Baby born after RU-486 reversal is ‘light of our life,’ says father

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Two-month-old Gabriel Caicedo is one of 78 children who have been saved by a new medical protocol being used to reverse the effects of the RU-486 abortion regimen in its early stages. The baby is “the light of our life,” said his father, Chris Caicedo.

He and Gabriel’s mother, Andrea Minichini, told their story at a Feb. 23 news conference held by the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Father Frank Pavone of Priests for Life to call attention to a RU-486 reversal kit available to physicians. The RU-486 medical abortion procedure is a two-day regimen used to terminate early pregnancies by blocking the hormone progesterone needed to sustain a pregnancy. It involves two types of medication—RU-486 itself, which is mifepristone, and a prostaglandin, known as misoprostol, that stimulates uterine contractions, and that is taken two days later to expel the aborted child.

At the news conference, association officials and Father Pavone said the reversal kits work to counteract the “abortion pill” by increasing the levels of progesterone in the mother’s body.

The RU-486 protocol, approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2000, involves three visits to a physician’s office over the course of two weeks and has been known to cause complications ranging from stomach pain and bleeding to death resulting from sepsis.

According to the FDA’s website, despite the risks associated with it, many women go through with the protocol but end up having a surgical abortion because of “medical abortions treatment failures.” It’s not a “quick and easy process,” said Dr. Mary L. Davenport, a former president of the obstetrician association. Besides the 20 percent risk that a woman will have a serious complication such as blood loss, severe infection or ectopic pregnancy, “the woman also has the guilt of knowing that she terminated her pregnancy,” she told reporters.

Dr. Matthew Harrison, a family practice physician from North Carolina, was the first doctor to perform a medical abortion

Faith and ‘chocolate ice cream understanding’ keep Sheila Gilbert focused on people in need

By John Shaughnessy

The story involving a gallon of chocolate ice cream tells a great deal about Sheila Gilbert’s sense of humor. Yet, maybe even more, it reveals the sense of humanity of Gilbert—the first woman to ever be elected president of the national council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The story unfolded late last summer as Gilbert was nearing the halfway point of her six-year term as national president. She had returned to her hometown of Indianapolis to participate in a training retreat that reflected her nationwide initiative to not just provide food, clothing and furniture for people in need, but to help people change their lives so they can escape the cycle of poverty.

In the course of the retreat, one of the presenters shared his frustration that his “stop smoking” program had attracted people who signed up, but then they didn’t show up for the classes. After listening to that lament, the 74-year-old Gilbert cautioned the presenter and the others at the retreat to not get discouraged.

“Smoking is an addiction, and we all have addictions. Mine is chocolate ice cream. If you put me in a room with a gallon of chocolate ice cream, only one of us is coming out!”

Laughter roared through the previously-somber retreat. “It really cracked everybody up,” recalls Pat Jerrell, a past president of the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. “It was a reminder that we all have weaknesses. We all have things we need to change. She said that when we’re trying to help people out

Survey: 133 percent increase in attacks on religion in America in past three years

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A new report from the Liberty Institute in Plano, Texas, shows that incidents of “religious hostility” have more than doubled in the United States over the past three years. The report, “Undeniable: The Survey of Hostility to Religion in America, 2014 Edition,” chronicles a series of more than 1,300 court cases recently handled or monitored by the institute, a nonprofit legal group that represents plaintiffs who feel their religious liberty has been violated.

“The freedom to openly exercise your faith is under intolerant, growing, damaging attack,” reads the opening statement. “If this hostility is not identified, defeated and deemed socially unacceptable, then we will forfeit the benefits of religion and freedom. We will risk watching our freedom and our American way of life destroyed.”

A “lot of people think that this only happens in China or North Korea,” Justin Butterfield, editor-in-chief of the survey, told Catholic News Service. “We published ‘Undeniable’ to get people to realize that religious persecution is something that happens here in the United States.”

The new edition of the report has four main sections: attacks on religious freedom in the public arena, in academic settings, against churches and ministries, and in the military.

“The thing to remember is that not only are these attacks on liberty

Helping, not judging the poor

A personal commitment to helping people in need continues to guide Sheila Gilbert, an Indianapolis resident who is the first woman to ever be elected president of the national council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. (Associated photo)

A worshipper holding a rosary and crucifix prays during a July 4, 2014, Mass celebrated at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on the final day of the U.S. bishops’ Fortnight for Freedom campaign. A new report shows that incidents of “religious hostility” have more than doubled in the United States over the past three years. (CNS photo/Willie J. Allen Jr.)
Panel looks to bridge divides among groups in shared parish

NEW YORK (CNS)—Delicate negotiation and open communication are keys to bridging divides among Catholics at parishes shared by distinct cultural groups that retain their own ministries and worship styles.

Brett C. Hoover, author of a new book on the subject, said more than one-third of parishes in the U.S. serve ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse communities.

Shared parishes are challenged by cultural and power differences, but united by faith, expressions of biblical hospitality and efforts to overcome sticking points. “It’s not about the Trinity or transubstantiation; it’s about the parking or the parish directory,” Hoover said.

Hoover is assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and author of The Shared Parish: Latinos, Anglos and the Future of U.S. Catholicism. He spoke on Feb. 19 at a panel discussion sponsored by the Center for Migration Studies in New York.

Shared parishes are those in which two or more distinct cultural communities maintain separate Masses and ministries while sharing the same facilities and usually the same leadership, Hoover said.

As the U.S. Church grows more diverse, largely through immigration, the percentage of parishes that offer Masses in more than one language also is growing. Hoover said 90 percent of parishes that Hispanics attend “might be” shared now, Hoover said. In some cases, each of the groups foresees displacement and “they see themselves as not possessing as much influence and power in the culture as they’d like. This leads to defensive positions,” he said.

“God speaks to us in strangers, and if we don’t welcome them, we don’t get the message,” Hoover said. Communication is important, and some “people from the dominant culture get converted to activism when they learn of others’ stories.”

Scalabrini Father Walter Tonelotto, pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii Church in Philadelphia in September, The Criterion is inviting our readers to share their stories of how their faith has made a difference in their families. Let us know how your faith has deepened your relationships as a parent, a grandparent, a sibling, a son or a daughter.

Share with us the rituals and experiences of your faith that have helped to make your family

Plan within the Church, Hoover said. “It’s what happened to accommodate immigration with limited resources.”

Shared parishes institutionalize the separation of distinct groups, but also offer safe spaces for them to gather, Hoover said. Both newcomers and established parishioners experience grief from the changes that bring them together.

They may also be anxious and uncertain because “they don’t know how to read one another’s reaction,” he said. As a result, they avoid one another and formalize the avoidance by negotiating room use and parking lot timing.

He said there is “emotional fragtherness” and anger related to grief. Avoidance also happens when information does not flow between and among the groups, Hoover said. In some cases, each of the groups foresees displacement and “they see themselves as not possessing as much influence and power in the culture as they’d like. This leads to defensive positions,” he said.

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Share with us the rituals and experiences of your faith that have helped to make your family
We believe that public policy ought to protect all humanity from threat of death. It is in the best interest of society to protect its weakest members, including the physically handicapped, those with mental illness, all children and especially the defenseless infant in the womb.’

—Glenn Tebb, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC)

Bill to ban abortion for gender selection, disabled babies advances

Legislation that seeks to ban abortion in Indiana when it is sought for gender selection or a genetically abnormal child born in the womb in a 35-15 vote on Feb. 24. The bill now moves to the Indiana House for consideration.

Glenn Tebb, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, said in support of Senate Bill 334, "We believe that public policy ought to protect all human beings from conception to natural death. It is in the best interest of society to protect its weakest members, including the physically handicapped, those with mental illness, all children and especially the defenseless infant in the womb."

"Abortion of all babies is unacceptable," added Tebb. "Aborting a child because of his or her sex or handicapped condition is another illustration of people playing God, wanting to control one’s life by determining another’s. "Aborting a child because of his or her sex or handicapped condition is another illustration of people playing God, wanting to control one’s life by determining another’s life," added Tebb.

