Christian leaders hope Palestinian saints can be intercessors for peace

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (CNS)—Christian leaders in the Holy Land hope two new Palestinian saints will become intercessors for peace and a bridge among faiths.

“I am sure they follow our situation from heaven and will continue to intercede for peace and reconciliation in the Holy Land,” Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali of Jerusalem said at a news conference on May 6. “Their intercession is strong and efficacious.”

He said not only Christian Palestinians should be proud of Blessed Mary of Jesus Crucified and Blessed Marie-Alphonsine, but also Muslims and Jews “can be happy because two persons from our country joined the highest degree of human righteousness, spiritual wisdom and mystical experience of God.”

“They are models for all and intercessors for all. Interceding for the Holy Land, they do not segregate among Christians and non-Christians,” he said. “By [coincidence] both [are] called Mary, Mariam. It is extraordinary. This name is common to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. They become a bridge between us all.”

He added that President Mahmoud Abbas will participate in the canonization celebrations in Rome on May 17.

“We are having a very big celebration now. Especially now that we are living a very difficult time in the Middle East, to have two Palestinian saints is wonderful,” said Sister Ferial of the Middle East, to have two Palestinian saints is wonderful,” said Sister Ferial. “It is a very big celebration now. Especially now that we are living a very difficult time in the Middle East, to have two Palestinian saints is wonderful.”

By Sean Gallagher

Charity, love of faith leads Deacon Michael Keucher to the priesthood

Transitional Deacon Michael Keucher serves as a Communion minister during a Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Dec. 8, 2014, at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad. He will be ordained a priest on June 6 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis along with transitional deacons Adam Ahern and Andrew Syberg. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

(Bishop William Shomali)

Wealthy from his journey to embrace the Catholic faith

As the Church marks the resurrection of Christ at Easter, it also welcomes new members who enter into their own new life as Catholics. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis welcomed 1,052 souls into full communion with the Church on Easter weekend through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) in parishes throughout central and southern Indiana.

Each new member brings a rich story of their call to Catholicism. Each bears the touch of God calling them closer to him in union with the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church founded by Christ.

Are you侠 those special stories. 

*1 knew that everything would change*

When Evan Fischer started having late-night religious discussions with his best friend—a Catholic—the summer before his freshman year

By Natalie Hooer

Newly baptized adults share stories of their journey to embrace the Catholic faith

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*1 knew that everything would change*
Inequality of opportunity termed a root cause of societal decline

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Robert Putnam, who has been charting the relative strength of the American social fabric since his 1995 book *Bowling Alone*, said on May 11 the “inequality of opportunity” in the United States is what is leading to a sense of despair and isolation among the nation’s poor.

Putnam, a political science professor at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, used his hometown of Port Clinton, Ohio, as an example during a presentation he made at a Georgetown University-hosted German-Germanal summit on overcoming poverty.

Based on interviews he and his associates had conducted with a high school graduating class of 1959, Putnam said, “about 80 percent of them did better than their parents,” adding that “those who came from the bad side of the tracks did just about as well as those who came from the good side.”

Then he said, there was not a great deal of income or wealth disparity. Jobs could be had fishing on Lake Erie, or at one of a number of manufacturing plants. Putnam was able to go to college thanks to a grant from a local organization.

But in the Port Clinton of today, much has changed. “The town east side, where the factories were, is now a ‘ghost town,’” according to Putnam. The pollution in Lake Erie took away the fishing jobs. Putnam then described two of two young women of the same age with roots in Port Clinton. One was Miriam, his own granddaughter. She is a junior in college majoring in French literature. Putnam helped finance her book, which he hopes to delve more deeply into French cuisine and culture.

The other woman Putnam called Mary Sue. Her grandfather is a couple of years younger than Putnam. But Mary Sue “made one mistake: She chose the wrong parents,” Putnam said.

Mary Sue’s parents divorced when she was age 5. Her mother became a stripper, sometimes leaving her daughter alone “for days at a time.” Putnam said her father’s new girlfriend refused to feed her. By the time she turned 13, Mary Sue had gotten pregnant but later lost the child.

