryves Youth Program in Terre Haute, I met a woman named “Martha.”

Martha is the great-grandmother of three special needs children, who she is raising by herself. I didn’t get to hear the story of how it came to pass that mom and grandmother were not raising the

children, but I suspect it was a story of hopelessness. Martha told me that she would not make it without Ryves to care for her two great-granddaughters after school and provide a meal each night during the week. Martha finds hope there at 14th and Locust.

I met Martha’s two great-granddaughters, who I believe were 16 and 17. I learned that her great-grandson has cerebral palsy, and isn’t able to get out much. The girls had just met me, but both of them wanted to give me a hug. I think that they could do that because they feel safe and loved there at Ryves.

Just like the Grinch’s heart that grew 10 sizes, mine expanded that day—mostly due to meeting this amazing woman who is going far beyond her call of duty as a great-grandmother. If I ever lose hope, I’ll think of Martha.

declares the Lord” (Is 55:8). Even when we don’t understand, we must believe.

This Christmas, you might find yourself struggling with failure or disappointment. Perhaps you’ve lost a job. Or worse—maybe you’ve lost someone you love, one who remains permanently etched in your heart. But look at the Nativity, and see how God can take total underdogs—like a young virgin and a stepfather—who are willing to follow his lead, and allow their faith to culminate in the redemption and salvation of the world.

That’s a lot to take in, especially while we’re frantically preparing for Christmas. Perhaps our time is better spent in ways other than shopping and baking this Advent. Maybe a few moments are best spent quietly before the Nativity, reflecting on how God used, and continues to use, Earth’s unlikely candidates to reveal his glory—and how the story always ends well when we live by God’s will and not by our own.

May our weary world encounter the “thrill of hope” Christmas brings and be reminded that God will make everything OK—through the birth of his Son.

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Later this month, we will celebrate the birth of hope for all of humankind in the person of Jesus, who came to Earth to make sure that we would never lose hope. He came to remind us that God loves us, and wants to be in a relationship with us.

He showed us with his very life that even in the midst of death, even the most brutal death, that there is hope—that life will always win over death, and God’s love will always remain.

In a world that can often seem short on hope, what are your addresses for that gift? Can hope be found at your workplace and in your home?

(David Siler is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries. E-mail him at dsiler@archindy.org.) †

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Your Family/Bill Dodds

Widowhood and the joys and sorrows of Christmas

As I head toward my second Christmas as a widower, I now know the challenges begin with



Halloween. Yes, Halloween. Filled with happy “couple” memories, it’s a tough day for a lot of widows and widowers. It is followed by Thanksgiving,

Christmas, New Year’s, one blow after another, in overlapping, unrelenting succession, pummeling an already broken heart.

There’s the realization that, on Earth, the best is not yet to come. The best has come and gone.

For a widow or widower, no matter how happy the occasion, the gathering, the event, there can be the unalterable fact that it would be so much happier if our loved one had lived.

The first days, weeks and months after the death of a spouse can be a time of complete numbness. Shock. Disbelief. A blur.

And the years that follow, no matter how many years may follow, can be a time of incompleteness. It still astounds me how little I knew about widowhood before my wife died of uterine cancer in January 2013. Just as she had time to prepare for her death, I had time to prepare for her dying. But not really, because I simply didn’t know what it was like to have her gone.

Thanks be to God, I have a loving and supportive family, work I value, health, financial stability, a mortgage-free home, and on and on. But one description I’ve heard of widowhood is that life becomes like a nutritious meal that has no salt, no spice or like a can of pop, of soda, that has lost its fizz.

I don’t say this because I want to whine. I try to limit my whining to prayer. I say this because those who aren’t widowed don’t know what this is like, and so when they want to help a loved one, they’re unsure of what to do or not to do.

With that in mind, here are a few suggestions for dealing with your widowed friend’s Christmas and the holidays leading to it.

Invite the widowed person to the gathering even if the person may not be able to come. Accept the fact that the person may want to come, but on that day, that evening, it’s simply too much. He or she may call, e-mail or text at the last minute to tell you he or she just can’t leave the house. Your gracious acceptance of that helps tremendously. Prodding or pushing guilt buttons don’t.