Tebb noted that a large majority of obstetricians and gynecologists believe abortion for gender is justified in many cases. She later noted that 25 percent of mothers whose unborn children were diagnosed with Down syndrome or other serious defects insisted they abort and felt pressured to do so.

"I think we are seeing today is a rush to judgment on the part of some women. Instead of looking at the value these parents have in making a choice, we have positions, and abortion providers in particular are pushing this ‘choice’ on women in fact does not become a choice because they are not given all the facts. They are not making an informed choice."

Citing Harvard professor Dr. Amartya Sen’s book, "More than 100 Million Women are Missing," Brown said that there is a 60 percent reduction of women being born in parts of the world because they are not valued.

"Here in the United States, we do not subscribe to that judgment because gender and disability are protected classes. In this bill, we are saying that women and the disabled are protected classes from conception to the end of natural life," Brown said. "What this bill does codifies in law that these are constitutionally protected classes, and that if you have been impaired, ‘that is enough,’ that a woman should not be the inducement for a parent to abort you."

Sen. Vyanna Becker, R-Evansville, questioned if legislators who support the bill were also willing to provide more state support for developmentally disabled people. "Are you willing to put your money where your mouth is?" Becker asked.

In response, Holdman, "I believe we get a slippery slope when we begin to evaluate a child in economic terms only. We’ve seen that in fascism. We should not be evaluating the cost of a life."

"In our public policy, we want to say we value life over an economic choice," Holdman said. "When we abort a child because of Down’s syndrome merely on the fact that it is going to cost somebody a lot of money, it’s a slippery slope.

"We want to be very careful in approaching that kind of public policy position." Holdman said he “absolutely would be in favor of additional funding” if it’s required to support children with disability. "We need to have a policy of life rather than a policy of extermination."

Dr. David Pratnicka, a stem-cell expert, testified in support of the bill. He called it a bill about “preventing discrimination based on gender or genetic differences on preborn human beings.”

Holdman, while abortion for sex selection does occur in the U.S., there are not very good records. He said there are new studies coming out showing sex selection abortions are taking place in the U.S. and Canada.

As more advanced testing becomes available providing earlier results for sex and genetic defects, Pratnicka said more sex selection abortions will occur. "We know that some medical advancement will be used as a reason to justify an abortion, he said new treatments are available. 'It’s possible to determine specific medical defects in the womb including the use of such advanced stem cells.'"

"Eileen possesses a number of characteristics that make her a worthy recipient of the Sanctity of Life Award,” said Niemerg. "She has a deep conviction in her own dignity and worth and those who have sinned and need healing, Pope Francis said.

"We believe—that we love one another as brother and sister, your neighbor,” he said. "What this bill does codifies in law that these are constitutionally protected classes, and that if you have been impaired, ‘that is enough,’ that a woman should not be the inducement for a parent to abort you."

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Pope Francis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—“Being generous toward the Church, but selfish and unjust toward others ‘is a very serious sin. It is using God to cover up injustice,’” he said on Feb. 20 during his homily in a morning Mass celebrated in the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace.

The pope’s homily was based on the day’s reading from the Book of Isaiah in which God tells his people he does not care for those who observe penances but fail to share, “like a reed,” lying quietly in a “sackcloth and ashes” (Is 58:5).

"Instead, God says he desires to see his people crying out ‘For you’ are found unprofitably and sin, ‘setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless,’” the pope said.

The pope also pointed out the hypocrisy of the faithful who fast, but treat their workers badly and fight and quarrel with others.

Pope Francis said Lent is about fulfilling all commandments both toward God and others, according to reports from Vatican Radio and the Vatican newspaper.

Lent is not about the formal observance of “doing a little whatever” and not eating meat on Fridays, while giving oneself free reign to “grow in selfishness, exploit others and ignore the poor,” he said.

There might be someone who thinks, “Today is Friday, I can’t eat meat, but I’m going to have a nice plate of seafood,” he said. "That’s what the Church is about. While appearing to be an abstinence from meat, the sin is of gluttony, the pope said.

Another person might say: “I am a great Catholic, Father, I like it a lot. I always go to Mass every Sunday,” he said. "That’s not about the Church."

The pope said, "Great, and how is your relationship with your workers? Do you pay them under the table? Do you give them a fair wage? Do you contribute toward their pension?”

To their health insurance and social services?

Some people may regularly make financial contributions to the Church, but, the pope asked, how generous are they toward their loved ones and their dependents? Are they generous and just to them, too, he asked.

People cannot “make offerings to the Church on the back of injustice,” he said. "It is not a good Christian who doesn’t do justice to the people who depend on him,” and who does not “deprive himself of something essential for him in order to give it to another who is in need."

This is the distinction between formal and real, he said, which Jesus underlined, too, who condemned the Pharisees and doctors of the law, who adhered to “many external observances but without the truth of the heart.”

Unfortunately, he said, many “men and women have faith but they separate the tablets of the Law from the precepts of life and evaluation love in our parishes and communities.”

Tickets for the event are $50 per person, or $40 per student. Registration is available online by logging onto secure.acpgrc.org/?cst=0b5bd7 or by calling 260-463-1551 ext. 382-98.
We’re only a little over a week into Lent, and for many of us, our internal calendar is already squarely pointed toward Easter. We cannot dismiss the fact that on April 5 we will celebrate Christ’s resurrection from the dead, the chief feast of all Christian traditions. But our faith also teaches us the six weeks leading up to that great feast are a time for us as Catholics to make sure the three pillars of Lent—fasting, prayer, and almsgiving—allow us spiritual growth as they help us prepare for Easter. Is there time on the way to or from work where you can make a few minutes to pray the rosary or another form of prayer or prayer? Can we fast not only from a form of prayer or prayers? Can we fast not only from a form of prayer or prayers? We're only a little over a week into Lent, and for many of us, our internal calendar is already squarely pointed toward Easter. We cannot dismiss the fact that on April 5 we will celebrate Christ’s resurrection from the dead, the chief feast of all Christian traditions. But our faith also teaches us the six weeks leading up to that great feast are a time for us as Catholics to make sure the three pillars of Lent—fasting, prayer, and almsgiving—allow us spiritual growth as they help us prepare for Easter. Is there time on the way to or from work where you can make a few minutes to pray the rosary or another form of prayer or prayer? Can we fast not only from a form of prayer or prayers? Can we fast not only from a form of prayer or prayers?

Father Patrick Beidelman, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, places ashes on the forehead of Jerry Malloy, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, during a Feb. 18 Ash Wednesday Mass at the cathedral. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Opinion

Be Our Guest!
Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Publisher
Greg A. Olsalik, Associate Publisher
Mike Krokos, Editor
John F. Fink, Editor Emeritus

Whose Life Is It Anyway: Thoughts on physician assisted suicide

In college, I wrote a medical ethics paper on a play titled “Whose Life Is It Anyway?” That old paper came to mind recently when I learned that the campaign for physician assisted suicide has gained momentum. The renewed push to legalize “aid in dying,” or “death with dignity,” as various groups euphemistically call it, is the result of positive media coverage in the wake of a young terminally ill woman’s decision to end her life on her own terms and at the precise moment of her choosing.

Whose life is it anyway? I can’t get this question out of my mind as I come to grips with the fact that assisted suicide legislation is currently being introduced in a dozen states and the District of Columbia. While some persons faced with serious illness consider taking their lives because they fear they will be a burden to others or have no one to care for them, for others this choice is a declaration of personal autonomy. To the question, “Whose life is it anyway?” they answer, “It is mine to do with what I want.”

The claim that each of us is master of our own life, with the power to do with it whatever we choose, just doesn’t make sense. After all, which of us chose the date, time or conditions of our birth? May we, who make up the body of Christ, avail ourselves of this opportunity of grace and forgiveness.

It is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news, sharing the treasure entrusted to us, consoling broken hearts and offering hope to our brothers and sisters experiencing darkness. It means following and imitating Jesus, who sought out the poor and sinners as a shepherd lovingly seeks his lost sheep. Consoling broken hearts. Offering hope to those in darkness. Seeking lost sheep. The sacrament of reconciliation is available to Catholics in any state of life, and through the grace of going to confession, we are each forgiven through God’s abundant mercy and love.