A few years later, Putnam said he noticed marks on one of her arms from where an ex-boyfriend had cut her. “She has a new boyfriend now, an older man who has children born to two different women two months apart, and who wants to make Mary Sue a ‘model,’” Putnam noted, wagging his fingers as quote marks for emphasis.

In her most recent Facebook posting, Putnam said, Mary Sue said she wanted to have a baby because “the baby will love me.”

Based on interviews and his and his team have done in metropolitan areas big and small throughout the United States, Putnam declared, “There are Mary Sues everywhere.”

Putnam’s latest book, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, details the situation in greater depth, said the “opportunity gap” is growing more pronounced between the children of college-educated parents and the children of parents who advanced only as far as high school.

There is a 7-to-1 gap in the amount of money spent on enrichment activities such as summer camps and music lessons. Family time with young children—which Putnam called “Goodnight Moon time”—after the popular children’s story—was roughly the same for both groups in 1980, but now there is a 7-to-2 ratio in favor of the better-educated.

The frequency of family dinner time dipped for the better educated but leveled off around 1990, while for the less educated, it’s down to 50 percent and still dropping. Eighty-five percent of children from college-educated families take part in extracurricular activities, but only 65 percent of children from high school educated households do. Putnam attributed some of this to public schools’ deem extra-curricular activities “frills” in an era of tight budgets, forcing parents and students to pay for the cost of participating.

Putnam said the gap is growing because of the “collapse of the working-class family,” economic insecurity among poor seniors, and a frayed social safety net— which he said was not just welfare checks and food stamps, but assistance from churches, organizations and neighbors who could have depended on in a previous generation.

He still holds hope for the future. The current situation, according to Putnam, mirrors in many ways the Gilded Age, and American indignation over its disparities brought about the Progressive movement.

“I want to begin a conversation right now on how to close the opportunity gap,” Putnam said. “I want this to be the top issue in the 2016 presidential election. Not because all of the candidates are going to agree on what to do. They’re going to disagree, and then we’ll have a real discussion.”

—Robert Putnam, Harvard University professor and author

Parish’s change Mass times due to holiday and race

Several parishes in the Indianapolis West Deanery will change their Mass schedule for the Memorial Day weekend on May 23-24 due to the annual Indianapolis 500 race on May 24. • Holy Angels Parish, Indianapolis—Saturday anticipation Mass will be celebrated as usual at 4:30 p.m. in the parish center at W 28th St., on May 23. There will be no Mass at Bishop Chatard Memorial Chapel on the campus of Marian University in Indianapolis on May 24. Instead, Mass will be celebrated with the members of St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., at 11 a.m.

• St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., in Indianapolis—Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 23. No Mass will be celebrated on May 24.

• Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., in Indianapolis—Mass will be celebrated in English at 5 p.m. and in Spanish at 7 p.m. on May 23. Mass will be celebrated in English at 7 a.m. and a bilingual liturgy at 7 p.m. on May 24.

• St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3334 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis—Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 23. Mass will be celebrated at 7 a.m. on May 24.

• St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., in Indianapolis—While the parish has altered Mass times for the Memorial Day weekend and race in the past, their schedule will not be altered this year. Mass will be celebrated at the normal times: in English at 4:30 p.m. and Spanish at 6 p.m. on May 23, and in Spanish at 8:30 a.m. and English at 11:30 a.m. on May 24.

For information about Mass changes at other parishes in the area, call the parish offices.
Archbishop Tobin praises Miter Society members, archdiocese for embracing the message that stewardship is ‘a way of life’

By Natalie Hoefer

During a gathering of Miter Society members on May 7, archdiocesan director of stewardship and development Jolinda Moore looked around at roughly one quarter of the archdiocese’s Miter Society members. While they are Catholics who donated $1,500 or more to the annual United Catholic Appeal: Christ Our Hope (UCA) effort, Moore knows many of the members are far from wealthy in terms of money. “I look out at these people, and I know some of their circumstances,” she said. “There are priests, deacons, parents of young children, retired people on fixed incomes. Many of these folks are everyday people who aren’t abundantly wealthy financially, but they are rich in generosity and gratitude, and have a strong desire to help the Church, in its mission to evangelize, celebrate the sacraments and exercise charity throughout central and southern Indiana.”