Please, please, please don’t act as if the person’s loved one never existed. Yes, in your eyes, he or she may have died a long time ago. In the widowed person’s eyes, it seems like a long time ago and only yesterday. Use the person’s name. Tell stories about the person. Share happy memories.

Your stories and memories may make the widowed person cry. Allow that to happen, especially around Christmas. It may make you uncomfortable, but it brings great comfort. It may be just what the widowed person needs for Christmas this year.

(Bill Dodds writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 7, 2014

- Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
- 2 Peter 3:8-14
- Mark 1:1-8

The second part of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for this Second Sunday of Advent.



When this book was written, God's people were very happy. Their long, dreary exile of four generations in Babylon was about to end. They were looking forward to returning to their homeland.

This section of Isaiah captures well the joy and relief the people felt and their longing to return to their homeland. This passage also conveys well the important understanding that this happy circumstance has occurred as a result of God's mercy and faithfulness to the covenant he had made with his people.

It was not as if the people had earned God's munificence in this regard, or that they had been unusually loyal to the covenant themselves. On the contrary, their sins had brought misery upon themselves.

Nevertheless, God's mercy lives! So, the prophet insists that upon returning to their homeland, the people must go to Jerusalem, to the holy mountain where the temple once stood and proclaim there the goodness of God.

To any who doubt, this release from exile is proof of God's existence and God's love.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church presents a passage from the Second Epistle of St. Peter. Its theme differs from that of the first reading. The first reading was wonderfully optimistic. This reading is grim in its predictions of dark days and gloom.

However, it is not predicting everlasting death. Bad things will happen. Difficult times will come. But God will protect the faithful. In this last reassurance, the reading parallels the message of the first reading.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading.

It is the beginning of the Gospel, as the first verse of the reading states. And the opening verse indicates the purpose of this

Scripture. It is the "Good News" about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In these relatively few words, the entire reality of salvation is revealed. Something new is being proclaimed, utterly different from the sad moods and dreariness of human life, unbound by the variances of earthly existence.

The news, furthermore, is good! Jesus, the Son of God, both conveys this Good News and brings its effectiveness into human life.

This reading quotes Isaiah's prophecy that God will send a representative to guide the people from death to life, from the deadly effects of their sins to the bright realms of God's forgiveness. God has been true to this pledge. He gives us Jesus.

The Gospel then tells of John the Baptist, who went throughout Judea calling people to repentance. John recognized Jesus. Anyone can recognize Jesus, the Son of God. Too many, however, create an unrealistic image, an invention to confirm the easy way out or an excuse from the task of genuine conversion.

Reflection

In Advent, the Church clearly and frankly calls people to remember who they are and to recognize the devastating results of sin. Such was the message of John the Baptist.

These steps require frankness and humility. First, we must admit our sinfulness and human limitations.

We must see what sin actually is—total estrangement from and rejection of God. It is the cause of eternal death, and often of misery in earthly existence.

The ultimate message, nevertheless, is not doom and gloom. While we are limited and have sinned, while we may have made quite a mess for ourselves and for others, all of this weekend's readings remind us that God's mercy is overwhelming and unending.

So we have reason to hope. God will forgive us. He will strengthen us.

The key to obtaining this mercy is in admitting our personal sins and repenting. God does not drag us kicking and screaming into heaven, so we must wholeheartedly turn to God. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 8

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, December 10

Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, December 11

St. Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:1, 9-13b
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:14-17
or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
(Response) Judith 13:18bc, 19
Luke 1:26-38
or Luke 1:39-47

Saturday, December 13

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, December 14

Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
(Response) Luke 1:46-50, 53-54
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The beliefs people have about God can make a difference in their lives

Q Please help me to know how to answer people who say, "It doesn't matter what religion or beliefs you have, since we're all going to the same place anyway." (Versailles, Kentucky)



A The quote you offer strikes me as a species of what the Second Vatican Council called "false irenicism."