Whether you’ve already got a plan in place or are still questioning how your life of faith will be nurtured in the coming weeks, why not make sure taking part in the sacrament of reconciliation is a part of your Lent? Parishes throughout central and southern Indiana have schedules where confession is regularly offered. See our list of penance services on page 15. This year, archdiocesan parishes are also again participating in “The Light is on for You,” a confession initiative on March 4 and March 18 where the sacrament of reconciliation will be offered in each parish or parish cluster.

Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Spiritual Life and Worship, hopes that the success of “The Light is on for You” in 2014 is a sign that more Catholics are returning to the sacrament of reconciliation.

“I hope that people are hearing this as an invitation to utilize again a dramatically underutilized sacrament in the Church,” Father Beidelman said. “My prayer is that it’s the beginning of a trend, so that people have access to this great artery of God’s mercy in their lives.”

May we, who make up the body of Christ, avail ourselves of this opportunity of grace and forgiveness.

—Mike Krokos
La Cuaresma es la temporada para desterrar la indiferencia

_Peter’s conscience was troubled often. As much as he loved Jesus and wanted to follow him faithfully, he repeatedly fell short. He even denied his Lord three times._

—Jn 21:15-16

La Cuaresma es la temporada para desterrar la indiferencia
February 27
St. Lawrence Parish,
4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
Fish fry,
5:30-7 p.m., carry-out available.
Stations of the Cross, 4-5 p.m., lunch.
Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish,
9 N. 17th St., Beech Grove.
Fish fry,
5:30-7 p.m.
Information: 317-636-5551.

March 7
Northside Knights of Columbus,
2100 E. 31st St., Indianapolis.
Traditional Tow to Joe and Barbi Kriger, fundraiser for Bishop Chatard Grant,
7:30-11:30 p.m., $20 per person.
Information: 317-872-5088 or sherrymp@comcast.net.

March 8
Saint Francis Health Education and Support Services Center,
421 N. Franklin Greenwood.
Office of Pro-Life and Family Life and Franciscan St. Francis Health CPR and AED training for users
8:30-11 a.m. $10 per person includes booklet, practice stations, March 2.
Information: 317-236-1475 or jeanmary@archindy.org.

March 9
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: 765-847-3462.

March 10
St. Simon the Apostle Parish,
8155 Oaklandon Road, in Indianapolis.
Fish fry,
3-7:30 p.m.
Information: 317-636-4478 or afcadi2014@gmail.com.

March 11
St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church,
4720 E. 156th St., Indianapolis.
Class of ’63 monthly gathering, 6 p.m.
Mass, optional dinner afterward.
Information: 317-408-6396.

March 12
St. Malachy Church,
3200 Cold Spring Road, Carmel.
Fish fry,
4:30-7 p.m.
Information: 317-546-4065 or parishoffice@tiyczone.com.

March 13
All Saints Parish,
8044 Yorkridge Road,
Yorkville.
Fish fry,
4:30-7 p.m.
Information: 812-576-4302 or parishoffice@tiyczone.com.

March 14
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church,
1807 Poplar 2322 N 133 St. S., Terre Haute.
Annual Jonah Fish fry,
4-10:30 p.m.

March 15
Maryknoll Missionary Church,
3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis.
Lumen Dei Catholic Business Group Mass, and monthly prayer service,
7:30-8:30 p.m., breakfast, $15 per person.
Information: 317-345-3447 or lumen.dei.com/net.

March 16
The Maryknoll Missionary Church.

March 17
St. Thomas More Catholic Center,
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.
Seniors, Catholic education, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, separated, widowed or divorced.
New members welcome.
6:30 p.m.
Information: 317-242-0777.

March 19
St. Luke the Evangelist Parish,
7641 E. 51st St., Indianapolis.
Soup supper,
“Tiqui – Spiritual Virtuaries of St. Ignatius of Loyola.”
March 19-20, Mass, 3:30 p.m., supper, 6:30-7:30 p.m., speaker,
7:15-8:30 p.m. reservations requested.
Information: 317-259-4573, ext. 256 or dcarelli@stlukie.org.

March 20
St. Lawrence Church,
4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
Fish fry,
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Information: 317-546-4065.

March 23
Fathers of the Holy Mass,
7:30-11:30 p.m., $20 per person.
Information: 317-872-5088 or sherrymp@comcast.net.

March 24
Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Center,
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.
Seniors, Catholic education, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, separated, widowed or divorced.
New members welcome.
6:30 p.m.
Information: 317-242-0777.

March 25
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church,
1807 Poplar 2322 N 133 St. S., Terre Haute.
Annual Jonah Fish fry,
4-10:30 p.m.

March 26
St. Michael Church,
3200 Cold Spring Road, Carmel.
Fish fry,
4:30-7 p.m.
Information: 317-546-4065 or parishoffice@tiyczone.com.

March 27
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church,
1807 Poplar 2322 N 133 St. S., Terre Haute.
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4-10:30 p.m.

March 28
St. Malachy Church,
3200 Cold Spring Road, Carmel.
Fish fry,
4:30-7 p.m.
Information: 317-546-4065 or parishoffice@tiyczone.com.

March 29
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church,
1807 Poplar 2322 N 133 St. S., Terre Haute.
Annual Jonah Fish fry,
4-10:30 p.m.

Retreats and Programs
March 13-15
Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center,
2220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington.
Information: 812-825-4642 ext. 1 or marianaous@bluebirdearl.com.

Black Catholic marriage retreat to be held in Indianapolis on Mar. 27-29
The archdiocesan Black Catholic Theology and Spirituality Program is offering a marriage retreat for Black Catholic couples with a theme of “Marriage on a Lampstand: Mission Possible!” at Marian House Hotel, 1800 W. 36th St., in Indianapolis on March 27-29.
The retreat will be presented by Andrew and Terri Lyke, the couple, married in 1975, have been leaders in Christian marriage preparation, education and enrichment since 1982. They are national trainers of curricula used in the Healthy Marriage Initiative, and the founders of AfriCaribbean Network, a not-for-profit organization that educates African-Americans on the skills and effects of Christian marriage. They have also served as advisers to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Marriage and Family.
The retreat begins at 7 a.m. on March 27 and ends around 1 p.m. on March 29. The cost is $310 per couple, March 27 and ends around 1 p.m. on March 29. The cost is $310 per couple, March 27 and ends around 1 p.m. on March 29. The cost is $310 per couple, March 27 and ends around 1 p.m. on March 29. The cost is $310 per couple.
The weekend also includes Mass and an evening social.
Checks can be made to “Office of the Office of Pro-Life and Family Life and Franciscan St. Francis Health CPR and AED training for users
8:30-11 a.m. $10 per person includes booklet, practice stations, March 2.
Information: 317-236-1475 or jeanmary@archindy.org.

March 9
St. Simons of the Apostles Parish in Indianapolis
Seasons of Hope, a six-week Christ-centered bereavement ministry grounded in the healing wisdom, traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, will be offered at St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8115 Oaklandon Road, in Indianapolis.
Two will be offered, one at 11 a.m. on Tuesday mornings starting on March 10, and one at 7 p.m. on Thursday evenings beginning on March 12. Both sessions will be held in the St. Clair Room of the Parish Life Center.
For more information, contact Mona Lime at 317-371-8993 or monalime@att.net, or Sheila Hussey at 812-855-7651 or sheilahu@comcast.net.

Thursday of the Refusal of the Prodigal Son, three-week study led by Eastern Illinois University dean and professor emeritus Dr. Will Hare, and second and third sessions Mar. 14 and 21, 9-10:30 a.m. $35 includes booklet.
For more information, contact Mona Lime at 317-371-8993 or monalime@att.net, or Sheila Hussey at 812-855-7651 or sheilahu@comcast.net.
Parish Vocations Gathering set for March 14 at college seminary

By Sean Gallagher

Over the past 10 years, more seminarians for the Church in central and southern Indiana have been members of parishes in the Indianapolis South Deanery than any other archdiocesan deanery.

Over that same time, the deanery has also had more parish vocations committees than any other deanery.

Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan vocations director, who himself grew up in St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis' South Deanery, recently reflected on these two statistics.

"Do they mean there’s a direct correlation [between the two]? Not necessarily," he said. "But it makes you stop and think.

In any case, Father Augenstein said, parish vocations committees "certainly make a contribution of creating a culture in which priestly and religious vocations are honored, respected and lifted up as a possibility.

Representatives of parish vocations committees in the archdiocese and members of parishes who would like to form such committees will meet from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 14 at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, 2500 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis.

The second annual Parish Vocations Gathering is sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Vocations.

Joseph Dwenger, who helped start the vocations committee at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis in 2008, is looking forward to the event.

"You can learn from each other," Dwenger said. "There will be other people from various parishes there that will have information that they’d be willing to share.

"We’re all in this together. It’s a great way to learn from each other.

Examining the various initiatives of vocations committees at Nativity and St. Jude parishes—and other parishes in Indianapolis—suggests the diversity of ways that vocations awareness can be promoted in faith communities.

St. Jude’s committee maintains a “vocations station” in the narthex of the parish’s church, where information about vocations and posters of seminarians and people in religious life from the parish and archdiocese are posted.

The committee also makes sure that prayers for vocations are included in the general intercessions at each weekend Mass. And it has invited priests and seminarians to be speakers during National Vocations Awareness Week.

Nativity’s committee includes prayers for vocations in the parish bulletin, makes “vocation buckets” featuring rosaries and prayers for vocations available for families in the parish to take home, and sponsors a trip to the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Bernie and Linda Augenstein, co-chairs of St. Jude’s committee, and Father Augenstein’s parents, were at a loss at how the committee could promote vocations when they became its leaders in 2011.

"We had no idea what to do," Linda said. "We went online and found a lot of things. We talked to a lot of people.

She thinks the gathering at Bruté on March 14 will assist parishes just starting or considering founding vocations committees.

“We’re going to give them some ideas about what they can do to start their own vocations committee,” Linda said. “And for those who already have a vocations committee, we’ll have ideas for them, too, such as best practices and networking.

No matter what initiative a particular parish’s vocations committee might sponsor or how committees from different parishes might cooperate, their ultimate goal is to get parishioners to be thinking about vocations more consciously and regularly, says Marilyn Ellis, a member of Nativity’s committee.

“We need to help our fellow parishioners be more aware of Christ’s call to us,” she said. “Through a vocations committee, we can help our fellow parishioners be more aware to listen to God’s call. It needs to be an active part of our parish ministry.

People interested in attending the second annual Parish Vocations Gathering on March 14 at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis need to register by March 4. Register online at www.HearGodCall.com, by e-mailing Elizabeth Eiscopfery at ecsoffery@archindy.org or by calling 800-382-9836, ext. 1490 or 317-236-1490.

On Ash Wednesday, Cardinal Wuerl urges solidarity with persecuted Christians

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Making an impassioned plea at the end of his Feb. 18 Ash Wednesday Mass at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle, Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington urged Catholics to offer prayers and speak out for Christians being persecuted throughout the world.

"Lent is a time of prayer—pray for those who are suffering and offer your voice," Cardinal Wuerl told a standing-room-only congregation. “Say, ‘This is wrong. There is no political, social, cultural or religious reason for this.’ “

Particularly mentioning the suffering and persecution of Christians in Africa, especially in Nigeria, in the Middle East, in parts of Iraq and Syria and in India, Cardinal Wuerl noted that “when we go out the door with ashes on our forehead, we manifest ourselves as practicing Christians, but there are parts of the world where this will be a death sentence.”

The cardinal also lamented the recent beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians by ISIS terrorists in Egypt.

He added, “This cannot go on. This is a sense of solidarity and our prayers for those who are suffering and offer your voice.

During the Mass that these 40 days are a time “to purify ourselves more and more of anything that withholds us from God.”

He said that the ashes—placed on the forehead in the sign of the cross—are “a sign of humility and exaltation, of death and new life.

“The ashes are a sign of death, the cross a sign of our salvation,” the cardinal said. “The cross reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven.”

Calling Lent “part of our preparation for heaven,” Cardinal Wuerl likened the observance of the 40 days as a journey, “one of death and resurrection,” ending with the observation of the cross on Good Friday.

In his plea for prayers and witness for persecuted Christians, the cardinal called on Catholics to stand in “prayerful solidarity” with their brothers and sisters.

“We change the world by changing hearts, solidifying our call to be present, and doing it at the risk of death simply because they believe in Jesus Christ,” he said. “We cannot forget them.”

In other U.S. Catholic reaction to the beheading of the Coptic Christians, Dallas Bishop Kevin J. Farrell in a Feb. 17 posting on his blog said the killings show that atrocities carried out by ISIS terrorists have “reached a new level of barbarity.”

But he also said, “This is not a time for vengeance or retaliation that is contrary to the teaching of Jesus, and only escalates violence. Rather, it is a time for prayerful reflection on the sacrifice of these Coptic brothers who, as the Holy Father noted, only said, ‘Jesus help me.’ “

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan on his radio show on Sirius XM said that the fact that ISIS and other groups are attacking people because of their religion “is lunatic. This is crazy.”

Like Pope Francis, he called for respect for all religions and urged moderate followers of Islam to denounce ISIS.

Cardinal Dolan said the fanaticism carried on his radio show on Sirius XM said that the fact that ISIS and other groups are attacking people because of their religion “is lunatic. This is crazy.”

Linda Augenstein, left, and Kathy Kalor, both members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, speak about vocations on Feb. 15 with Bill Denner, the parish’s director of adult faith formation, at St. Jude’s “vocations station” in the narthex of its church. Augenstein helps lead St. Jude’s vocations committee, which maintains the vocations station. (Gaelen Morse)
of poverty, we can’t judge them. We just have to help.”

Jerrell adds, “She’s very faith-filled and also very visionary about helping people in getting to the root causes of poverty and trying to end poverty. And she’s always challenged us to use our spirituality and to keep that as our focus.”

Those foundations of spirituality and human development have guided her leadership of the national council of the Catholic lay organization that’s committed to helping the poor—a segment of the American population that numbers 45 million, including one in five children, according to recent U.S. Census statistics.

Here is an edited version of that conversation with Gilbert, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. “I don’t want to live on welfare. I want to have the commitment to helping people who are poor. How has that personal commitment translated into an approach as the society’s national president?

A. “I’m taking the challenge of ending poverty this year very seriously. It’s really possible. I’ve seen what it can do to people. I’ve watched a very close friend of mine lose his home to cancer in the midst of all the ill health. She worked her whole life. Then she had several medical conditions. She’s got the more prescriptions she needed, and the harder it was to pay for them. She had so much stress, and now she’s not with us. It says to me that poverty can kill you.

“I did what I could, and the society did what it could, but it really hurts a lot. It just says to me that the system doesn’t work when a person who has worked their whole life can’t have their home. What it says to me is that there is evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in the Circle of Protection [an alliance of Christian leaders and organizations concerned about poverty, an alliance that includes Gilbert and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul] and the Circle of Protection, which has made poverty and solutions to poverty an issue in the next U.S. presidential election. We’re going to ask candidates to say what they’re going to do to end poverty—which is really a disgrace in our country.

Q. What has the responsibility to you being the first woman to head the national council?

A. “Everybody says, ‘That’s really great,’ then they go on doing what really counts. We were at a time in the council for it to happen. From my perspective, I don’t think it’s so much about being a woman. It’s about the Holy Spirit putting in my heart this desire to help the poor—and that resonated with Vincentians all over the country. That’s why I was elected.”

Q. Share a specific moment that stands out to you where the society has helped to make a difference in someone’s life.

A. “In Long Island, N.Y., I met a man who had lost his son and his wife. He really became active in trying to raise money and awareness for people with special needs. He lost his house in Hurricane Sandy. Yet he was determined to rebuild. He did, with help from the society.

“I was so amazed that someone who had so much happen to him still had his faith and still was going forward. The society stood with him through a very long and difficult process.”