In recognition of the support of the Miter Society members, a Mass was celebrated on May 7 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin as the principal celebrant, followed by a reception at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center. Approximately 250 of the 1,021 Miter Society members throughout central and southern Indiana attended the Mass and gathering.

In total, Miter Society members contributed $2.64 million of the more than $6 million received in last year’s annual appeal. That figure comprises 43 percent of last year’s UCA total.

“We also saw a significant increase in the total number of people who contributed to the United Catholic Appeal,” the archbishop reported to those attending the reception, noting that the total number of donors to the UCA increased 22 percent during the past year, growing from 15,722 to 19,240 donors.

“I believe this is evidence that more people in the archdiocese are embracing stewardship in a way of life,” he said.

“I’ve tried to keep the stewardship message simple. What I do with what I have when I believe in God. The message must be getting out.”

The message is not lost on Miter Society members Vija and Leons Leipa, members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. As immigrants from a formerly communist country, they know the importance of the existence of the Church.

“We had a year under communism in Latvia [before moving to the U.S.], and they suppressed religion,” Vija recalled of life before her and Leons’ families immigrated separately to the United States when the two were pre-teens about 65 years ago, shortly after Latvia was forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union.

Leons said they knew people who stayed in Latvia “for 50 years with a shortage of priests, a shortage of seminarians. The Church almost shut down. It makes us appreciate our faith more.”

And for that reason, the couple—along with their daughter Andra Leipa of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, who is also a Miter Society member—appreciates the opportunity that the appeal presents to help the greater Church in central and southern Indiana.

“So not only is it for those who can give to the United Catholic Appeal, but it’s for all of us who, as you well know, I am, too, in a certain sense because I was always in Jesuit schools,” Castro told reporters on May 10. “When the pope comes to Cuba in September, I promise to go to all his Masses and will do so happily.”

The president told reporters at a news conference he held later in the day with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi. The Cuban bishops’ conference announced on May 11 that Pope Francis will visit the island on Sept. 19-22.

The pope’s trip to Cuba will mark the third time a pope has visited the island. St. John Paul II visited Cuba in 1998, and Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2012.

Castro said he left his meeting with the pope “very much struck by his wisdom, his humility and all the virtues that we all know he has.”

“I read all the speeches of the pope,” Castro said, and he told reporters that he already had Renzi, “if the pope continues to speak this way, sooner or later I could start praying again and return to the Catholic Church. I’m not kidding. I’m a communist, [a member] of the Cuban Communist Party. The party has never admitted believers.”

Today, he said, the country allows people to hold important positions even if they are not members of the party. “It’s a step forward,” he said, although many of the reforms he would like to make are still being implemented.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, said that during their private meeting in a studio of the Vatican audience hall, Castro thanked Pope Francis for “the active role he played in improving relations between Cuba and the United States of America.”

In December, Castro and U.S. President Barack Obama announced that their nations were working toward re-establishing official diplomatic relations. Both leaders credited Pope Francis with helping to secure the deal through his letter-writing, and by hosting a secret meeting at the Vatican between Cuban and U.S. representatives last fall.

Castro also relayed to the pope the expectations of the Cuban people for his upcoming trip to the nation and outlined how the preparations were going, Father Lombardi said.

During the traditional exchange of gifts, Castro gave Pope Francis a commemorative medal featuring Havana’s cathedral and, in honor of Pope Francis’ concerns for migrants, a contemporary painting of a cross made up of migrants’ boats with a migrant kneeling before it in prayer.

The Cuban artist known as Kcho, who made the painting, was present at the audience and told Pope Francis he was inspired by the pope’s expressions of concern for the thousands of migrants who risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea seeking security and a better life.