That is a fancy expression to describe the habit of playing down doctrinal differences for the sake of keeping the peace. (It comes from the Greek word "eirene," meaning "peace.") The council's "Decree on Ecumenism," said: "Nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss and its genuine and certain meaning is clouded" (#11).

Simply put, what people believe matters. If I believe that God revealed himself by coming to Earth in the person of Jesus, then I consider myself obligated to examine seriously what Jesus had to say and to align myself with whatever religious institution carries that teaching forward most faithfully.

At the same time, we acknowledge that God, through mysterious means known only to himself, can save people outside the Church, even non-Christians, through the grace of Christ.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explicitly affirms this belief, referencing Vatican II's "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," where it says: "Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience—those too may achieve eternal salvation" (#847).

I, along with the Church, believe that Catholics get the fullness of the help along the way to heaven that God intends for all humanity to have. This especially includes the sacraments and the guidance of Church teaching, since the truth of its fundamental doctrines is guaranteed by Christ. I, for one, am supremely grateful to be a Catholic and, to me, it makes a very big difference indeed.

Q Sometimes things happen in life that we have no control over. You marry and your partner is unfaithful or cruel, or he

just disappears. Many times a woman is left alone, with children to raise by herself. The [Ten] Commandments say, "Don't kill, don't steal, keep holy the Sabbath" etc., and if we break any of them, we can go to confession, be forgiven and receive the sacraments. But a divorced person who remarries outside the Church cannot be forgiven. Why does the Church single out that person for punishment? (Walterboro, South Carolina)

A The technical answer to your question is this: Sins are forgiven in confession when a person is sorry for them and has a "firm purpose of amendment." In other words, the person has the sincere intention of changing the behavior being confessed.

When a person is divorced and has remarried outside the Church, they may be sorry for the circumstances which led to this, but rarely do they intend to change their status by leaving the second marriage.

But you deserve much more than a technical answer. I have deep sympathy for the situation you describe, and pray that the Church will find a way to deal appropriately with such complex circumstances. There is strong evidence that the bishops gathered at the October 2014 synod were aware of your pain and that experienced by many Catholics in the situation you described.

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

My Journey to God

Where is the Crowd Waiting for Jesus?

By Thomas J. Rillo

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington and a Benedictine oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.)

A little boy holding his mother's hand
his anxious eyes searching
They move through the dense crowds
in a busy shopping mall
He asked her if the crowd was waiting
for the coming of Jesus
Why are they not waiting in line
for baby Jesus
No, my son they are on a tense
materialistic quest
For them there is no spiritual
respite or rest
No, Jesus will not be in the mall
this is not his thing
The place where we will find Jesus
is not this way
Let's go out to the little church
it is not far away
You know the one with the manger
we will find Jesus there
There will be no crowd waiting
just a few simple people
They wait to welcome the Christ child
we will see Jesus there
In the hearts and faces of the people
we will see Jesus imitated in them
The crowds that waited
for Jesus existed long ago
We will meet Jesus inside the church
there we will kneel and pray
For you see my son Jesus is the light and the way.

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to nhoefer@archindy.org. †

Rest in peace

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

BIRD, Janet Louise (Owen), 76, Prince of Peace, Nov. 21. Wife of Paul Bird. Mother of Julie and Travis Bird. Sister of Wanda Jackson, Nancy Simmons, Bill and Ernie Owen, Melvin and Paul Randall.

BLANTZ, Sarita, 91, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Nov. 21. Wife of William Blantz. Mother of Celia Schook, Barbara Sferra, Christina Skees, Andrea Vedder, Sarah Anne Wildgoose, Michael and Stephen Wollenhaupt and Alison and Andrew Blantz. Grandmother of 12.

COOPER, Lillian E., 92, St. Augustine Home for the Aged, Indianapolis, Nov. 26. Mother of Jill Cooper, Annette Danielson, Stephanie Jones, Teresa McKamey, Donna Paxton, Eric Hickman, Torstein Degnes, Dan, James and Michael Cooper. Grandmother of 30. Great-grandmother of 15. Great-great-grandmother of one.