Q. How many years of being your society’s president has an impact on your faith?

A. “It definitely has deepened my faith. I’ve realized that God is with us. I’ve looked at God as things move forward. Over and over, I see the faith of people in poverty—people who have nothing to depend on but God. And that really strengthens my faith.

“I’ve seen the progress we’ve made. And it makes me feel very good. But I know it’s God’s plan, and not mine. I wanted it all to happen yesterday, but God has a timetable. That’s the one we’re working with.”

Q. What are your hopes and ambitions for your remaining time as the society’s president?

A. “I want to see the society grow in its membership and its ability to help people out of poverty. I want to help people in poverty and Vincentians to use their voices together for the things that need to be changed to end poverty.

“I feel like we’ve had a good three years, and I’m looking forward to where we’ll be when my term ends. I’ve seen what happens when people get the resources they need. They can get back on their feet.

“I know that each day God is calling me to do—let’s see if I can in the service of God’s plan.”

(Anyone seeking to volunteer or offer assistance to the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul should visit the website, www.svpindy.org. The local chapter can also be contacted at 317-924-5769, ext. 236.)

As national president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Sheila Gilbert has changed the organization’s focus to attacking the systemic causes of poverty in the hopes of changing people’s lives. (Submitted photo)
By Sean Gallagher

BRAZIL—Visit Annunciation Parish in Brazil on Tuesday around lunchtime and you’ll see a group of members of the Terre Haute Deaf faith community offering a wide variety of food items to a steady stream of people. Over the course of a month, between 200 and 250 families receive assistance from the parish’s food pantry.

What’s changed is that a conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been established at Annunciation Parish. This brought better organization to the parish’s charitable efforts, and inspired more members to lend a hand.

“Conference” is the title that the international kinesiologist Michael Vincent de Paul gives to its parish-level organizations.

“I always warm my heart,” said Father John Hollowell, Annunciation’s pastor. “I’m proud of the effort that everybody is giving, and in seeing all of the people that we’re able to help.”

Those numbers might continue to increase in the future because of a $20,000 grant the conference was awarded last December by the Walmart Foundation. It was one of 75 food pantries across the country to receive grants from the foundation.

Part of it will be used to create a strategic plan for the parish’s conference that would investigate additional ways to help people and to ensure its ministry continues in the future.

Father Hollowell said, “A lot of times, what you see with these efforts is one individual person sort of willing it to happen,” he said. “Then, when that person gets sick or can’t do it anymore or turns out the mission dies. Putting a strategic plan in place . . . is a great way to continue to make sure that this is a team effort, and everybody is moving in the same direction.”

Father Hollowell is the focus of the charitable ministry in the parish on the people who receive it, not simply helping as many people as possible.

“The primary thing is not to get as much bread to the masses as possible,” he said. “The primary thing is the interaction between people.”

That interaction has certainly helped Annunciation parishioner Natalie Schenk, who handles in-person distribution of food on Tuesdays.

“These people think that we’re helping them,” Schenk said. “But really, they’re helping me so much more. It’s the joy and happiness of seeing Jesus in each and every person. You form friendships with people that you wouldn’t normally know. You learn their stories and names.”

Jennifer Bailey brings four of her children who homeschooled to volunteer at the food pantry each Tuesday. Like Schenk, she sees the service that she and her family give as benefiting them as much as anyone else.

“It teaches [my children] how to be better Catholics and help care for others in need, how to treat others with respect and see the dignity in everybody,” said Bailey, a member of Annunciation Parish. “It’s my favorite part of the week. My husband usually comes during his lunch break and helps. It’s something that we’ve been able to do as a family.”

The closeness the Bailey experiences as a family in helping people in need is shared by many of the pantry clients, who share a lunch together that volunteer staff members prepare each week with food that the pantry has in overabundance.

“It’s a really nice opportunity for people to socialize,” said pantry volunteer Annette Clawson, a member of Annunciation Parish. “A lot of this ministry isn’t just about the food. It’s about hospitality. Some are older and live alone. They’re lonely and don’t have family. They sit down, have lunch and talk. And it gives us a chance to interact with them there and find out more about their stories.”

They’ve heard the stories of pantry clients Steve and Eva, a married couple in Brazil who are retired senior citizens. “It’s been very helpful,” said Steve. “We’re both on social security. That’s our basic income. So this helps out quite a bit. It’s been very rewarding for us. It’s nice to see the volunteers, especially the young kids eager to help.”

The number of people in need in and around Brazil hasn’t increased greatly over the past year, said Father Hollowell. Rural poverty might not be as well-known as its urban counterpart, he said, but it still affects the lives of many hidden people.

“Rural poverty is a huge thing. It’s a reality,” he said. “I think a lot of people assume that all poor people live downtown in a big city. But anytime you turn off of a main thoroughfare out in the country, you’re going to really quickly hit a poverty area.”

In encouraging his parishioners to start a Society of St. Vincent de Paul conference, Father Hollowell was convinced that the organization would help the parish reach out to the poor like Steve and Susan with the Catholic approach to charity that Pope Francis has encouraged: the faithful to embrace since his election nearly two years ago.

(“The Criterion” stresses that parishioners go out and meet the poor, Father Hollowell said. “That’s what Pope Francis is calling us to.”

“It has all the benefits of the poor serving the poor. But it also has the benefit of helping our people develop the confidence to know how to safely go out to the margins, like Pope Francis says.”

This person-centered approach to charitable outreach, Father Hollowell said, is rooted in the example given by Christ and aimed at helping both the receivers and givers of assistance.

“[Jesus] could feed the world with one flick of his wrist,” Father Hollowell said. “But he has deigned to trust us with that mission. He knows that it’s for our own sake to be involved with that mission. It’s a grace for us, and it changes us as we are a part of that. That does make Catholic charity unique.”

Women’s conference offers attendees chance to ‘hear many strong speakers’

By Natalie Hoefler

The Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference, sponsored by the Marian Center of Indianapolis with assistance from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, will take place at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown hotel, 350 W. Maryland St., from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on March 21. The theme of this year’s conference is “The New Evangelization—Bringing Jesus to the World.”

This year’s speakers include:

• Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Father James Blount, a national speaker and retreat leader who preaches that “through the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s Church can make a difference in the world today.” Father Blount is a lay missionary who, inspired by the example of Pope Francis, is retired and lives in Brazil who are retired senior citizens.

• Yvonne O’Brien, a Catholic laywoman who, inspired by the example of Pope Francis, is retired and lives in Brazil who are retired senior citizens.

• Kim Schonk, an Annunciation Parish volunteer who, inspired by the example of Pope Francis, is retired and lives in Brazil who are retired senior citizens.

• Kathy Denney, director of the volunteer-run Marian Center of Indianapolis, is “excited” about each of the speakers.

“I heard of this group, Christ in the City,” she said. “These young people go out, find the homeless, lonely, suffering, and befriended them. It’s so much like Pope Francis.

“Annie Karto, a mother of eight children who publishes Catholic Digest, hosts a women’s talk show, and developed Monomission, a book and study to help women reclaim their place in the community.

“I think [Yvonne O’Brien] is such an inspiration. I hope a lot of young adults come. I think everyone needs to hear her. She’s seen this many, many times where young are wanting something to believe in and to do, and Yvonne provides that.”

• Danielle Bean, a mother of eight children who publishes Catholic Digest, hosts a women’s talk show, and developed Monomission, a book and study to help women reclaim their place in the community.

“We get to park in the government building parking garage this year, and it’s only $5 for the day,” she said. “You can either just cross a small street or use the enclosed walkway. It’s the best parking ever!”

We encourage all women to come—you’ll be happy you did.”

(Registration is available online at www.indianacatholicwomen.com, or checks and number of attendees can be mailed to the Marian Center of Indianapolis at 1536 W. 30th St., Indianapolis, IN 46222. For more information, call Kathy Denney at 317-888-0873 or e-mail her at mariancntr@aol.com)
As soon as drummer John Rash sets the beat and lead singer Jessica Navarro and Chastin Henley step up to the microphones, it’s clear that Arisan Maru isn’t a usual high school band.