Pope Francis gave Castro a copy of his apostolic exhortation, “The Joy of the Gospel,” and a large medallion featuring St. Martin of Tours covering a poor man with his cloak. Father Lombardi said Pope Francis told Castro the medallion is a reminder not only of the obligation “to assist and protect the poor, but also to actively promote their dignity.”

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—After spending close to an hour with Pope Francis, Cuban President Raul Castro told reporters he is so impressed by what the pope does and says that he might start praying and could even return to the Church.

I had a very agreeable meeting this morning with Pope Francis. He is a Jesuit, as you well know. I am, too, in a certain sense because I was always in Jesuit schools,” Castro told reporters on May 10. “When the pope comes to Cuba in September, I promise to go to all his Masses and will do so happily.”

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“I read all the speeches of the pope,”

Above, Andra Leipa of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, left, and her parents, Vija and Leons Leipa of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, kneel during a Mass for Miter Society members at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Left, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin delivers a homily during a Mass for members of the archdiocesan Miter Society at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 7.
Faith should not finish second to sports, Pope Francis says

The timing of Pope Francis' advice seemed providential, as the Church approaches another celebration of Pentecost, which begins this weekend.

It came a few days after pundits labeled May 2-3 as one of the greatest sports weekends in recent Church history. The reason? The second 

The tennis classics of the Italian Federation on May 8 as he echoed a message we believe needs to be heard over and over again during a meeting of the Italian Tennis Federation on May 6 as he echoed a

The VATICAN on May 7 (CNS photo/Observer Remano) he said, and offer a way for people to experience friendship and harmony "without discrimination."

"Studying, friends, [and] serving the poor" also are important, and should be "neglected in order to do just one thing. No. Everything together," he said.

Sports done right helps build a more caring, brotherly and just world that helps overcome "human and social disadvantage," the pope said. During his meeting with the tennis federation on May 8, Pope Francis urged members to never let the high pressure and high stakes involved in competition lead them to take "shortcuts as happen in the case of doping."

"How awful and sterile a victory gained by breaking the rules and deceiving others," he said. They have to always do their best and give all in life by seeking the good "without fear, with courage and with enthusiasm."

"Spend your life on what really matters and what lasts forever," and put "your talents at the service of bringing people together, friendship and inclusion," he said. May we heed the pope’s advice and make sure sports is an educational path that helps lead our young people so, in the end, they will be able to say: "I have competed well, I have finished the race; I have kept the faith." (2 Tim 4:7)

Mike Krokos

Letters to the Editor

How Mother Mary teaches us to ‘yes’ through her rosary

Our Catholic faith is often misperceived as a series of prohibitions. In reality, as its core is a call to a great big “Yes.”

In prayering the rosary, the Blessed Mother teaches us to say “Yes!” To God’s divine will for our lives, even when we don’t fully understand (The Ascension); To ministering our faith by loving and serving someone each day (The Visitation); By following the humble example set by our Lord in coming to us as a vulnerable babe (The Nativity); By learning and obeying all of the Church’s teachings (The Presentation); And foremost addressing the work the Father has for us each day (Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple).

By remembering and trying to live our baptismal vows each day (The Baptism of Jesus); To recognizing that ministry occurs every day, most especially bread and wine becoming the body and blood of Jesus (The Wedding at Cana); And spending time each day with Jesus as he teaches us in Scripture (Proclaiming the Kingdom); To contemplating the glories that await us in heaven after a life of discipleship (The Transfiguration); To centering our life each day on the only way to reach the love of Jesus’ body and blood (The Institution of the Eucharist).

To recognizing that our lives involve fierce spiritual combat against enemies seeking to steal our souls for all eternity (The Agony in the Garden); To offering our physical pain to Jesus for the benefit of others (The Scourging at the Pillar); To offering the encouragement that comes from being mocked for our faith in Jesus for the benefit of others (The Crowning with Thorns); To offering our burdens, great or small, always with a sense of Christian joy (The Carrying of the Cross); To forgiving the greatest sacrifice ever made on our behalf (The Crucifixion).