DUNCAN, Linda Diane (Cox), 66, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 22. Mother of Sterling McCarty, Pam Morgan and Bridget Sullivan. Sister of Denise Hamburger, Don, Rick and Ron Cox. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of one.

FERENCAK, Phillip E., 76, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Nov. 22. Husband of Sonya Ferencak. Father of Alissa Lee. Grandfather of two.

FITZPATRICK, Susan E., 72, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Nov. 20. Mother of Kelly, Sheri and John Ziegler. Sister of Rebecca Arthur and Katherine Bell. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of two.

GEARY, Thomas Emmet, 77, St. Patrick, Terre Haute, Nov. 16. Brother of Kathryn List and John Gibbons.

GEORGE, Micheal Joseph, Sr., 67, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 23. Husband of Bernice George. Father of Andrea Harman and Micheal George Jr. Grandfather of three.

GIOVANINI, Louis A., 75, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Nov. 19. Husband of Kathy Giovanini. Brother of Julia Hoffman and Joe Giovanini.

HOLEVA, Barbara A., 85, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Nov. 4.

LAWRENCE, Della R., 90, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Nov. 17. Mother of Carolyn Baker. Sister of Clara Bedel. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of two. Great-great-grandmother of one.

NAAMAN, Priscilla, 73, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Nov. 1. Mother of James, Jason, Jeffrey and Joseph Naaman. Sister of Etta Swann, Bobby, Jack, Jerry and Raymond Ison. Grandmother

of 11. Great-grandmother of three.

NOONE, John E., 87, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 24. Husband of Carolyn Noone. Stepfather of Barry and Brian Sweeney. Uncle of several.

O'CONNELL, John, 78, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Nov. 20. Husband of Judith (Irving) O'Connell. Father of Susan Gragg, Catherine Patterson, Mary Ellen, Michael and Timothy O'Connell. Brother of Aileen Tansey and Mary Maigler. Grandfather of eight.

RAYMANN, Joseph Edward, Jr., 82, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 23. Father of Vicky Martin, Peggy Ridgway, Connie Stradling, Joseph III and Thomas Raymann. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of nine.

ROSS, Audra Ellen, 20, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Nov. 17. Daughter of Scott and Lisa (Wellman) Ross. Sister of Amelia, Emma, Ivan and Owen Ross. Granddaughter of Richard Ross, Ruth Ross, Tom Wellman and Nancy Wellman. Step-granddaughter of Linda Ross.

SHRINER, Martha J., 101, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 3. Mother of Patricia Long, Pamela Parsons and Michael Shriner. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 11.

SLUDER, Julie M., 43, St. Mary of the Assumption, Mitchell, Nov. 20. Wife of Kim Sluder. Stepmother of Robin Holmes and Candace Schofield. Daughter of Gene and Kerri Abel. Sister of Stephanie and Gregory Abel. Grandmother of three.

SPARKS, Jackie A., 77, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 27. Mother of Debbie Dorrell and Tim Sparks. Sister of Janice Donner. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of one.

SPARKS, Larry, 78, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 27. Father of Debbie Dorrell and Tim Sparks. Brother of James Sparks. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of one.

VERNIA, Charles C., 83, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 12. Father of Mary Ann Hoback, Joanie Ricke, Bob, Charles and John Vernia. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of one.

WEILEMAN, James E., 73, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 18. Husband of Patricia Weileman. Father of Jennifer Ebrems, Mark and Steven Weileman. Brother of June Williams. Grandfather of eight.

WILLETT, Mary Ruth (Beckham), 74, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 21. Wife of James Willett. Mother of April Clifton and Karen Lewis. Sister of Martha Floyd, John and Martin Beckham. Grandmother of one. †



Praying for peace

Pope Francis releases doves prior to celebrating Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Istanbul on Nov. 29. (CNS photo/Stoyan Nenov, Reuters)

Franciscan Sister Laurencia Listerman ministered for 50 years in Catholic schools

Franciscan Sister Laurencia Listerman died on Nov. 20, 2014, at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 101.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 25 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Helen Ann Listerman was born on April 25, 1913, in St. Bernard, Ohio.