Soon the music room at Father Thomas Secchina Memorial High School in Indianapolis is rocking as the other members of the group share their sounds—Jackson McLaughlin getting down on guitar, Audrey Petrone picking on bass, Fason Hagerty pounding the keyboard and Alex Verbarg blaring away on trumpet.

It all blends into the band’s bouncy, lively rendition of Paramore’s “Ain’t It Fun”—three words that capture the spirit of what is believed to be the only extracurricular rock band sponsored by a school in Indiana.

Not that that distinction matters much to the members of the rock band who perform professionally at parish festivals, county fairs and community events. What matters most is the joy of performing together, and the reaction of the audiences who come to hear them.

“I love seeing people smile when we play,” says John, the drummer “And it’s good to be with people who like the same things I do. At practice, we can be ourselves, act like one group, and experiment with different things. Those are the things that make me happy.”

Lead singer Jessica adds, “When we’re playing, I feel good knowing that people are enjoying us. When we hear applause from people, I’m rocking out.”

So are the members of the track team who have chosen to warm up outside the music room before an indoor practice on a bitterly cold afternoon. There’s a bounce to the athletes’ steps as they listen to the band play.

Then there’s the reaction of 1-year-old Donnie Glowinski Jr., the son of the band’s moderator, Donnie Glowinski.

Baby Donnie just breaks into a natural bob as he stands by the band’s sound system. “They are crazy talented,” says Glowinski, who teaches theater, choir, band and orchestra at Secchina. “We’re at that point now where they are professional. They learn music so well, and they play so well together. It’s a rare thing for a high school band to have that musical maturity.”

Progressing to that level has taken time, and perhaps no one represents that progression more than Jessica. Now a senior, the student who hates speaking in public and making presentations in class couldn’t imagine herself performing on stage when she was a freshman. But she decided to give it a try when someone told her she had talent as a singer.

When the group performed at a school pep rally and received positive feedback from other students, she embraced the spotlight. And that feeling has continued in public performances, including during the Indianapolis Mini-Marathon when the group is one of the bands who line the route, making music and giving a lift to the 20,000 runners who pass.

“I have to get up at three in the morning for it, and we usually don’t perform until 10, but I love it,” she says. “There’s so much energy among the runners that the tiredness goes away. One time, a runner left the course and gave me a two-dollar bill. Playing for the Mini-Marathon is a memory I’ll always have.”

As for the name of the group—Arisan Maru—that’s in memory of Father Secchina. According to the school’s website, “During World War II, Father Secchina was among the many POWs who lost his life on a Japanese imperial ship,” a ship that was named the Arisan Maru.

While that memory is sobering, the memories that the members of the group are creating are joyful.

“It’s made my experience here at Secchina,” says John, also a senior, “I don’t play sports so this is an extracurricular [activity] I participate in. I like to think I’m good at it, and I’ve made some good friends.”

Jessica adds, “We all hang out with different groups, but we’re all very close. I consider us as a family.”

That sense of family shows in the way that the other members want to make sure that the eighth member of their group, guitar player Kevin Walters—who had to miss this band practice because of wrestling practice—is supposed to be fun. Don’t let the adults squeeze the fun out of this,” Rash says. “I consider that the best advice for anyone who works with kids.”

As the band finishes its rendition of “Ain’t It Fun,” the joy shows on the faces of the band members as they get ready for the next song.

“This is really fun,” John says. “This is something we love to do.”

Coach receives statewide honor

The recognition keeps coming for volleyball coach Terri Purichia, who led the girls’ team at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville to its second consecutive Class 2A championship of the Indiana High School Athletic Association in November.

Purichia was recently chosen as the 2014 Coach of the Year for volleyball in Indiana. The honor came from the coaches’ association of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

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By Daniel S. Mulhall

The Church offers us many ways of praying during Lent

Among the many things that can be said about Jesus of Nazareth, one thing is certain: He was a man of prayer. He prayed alone, in public, before meals and before he did anything of importance. He not only taught his disciples how to pray, but he also provided his followers with the example of when they should pray— and when.

When St. Paul wrote that Christians should “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17), he was simply encouraging us to pray, just as Jesus did. Lent is the perfect time for Christians to reinvigorate their lives of prayer. The season of Lent is modeled on the 40 days that Jesus spent praying and fasting in the desert after his baptism by John. During Lent, Christians are encouraged to actively participate in the Church’s life of prayer.

While we can pray in many different ways, the concept of prayer is itself quite simple. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it: “Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God” (#2559). However we choose to pray, our acts turn us toward God and help us to grow closer to God.

The catechism compares prayer to a well of living water where we meet Christ: “Christ comes to meet every loving heart” (#2560). However we choose to pray, the key here is to examine our motivation for doing so. It is easy to fall into the trap of believing that we can buy our way into heaven.

Another ancient Christian Lenten practice is reading and meditating on the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments. While reading and praying with the Bible all year long is a central aspect of the Christian faith, the Liturgy of the Hours is a formal part of the Church’s daily prayer and is required for the clergy and those in religious life. During Lent, however, the practice becomes more common among the laity.

Another way to pray with Scripture is the practice of lectio divina or divine reading. In this form of prayer, one reads a Bible passage several times in succession, pausing after each reading to think about a particular phrase or message that leads one to Christ.

“Lectio divina” can be practiced by one person reading and reflecting on the Scriptures in silence, or it can be done in large groups where the readings and people’s reflections are shared aloud. While some people make reading the entire Bible their Lenten prayer practice, others focus their attention around the Church’s daily liturgical readings, the Scripture passages that will be proclaimed during Mass.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has made it quite easy to pray using these readings by posting them on its website at www.usccb.org/bible. You can sign up to have the readings e-mailed daily. The site also contains audio and video meditations on the day’s reading.

Other Lenten prayer practices include praying the rosary daily, making the Way of the Cross and attending daily Mass. These practices help the Christian to focus on Jesus’ life, ministry, his passion, death and resurrection.

As you can see, there are many ways of praying. All help us to turn our hearts and minds to God, and to pray without ceasing. Find the ones that work best for you, and spend time with God this Lent.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a catechist. He lives in Laurel, Maryland.)

A couple prays the Stations of the Cross at Christ the King Church in Conmack, N.Y. The Church offers many ways of entering more deeply into prayer during Lent. One traditional form of Lenten prayer is the Stations of the Cross, which helps participants meditate on the suffering and death of Christ. (CNS photo/ Gregory A. Shemitz)

By Margaret Fenelon

How can we make Lent a more spiritually fulfilling time instead of just a time for us to give things up or fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday? We can begin by looking at the example Jesus set for us.

While it’s become fashionable to attempt, by some, to give up things like coffee or chocolate during Lent, letting go of those things won’t necessarily help us mentally or spiritually.

To begin, we may want to step back from the busyness of our lives, escape the crowds, so to speak, and spend time alone with our heavenly Father. That’s what Jesus did during the most important moments of his life.

After miraculously feeding 5,000 people with the five loaves and two fish, he went to pray. “Then he made the disciples get into the boat and proceed to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening, he was there alone” (Mt 14:22-23).

Before he chose his first Apostles, “he departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God” (Lk 6:12). At the conclusion of an exceptionally active period of ministry, Jesus took his Apostles with him to a solitary place to rest and rejuvenate (Mk 6:30-32). Jesus also sought respite when he felt himself wearing thin from the demands placed upon him. In one instance, he sought refuge in a house where he’d hoped to remain undiscovered, at least for a while (Mk 7:24).

In all of these situations, Jesus exemplifies the need to retreat from the busyness of life to rest for our bodies and souls.

Each of us has a God-willed mission, and Jesus has shown us how to prepare and strengthen ourselves to fulfill it. Perhaps you remember that the 40 days of Lent are an imitation of the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert before beginning his public ministry.

In the same way our Lord preceded an important milestone by spending 40 days in the desert, praying and preparing, we can find ways to do something similar, even in a world that’s constantly seeking every second of our attention.

Stop to consider: What could you be missing if you’re constantly giving in to all the things that demand your attention? How can prayer help you meet the most pressing of demands?