By offering the new beginning that we are given when we awaken each morning to God and his glory (The Resurrection); By lifting our hearts and minds to heaven in prayer each day (The Ascension); By opening our lives to the Holy Spirit’s movement in each day (The Descent of the Holy Spirit); By recognizing that it is possible to attain heaven directly and avoid the suffering purgatory by a life lived in conformity to God’s divine will (The Assumption); By seeking the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who stands closest to her Son’s throne in heaven (The Coronation).

As Our Lady of Fatima exhorted, pray the rosary each and every day.

Mike Nygra
Brownburg

We should know that big government is not the answer to social problems

"Why are Christians coming to government to do what we are called to do—provide individuals under the Gospel of Jesus Christ?"

Thank you, Rep. Todd Rokita, for asking this question of the Church. I have been asking it myself for many years, and have never gotten a satisfactory answer. Another way to phrase it might be, “How can we make sure this tinkering provoke calls for more help” for the poor, creating yet more future poverty. The negative results of subsidizing a pattern of fatherless families, the most reliable predictor of future poverty, is that big government is the most inefficient way to solve. It is always the “silent one” who is always there, and yet can always be unobserved, unheard and, more important, unshrinked. The whole in its unity and entirety, can be passed over as meaningless.

The word “God” is the final word before we become silent, the word which allows all the individual things we can name to vanish into the background, the word in which we are dealing with the totality which grounds them all.

The soul that is Christian from its origins is derived from the inexpressibility of the word “God.” The word “God” is our opening to the incomprehensible mystery of the “I am.” The word “God” is an exhausting and demanding word.

Kirth N. Roach
Order of Carmelite Discalced
Indianapolis
Go into the whole world, even the periphery

H
eve you heard about Pope Francis and the periphery? Since before he was elected pope a little more than two years ago, the Holy Father has been urging the Church, which is all of us, to “get out of ourselves and go toward the periphery.” This insight of Pope Francis is central to our celebration of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. The day the risen Lord returned to the Father is also the Ascension of the Lord. The day that he commanded his disciples to go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature” (Mt 28:19).

Two months ago, the Catholic bishops of Indiana published a pastoral letter entitled, “Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church’s Response to Poverty in Indiana.” Our message to the Catholic people of Indiana—beginning with ourselves—is that we have an obligation to go to the margins of society (where our sisters and brothers who are poor can be found) and share the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ. In this letter, we say, “All disciples of Jesus Christ are called to love the poor as he did. As people of faith, we are invited to see the poor, to allow the word of God to illuminate the reality of poverty, and to respond with transformed hearts.”

See, Judge. Act. This is the simple formula my brother bishops and I recommend to help us get out of our comfort zones. We must see (and not minimize or deny) the reality of poverty in our midst. We must make judgments (and not allow others to make decisions for us) about systems and policies that keep the poor “in their place.” And we must act (not pass the buck) through our prayer, our advocacy and our generosity. This is “going to the periphery” means—here in Indiana and “into the whole world.”

In his homily at Lampedusa, a large island near Sicily that has witnessed the tragic drowning of hundreds of African refugees attempting to find asylum in Italy, Pope Francis lamented what he called the anesthetism of the heart. “We are a society which has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion [with suffering with others], the globalization of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep!”

“Anesthetism of the heart” is not a Christian virtue. As we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, let’s recommit ourselves to doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God. Let’s go out of our comfort zones into the whole world, including the periphery, to proclaim his Good News!  

Vayan por todo el mundo, inclúe la periferia

H
a escuchado sobre el papa Francisco y la periferia? Después de que el papa Francisco fuera elegido, hace poco más de un año, el Santo Padre ha estado exhortando a la Iglesia—es decir a todos nosotros—a que “abandonemos nuestra comodidad y salgamos a la periferia.” Este planteamiento del papa Francisco es un elemento crucial de la celebración de la Soledad de la Ascensión del Señor. El día en que el Señor resucitado regresó al Padre, también es el día en el que ordenó a sus discípulos “vayan por todo el mundo y anuncien las buenas nuevas a toda la criatura” (Mc 16:15).

 Así a se le conoce hace mucho tiempo como la Gran tarea, porque Jesús confiere a sus discípulos (y a nosotros) a que “abandonen su comodidad (nuestra comodidad) y salgan a la periferia.”