She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 7, 1931, and professed final vows on July 2, 1937.

During 83 years as a Sister of St. Francis, Sister Laurencia ministered as an educator for 50 years in Catholic schools in Indiana, Missouri and Ohio. In the archdiocese, she served at St. Mary School in North Vernon, Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg, the former St. Mary Academy and Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School, both in Indianapolis.

Beginning in 1984, she returned to the motherhouse and ministered to the retired sisters there. She dedicated herself to prayer beginning in 1996.

Sister Laurencia is survived by several nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †



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New Year's Eve Retreat

"A Journey of Gratitude"

with Fr. Keith Hosey and Sr. Mo Mangen

December 31, 2014 – January 1, 2015

Join us for this special evening of reflection, worship and prayer to bring in the New Year!

Life is a journey of joy and sorrow, of life and death, and rebirth. Fr. Keith and Sr. Maureen will lead us through a reflection on our life experiences in 2014 with a focus on all that God has blessed us with. Giving special attention to these seasons of our life can help us to better grasp the beauty that we behold.

Cost: \$138/person \$256/couple

Includes snacks, a festive dinner, a complimentary champagne toast at midnight, overnight accommodations, brunch, the program and materials.

To register or find out more about this program, visit us at: www.archindy.org/fatima or call us at 317-545-7681



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Parish music director hits high note in winning international contest

By John Shaughnessy

The news came as a surprise to Francisco Carbonell, leading him and his wife to jump with joy.

Carbonell had just opened an e-mail on his smart phone, informing him that he was the first-place winner in a prestigious international competition for music composers.

"I couldn't believe it," recalls a smiling Carbonell, director of music at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "My wife and I were jumping!"

That spontaneous celebration in September is just one of the joys and surprises that have marked the life of Carbonell in recent years.

A native of Spain, he met his wife, a native of Mexico, through an online dating website, www.catholicsingles.com.

He also studied in Rome for three years, where he was a member of the choir at St. Peter's Basilica.

And just as intriguing, there's the story of how the Spanish-born, Italian-trained musician-composer found a home—and an even deeper appreciation of his faith—in the middle of America's heartland.

"After I finished my degree in composition in Rome, I had an offer to go to Jerusalem as a Church musician," he says. "But, praise to God, the visas were a disaster, and we couldn't go. Still, we knew God was there, that there was probably something better. I began to send about 20 resumes to the United States—to Seattle, Baltimore, New York, Indianapolis."

One of those resumes drew the attention of Father Rick Nagel, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish. After a week's worth of job interviews by video conference between Father Nagel in Indianapolis and Carbonell in Rome, the pastor offered him the position of music director. Carbonell didn't hesitate

to say "yes."

"The St. John's search team and myself were so impressed with Francisco's gifts of music, including his proficiency in organ, conducting and composing music," Father Nagel notes. "However, we were most moved by his deep love for our Lord and his Church. Francisco exudes the goodness of God in his daily walk of life."

After accepting the job, Carbonell, his wife and their then-1-year-old daughter soon made their first trip ever to the United States. He started working at St. John Parish on Oct. 11, 2013.

"It's just excellent, fantastic," he says. "The thing we really like is the people, and how warm they are in their welcome. From the first day here at St. John's, we found a family, more than a job. Everyone from the staff to the parishioners is very nice. The current president of the parish council even lent us a car for five months."

The move to Indianapolis has also led to another significant step in his journey of faith. With sadness, he acknowledges that he had grown away from his faith during his youth and his early adulthood in Spain. Yet meeting his wife, Itzel, online changed him.

"She helped me a lot to discover that God has been loving me since I was born," he says. "When it was noon in Spain, she was awake at five in the morning in Mexico to pray with me. We were married in Mexico in 2010."

His faith deepened again during the three years he studied at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome.

"I began to discover more my faith through the music, the liturgies. And God blessed me to be a member of the choir of St. Peter's, *Cappella Giulia*."