You may feel overwhelmed with the demands of daily life, but consider that Christ found strength in prayer. From the time he left the desert until his death, he devoted every bit of strength to ministering to others. He preached, healed and guided the people who came to him. Crowds would close in on him, demons would confront him and Pharisees would accuse him.

His life was no longer his own, but one of obedience to the will of his Father for him. He had to be ready for the mission he’d been given.

(Margaret Fenelon is a freelance writer from Milwaukee and author of Imitating Mary: Ten Marian Virtues for the Modern Mom.)

Prayer can be a source of renewal amid the many demands of life

Rhode Island State Police officers Ben Stemborg and Michael Godojo pray during Mass at the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul in Providence. Following the example of Jesus, Catholics can rely on prayer to give them rest and new strength in their busy lives. (CNS photo/Laura Kliger, Rhode Island Catholic)
Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher
Climb higher, achieve more during Lent

It wasn’t long ago that our youngest son Colin, who will soon be 18 months old, was crawling and walking in a matter of days. You don’t see him crawl anymore. That’s a done deal.

Now walking isn’t good enough for him. He’s臭着眉头 talking about getting a bicycle. Our son Colin was not around the house. And for most importance, he’s also starting to talk.

When I see him talk, I think to myself, “I see a chair. Therefore, I must climb.”

Climb higher, achieve more during Lent. We must climb a spiritual Mount Everest. God will help us see plenty of hills in our lives of faith that are challenging enough at this stage in our relationship with him. Instead, work diligently with the help of God’s grace on being faithful to the Lenten disciplines that you have chosen for yourself and, if you think that there are moments when you can do a little more, go ahead and try.

That might mean attending an extra daily Mass, fasting more from using your favorite smart phone or tablet or giving more time to your families or your neighbor's. We may stumble in our attempt to climb a little higher. But God will always be there to help you through the fall. His love can keep us from getting discouraged, and help us nurture that drive to achieve.

So this Lent, let’s try to be a little more like Colin. The drive that he has to climb higher is easier in his life. Maybe it just takes a lot of energy to achieve. Our son Colin just tend to bury it amid rationalizations and good old-fashioned laziness as we grow up.

God’s grace, however, can fan back the fire of hope that we have hidden under the ashes of self-satisfaction. If we take the opportunity to climb a little higher this Lent with a reinvigorated spirit, our spiritual view will be tremendous when we celebrate Christ’s resurrection at Easter.
Second Sunday of Lent/ Msgr. Owen E. Campon

Sunday Readings
Sunday, March 1, 2015

- Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
- Romans 8:31b-34
- Mark 9:2-10

This weekend’s first reading from the Book of Genesis is about Abraham. He is a very important figure in the process by which Jews reach a sense of their ethnic and personal identities since he is regarded as the father of the Hebrew people. There are uneasy links between Jews of any age and Abraham who is the only consideration. The ancient Jewish faith is another. Abraham is seen as the great example of faith in God and of obedience to God. Christians and Muslims also revere Abraham for his faith. Scholars believe that Abraham actually lived at one time. He is not a myth.

More than 75 years ago, Pope Pius XI said that Christians fall within the category of children of Abraham, since Christians descend from him as a spiritual father, because of his faith. In this reading, God promises divine protection to all of Abraham’s descendants.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. It was written amid a context similar to the circumstances surrounding each of the other Pauline letters. While Christians certainly were increasing in number in the last quarter of the first century, they still at this time formed only a tiny minority in the population of the Roman Empire. Because of their total commitment to the Gospel of love, they seemed either foolish or threatening to the great majority of their contemporaries. They were also soon regarded as enemies of the state because of their rejection of the Roman pagan religion. Amid all this, many Christians surely were uneasy. Paul reassured them. In this reading, he called them to faithfulness even likely, would come their way.

In this reading, he called them to faithfulness even likely, would come their way.

would save them. Christ had defeated death, and in the Lord we prevailed over every adversary. A reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew is the third reading. It tells the story of the Transfiguration, a story found in the other Synoptic Gospels as well. In the Transfiguration, the Lord’s identity as Son of God was magnificently displayed. Rich symbols abound. Each has unmistakable roots in the Old Testament. Jesus is atop a high mountain, as bright as the sun. God’s voice sounds from above. Each makes clear the fact of Christ’s divinity.

The further lesson is that God shares with humans the experience of being within the Holy Trinity, so that we all may know God.

Reflection

This weekend, we observe the Second Sunday of Lent. Lent is well underway. Lent will be meaningless unless it includes a total and free dedication to molding ourselves into the image of Jesus, as Paul urged the Roman Christians. It requires absolute faith, trust and commitment.

We express this sincere dedication in prayer and penance.

In the Transfiguration, the Lord’s divinity, seen in the Transfiguration, tells us of God’s love. God is with us in Jesus, the eternal Son of God.

Although almighty, however, Jesus overwhelms no one. We freely must respond. Lent is the process by which we individually and voluntarily intensify our response to the Lord. †

One Step at a Time

By Sandy Biery

The cross is seen from the distance, On the mountain so high, Inviting me to climb, Leaving all my cares behind. Taking one step at a time.

I muster all my strength, Not looking back, And start the climb, Praying that I’ll reach the top, Taking one step at a time. (Sandy Biery is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Hikers walk next to a cross on Enk mountain near Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, on Aug. 18, 2020.) (CNS photo/Michaela Rehle, Reuters)

My Journey to God

My thoughts are sublime, As I follow Jesus, Who carried the heavy cross, Burdened with my sins, Taking one step at a time.

I fall and he picks me up, And holds me close to his side, He helps me climb the mountain, Walking by my side. Taking one step at a time.

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Daily Readings

Monday, March 2
Daniel 9:4-10
Psalm 79:8-9, 11, 13
Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday, March 3
St. Katharine Drexel, virgin
Isaiah 1:10, 16-20
Psalm 50:8-9, 10bc-17, 21, 23
Matthew 23:12-22

Wednesday, March 4
St. Casimir
Jeremiah 18:18-20
Psalm 31:5-6, 14-16
Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday, March 5
Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1:1-6
Luke 16:19-21

Question Corner/ Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church teaching on Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist based in Scripture

Q Recent polls indicate that some 30 percent of Catholics in the United States (and 66 percent in Ireland) do not believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, but rather hold that it is only a symbolical presence of Christ. If these polls are even halfway true, why is this elephant in the room never addressed or even mentioned in Church? (Massachusetts)

A The beliefs of the Catholic Church are not determined by plebiscite. That is to say, what is fundamental in determining the core content of the Catholic faith is not how people feel, but what Jesus said. And for that, we can go among other places, to the sixth chapter of John’s Gospel. Jesus has just multiplied the loaves and the fish to feed 5,000 people, and the crowds are in awe: “How can one man give us [his] flesh to eat?” (Jn 6:52).

Even his followers are confused. Christ has every opportunity to pull back and explain. “Wait,” he might have said, “I was only speaking figuratively.”

Instead, he presses the point, watching as people start to drift away: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him” (Jn 6:54-56).

Later, at the Last Supper, Jesus reaffirms this teaching in language that is virtually identical.

Polling data varies widely regarding this teaching. The National Catholic Reporter, for example, found in a 2011 survey that 63 percent of adult Catholics believe that “at the consecration during a Catholic Mass, the bread and wine really become the body and blood of Jesus Christ.” (CNS photo/Michaela Rehle, Reuters)

On the mountain so high, Inviting me to climb, Leaving all my cares behind. Taking one step at a time.

Olive in a non-Catholic area, and not on Christmas I am asked this question: Why is the baby Jesus always portrayed with clothing? Why does he have to wear a diaper? Why is this elephant in the room never addressed or even mentioned in Church? (Massachusetts)

A What the Gospel says in Luke is that the baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. (Lk 2:7) That is how the Christ child is shown in most Christian art, and it is quite likely accurate.