The blessings have continued in Indianapolis.

"I've seen a real commitment of faith from the people here that I haven't seen in



Francisco Carbonell, left, was the first-place winner in a prestigious international competition for music composers earlier this year—another moment of joy in the life of the native of Spain who is the director of music at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo by Megan Fish)

Spain," he says. "Here, you live the faith. It is deeper."

The depth of his faith is captured in the musical composition that earned him first place in the 2014 MusicaFicta International Choral Competition.

Working from the theme, "New Music for Easter Time," the competition invited composers to write a piece that focused on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday. Eighty entries from around the world were submitted, including Carbonell's composition on Good Friday called "*Caligaverunt Oculi Mei*." Translated in English, the song is titled, "My Eyes Have Been Covered by My Tears."

"It's a lamentation by Jeremiah that is read on Good Friday," Carbonell says. "Every time I saw those words in other texts by composers, it's been very powerful. It shows how raw the pain of Good Friday is for the Redeemer. I thought, 'Can I make something by myself?' I said, 'Let's do it.' I had been working on that for nearly a year."

The joy of winning that competition in September reached another level recently when his wife gave birth to their second child.

Then there is the joy he has experienced from a faith that has kept getting deeper as he has fulfilled his

different duties as the parish's music director. He arranges and composes music for the weekend Masses. He conducts the traditional and young adult choirs. He also plays the organ for weddings, funerals, special liturgies and Sunday Masses.

"During my first two months here, changing completely from my own language in Spanish to English required me to be more ready for the Mass," he says. "I studied first the readings, and then put together the music. It's made me reflect more."

That attitude continues to guide him as he plans music for the Advent and Christmas seasons at the parish.

"They're my favorite seasons," he says. "When I was a child in Spain, I learned all the English carols. When I came here, I already knew the hymns and music of Christmas."

"I always like to compare Advent with Lent, in terms of waiting. I always encourage people to think of Advent as a time to prepare for the great joy of Christmas."

The joy of his faith especially strikes him when he plays the organ during the parish's Holy Hour Adoration from 11 a.m. to noon on Fridays.

"I feel very close to the Lord," he says. "I play my own music. It's like giving him my gift." †



'It's a lamentation by Jeremiah that is read on Good Friday. Every time I saw those words in other texts by composers, it's been very powerful. It shows how raw the pain of Good Friday is for the Redeemer. I thought, "Can I make something by myself?" I said, "Let's do it."'

— Francisco Carbonell

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Students aim high in leading village's special Christmas event



(Editor's note: The Criterion offers its monthly salute to the success stories of Catholic schools in the archdiocese.)

By John Shaughnessy

Jonathon Maple wanted a challenge for his high school students.

He also wanted a way for his students to help the small Indiana community that has always been generous to their school.

Both dreams will blend in a special way on Dec. 6 when the village of Oldenburg will host its annual "Holidays Under the Spires"—a town-wide Christmas celebration featuring carolers, roving musicians, an Advent Mass, a children's area and a performance by a German folk choir befitting the community's ethnic heritage.

And it's all being planned by the 19 students who form the National Business Honor Society chapter at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception.

"We were looking for a service project to benefit the community," says Maple, a teacher at the private Catholic school and the moderator of the business honor group. "I was talking with a few local businesspersons, and they suggested this event. Mary Beth Kerker, who normally does it, has had a very busy year. The kids have provided a new outlook, a new energy and a focus on making it a great event."

The student business group has been planning "Holidays Under the Spires" for months, all the time thinking of new



Students at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg display the banner they created to promote the community's annual "Holidays Under the Spires" event on Dec. 6. Members of the school's National Business Honor Society took the lead this year in planning and promoting the village's Christmas celebration. (Submitted photo)

festivities for the event while promoting it in every way possible—from creating a website to carrying signs and handing out candy canes while marching in Batesville's recent holiday parade.

"It's very reassuring that the town of Oldenburg is happy to have us plan the event," says Kirsten Ricke, a senior from St. Catherine of Siena Parish in

Decatur County. "This event means a lot to them, so it says a lot about how they think of us to let us do this. With everything we've added, it's going to be a lot of fun."

Children will be able to make ornaments, decorate a gingerbread house and have breakfast with Santa.

"We're having a mailbox where little kids can write letters to Santa, and members of our group will respond to the children as elves," says Ella Lamping, a senior from St. Louis Parish in Batesville. "We also hope people will get the feel of the German heritage of the town."

Working toward that goal, the group has lined up a German folk choir from Cincinnati—the Kolping Society Sangerchor. The choir will be part of the celebration of Mass at 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 6 in Holy Family Church in Oldenburg. The singers will also perform at 7 p.m. in the Sisters of St. Francis Chapel.

A year ago, Sarah Wilder was one of the Oldenburg Academy musicians playing "Jingle Bells" and "The First Noel" as they roamed through the streets entertaining visitors. This year, the senior violinist from St. Louis Parish in Batesville has been busy creating the Facebook account for the celebration.

"It's fun to see people around the area come to enjoy something like this," Sarah says. "Planning the event has definitely been a challenge, but I think we're all up for the challenge."

Senior Ryne Domingo wants to see how people respond to the fresh approach.

"There's been a lot of interest from people inside of Oldenburg and outside of Oldenburg," says Ryne, a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg. "People are looking forward to it."

The students' teacher is among that group. He's already proud of what the 19 seniors and juniors have accomplished.

"Planning a town-wide event is not an easy thing to do," Maple says. "Part of our organization's mission is to promote local businesses. Oldenburg is known for volunteerism, and the people here do so much for the academy. This is a way for us to give back."

"This is a volunteer effort by the students. It's a great story of the youth doing something good. They want to instill the Christmas spirit in Oldenburg and take it to a whole new level."

For more information, visit www.holidaysunderthespires.com.

And when Bill Hicks recently became the third person to be honored with the award from the National Speech and Debate Association, the longtime teacher at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis was naturally pleased.

Yet, the real thrill came when the news spread to his former students who used Facebook and Twitter to congratulate him and thank him for his influence on their lives.

"Knowing they're being successful is a bigger thrill for me than a nice plaque," said Hicks, a 70-year-old teacher who has been teaching speech and debate for 48 years, including the past 31 at Brebeuf.

Hicks received the National Speech and Debate Association's "Distinguished Service Plaque—Eleventh Honors."

"The award recognizes coaches who unselfishly serve the association by sponsoring new chapters, serving as a district or national officer, hosting and/or managing tournaments, and speaking or writing about speech and debate education," stated J. Scott Wunn, the association's executive director.

On Dec. 6, for the 31st year in a row, Hicks will direct the Brebeuf Speech Tournament for sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students from across the state. Students from the Indianapolis schools of St. Jude, St. Luke the Evangelist and St. Thomas Aquinas have traditionally excelled at the event.

Hicks has his own measure of success for the 20-30 Brebeuf students who take his speech and debate class each year.

"The number one fear for people is speaking in public. My goal in my classes is to get every student up and talking as much as possible—and improving. Communication skills are what I'm working at, especially in this age of social media when people don't look at each other eye to eye."

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

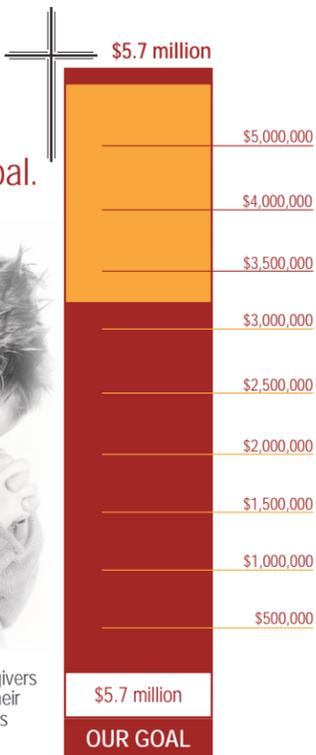


Bill Hicks

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