Newborns at the time were swaddled in long strips of cloth to give them the sense of security they had experienced in the womb. Then, in the 14th century, St. Bridget of Sweden experienced a vision of the Nativity in which she saw the glorious infant Jesus lying naked on the Earth, with light streaming through the manger. Following that, medieval and Renaissance art began to show the Nativity with the baby wearing little or no clothes. Today, modern paintings usually depict the infant either in swaddling clothes or almost naked, wrapped in a linenspace. (Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.)
Ash Wednesday in Jerusalem

Father Feras Hejazin of Jordan places ashes on the forehead of a Palestinian Catholic woman during the Feb. 18 Ash Wednesday morning Mass at St. Savior Church in Jerusalem’s Old City. (CNS photo/Dusan Ilic)

Providence Sister Rosalie Marie Weiller ministered as a cook, also in parishes

Providence Sister Rosalie Marie Weiller died on Feb. 4 at Mother Theodore Hall at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 103.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 14 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Rose Henrietta Weiller was born on Sept. 7, 1911, in Earl Park, Ind.

She entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on July 15, 1934, and professed final vows on Jan. 23, 1942.

During her 60 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Rosalie Marie Weiller ministered as a cook for 38 years in convents in California, Illinois, Indiana and Washington, D.C.

Beginning in 1975, she began ministering in parishes. In 2001, she returned to the congregation’s motherhouse where she continued to serve in many ways. In 2011, she dedicated herself entirely to prayer.

In the archdiocese, Sister Rosalie Marie Weiller ministered at St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis from 1984-2001.

She is survived by nieces and nephews. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.

Sister Rosalie Marie Weiller was born on Sept. 7, 1911, in Earl Park, Ind. Her father was Daniel Weiller and her mother was Maria (nee Bein) Weiller.

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Don’t be a successful failure: Choose life over false gods, Pope Francis says

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services was reported to The Criterion.

**Batesville Deanery**
- March 1, 1:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Milhouseon
- March 6, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at All Saints, Dearborn County, St. Martin Campus (individual confession)
- March 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- March 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- March 21, 10 a.m. noon and 1:30 p.m. at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright

**Bloomington Deanery**
- March 10, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
- March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer
- March 26, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

**April 1, 4 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington**

**Connersville Deanery**
- March 3, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
- March 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary (Immaculate Conception), Rushville
- March 24, 6 p.m., Richmond Catholic Community at St. Mary, Richmond

**Indianapolis East Deanery**
- March 5, 7 p.m. at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) and Our Lady of Lourdes at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
- March 11, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit
- March 12, 7 p.m. for St. Philip Neri at Chapel of the Holy Cross
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield
- March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas, Fortville
- March 25, 7 p.m. at St. Mary
- March 26, 7 p.m. for St. Rita and Holy Angels at St. Rita

**Indianapolis North Deanery**
- March 15, 2:30-3 p.m. at St. Matthew the Apostle
- March 16, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc
- March 17, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc

**Indianapolis South Deanery**
- March 16, 6 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
- March 30, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

**Indianapolis West Deanery**
- 6:30 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville (individual confession available every Wednesday during Lent)
- March 10, 7 p.m. at St. Monica
- March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Malachi, Brownsburg
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel
- March 16, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
- March 18, 7 p.m. for St. Anthony and St. Christopher at St. Christopher
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield

**New Albany Deanery**
- March 3, 7 p.m. at St. Martin de Porres
- March 9, 7 p.m. at Madonna of the Rosary
- March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, New Albany
- March 11, 7 p.m. at St. Philip Neri at Chapel of the Holy Cross
- March 14, 10 a.m.-noon at St. John the Baptist, Seymour
- March 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Madison, St. Philip and St. James (individual confession)
- March 17, 7 p.m. at St. William, Clarksville, St. John the Baptist, Seymour
- March 19, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus

**Seymour Deanery**
- March 3, 7 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace, Madison
- March 8, 2 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- March 10, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon, and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County
- March 11, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownsstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus

**St. Luke’s**’s Gospel has Jesus asking, “What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?” (Lk 9:25)

Christians are still faced with the same difficult choice every day, the pope said, “to choose between God and the other gods—that have no power to give us anything, just tiny little what-nots that are fleeting.” It is not easy to make the right choice because “we always have this habit of following the crowd a little. It’s easier to live letting ourselves be carried by inertia in life, by each situation, by habits,” and it’s easier to become a slave to “other gods,” he said.

“So often we are on the run, we are in a rush without realizing what the road we’re on is like, and we let ourselves—without thinking—be swept up by needs, by our desires, by our passions,” the pope said.

“Why do we go so quickly in life without realizing what path we’re taking?” he asked. “Because we want to win, we want to succeed.”

But, the pope said, the day’s Gospel reading from St. Luke’s Gospel has Jesus asking, “What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?” (Lk 9:25)

“Is it easier to live letting ourselves be carried by inertia in life, by each situation, by habits?” he said, adding that just by reflecting on the last question, “surely we will find things that we have to correct.” †

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)—**Don’t use peer pressure, greed or laziness as excuses to chase after false gods and become a wildly successful failure, Pope Francis said.

“Slow down, reflect and choose the path that takes you closer to God and your loved ones, he said on Feb. 19 during his morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he lives.

“One mistake in life, he said, is “always seeking one’s own success, one’s own benefit without thinking about the Lord, without thinking about one’s family,” he said.

Vatican Radio and Vatican News released excerpts from his homily, which examined the day’s first reading from Deuteronomy, in which Moses sets before the people “life and prosperity, death and doom” (Dt 30:15), and encourages them to choose life by following the Lord.
ABORTION
continued from page 1
reversal, and he also addressed the news conference.
He recounted the case of a woman who came to him in 2007. According to Harrison, the woman had been to an abortion clinic where she was “bullied and pressured” into opting for a medical abortion.
The mother wanted to know if there was any way to stop the effects of the drug. At the clinic, he said, they gave her no hope. They said, “There’s nothing you can do, you have to complete this procedure.” Harrison told the woman, “I need to step out and pray” about her request. “Then I said a prayer and started looking through books and thinking about how RU-486 works,” he told reporters. “It essentially just blocks the progesterone receptors and starves the baby.”
Harrison then immediately took some progesterone he had on hand for fertility treatments and, after informing the mother that the treatment might not work, injected her with the hormone.
She later gave birth to a little girl, who survived with “no problems and no ill effects” and, according to Harrison, is now “an excited little cheerleader for her local football team and just a great little joy to be around.” Her mother went back to school, and is now a respiratory technician and has purchased a house.
Since Harrison’s discovery, Davenport and Dr. George Delgado, medical director of the Culture of Life Family Services in San Diego, have published a series of case studies “demonstrating successful reversal of mifepristone effects in women who chose to reverse the medical abortion.”
Gabriel David Cacedo was born on Dec. 31, 2014, weighing 8 pounds 9 ounces and measuring 21 inches long. Despite what his mother was told back in May, Gabriel is an extremely healthy and energetic child. “He’s very active, always awake and alert, making eye contact,” Minichini told Catholic News Service. “He just rolled over for the first time last week at 6 weeks old.” To other young men facing unexpected fatherhood, Gabriel’s father urged contemplation.
“Take a deep breath and think about the situation. It’s a hard situation to go through, but it’s not as bad as many fathers think that it is. They [kids] are just a blessing to be quite honest. He gives us more ambition to progress [in life]. … You just have to grab the bull by the horns.”

What was in the news on February 26, 1965? The bones of St. Peter are found, the pope reveals secret peace talks and cardinals are given a new rank
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 February 26, 1965, issue of The Criterion:

- Pope Paul gives reasons for naming new cardinals
- Unity head welcomes ‘dialogue’
- ‘Czech surprise’: Freed Cardinal Beran in Rome for Red Hat
- Pope reveals secret peace ‘negotiations’
- Vatican City—Pope Paul VI has revealed that he has made ‘confidential’ approaches to various governments in an attempt to promote world peace.
- He wrote this in a letter to the bishops of war-torn Vietnam where American forces helping in the struggle against communist guerrillas have struck at bases in the communist-ruled north.
- The pro-life movement is about saving lives, he stated, “and we save lives by taking despair and replacing it with hope.
- “There is not one person here who cannot save a life by spreading the news about this technique,” the prelate told reporters. “The goal of the pro-life movement is to end all abortion, and for babies like Gabriel, who are here today because of this technique, abortion did end. It was conquered; it was overcome.”

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