¿Dónde se encuentra la periferia? La definición de periferia, según el diccionario, es: “el borde exterior de un área o el área que rodea a un lugar o cosa.” El papa Francisco se refiere a esas áreas en las que habitan las personas consideradas marginadas sociales, en los “márgenes” de la aceptabilidad social, y a esto es a lo que denomina “la periferia.” Nos exhorta a que abandonemos nuestra comodidad (otra expresión que usa frecuentemente el papa Francisco) y a que abramos nuestras obras de a Dios a los demás, especialmente a aquellos que han sido rechazados por la sociedad.

En los Evangelios, los samaritanos se encuentran claramente “en la periferia” de la sociedad judía. Lo mismo ocurre con los leprosos y aquellos que fueron sorprendidos pecando, como es el caso de los adulteros.

Tal como lo hacen en el Evangelio según San Mateo: “Mientras Jesús estaba comiendo en casa de Mateo, muchos recaudadores de impuestos y pecadores llegaron y comieron con él y sus discípulos. Cuando los farsiones vieron esto, les preguntaron a sus discípulos: —¿Por qué viene su maestro con recaudadores de impuestos y pecadores? ¿Al oír esto, Jesús les contestó: —No son los santos los que necesitan médico sino los enfermos. Pero vayan y aprendan lo que significa: ‘Lo que pido de ustedes es misericordia y no sacrificios.’”

En otras palabras, la periferia no está delimitada por un espacio geográfico, o estatus social, económico o legal, ni por nuestros puntos de vista en cuanto a religión o política. Todo aquel que es distinto de nosotros nos resulta incómodo. Salir de nuestra comodidad y adentramos en la periferia podría significar cualquier esfuerzo por reaccionar a las circunstancias de la vida con comprensiva y compasiva. Esto no significa que tenemos que abandonar nuestras creencias, principios o forma de vida; pero sí significa acoger a aquellos que son distintos de nosotros y, en este mismo acto, compartimos con ellos la buena nueva de que Dios ama a todos y han sido redimidos por Cristo.

Hace dos meses, los obispos católicos de Indiana publicaron una carta pastoral titulada “Pobreza en la Encrucijada: la respuesta de la Iglesia ante la pobreza en Indiana.”

Nuestro mensaje para el pueblo católico de Indiana, comenzando por nosotros mismos, es que tenemos la obligación de acercarnos a los márgenes de la sociedad (donde se encuentran nuestros hermanos y hermanas pobres) y compartir con ellos la buena nueva de nuestra salvación en Jesús Cristo. En esa carta expresamos: “Todos los discípulos de Jesucristo están llamados a amar a los pobres tal como él lo hizo. Como pueblo de fe, se nos invita a reconocer al pobre, a dejar que la Palabra de Dios ilumine la realidad de la pobreza y a responder con corazones transformados.”

Yet, Judge. Act. Esta es la sencilla fórmula que mis hermanos obispos y yo recomendamos para salir de nuestra comodidad. Deberemos ver (y no minimizar o negar) la realidad de la pobreza que existe en nuestra sociedad. Deberemos juzgar y no permitir que otros decidan por nosotros, en cuanto a los sistemas y las normas que perpetúan el lugar que ocupan los pobres. Y debemos actuar, no pasar el testigo, a través de la oración, nuestra defensa y nuestra generosidad. Esto es lo que significa “salir a la periferia,” tanto aquí en Indiana como en todo el mundo.

En su homilía en Lampedusa, una isla grande localizada cerca de Sicilia que presenció la trágica muerte por ahogamiento de cientos de refugiados africanos que intentaban pedir asilo en Italia, el papa Francisco lamentó lo que denominó la anestesiá del corazón. “Somos una sociedad que ha olvidado cómo llorar, cómo sentir compasión por [el sufrimiento de] los demás; la globalización de la indiferencia nos ha despojado de la capacidad de llorar.”

La “anestesiá del corazón” no es una virtud cristiana. Mientras celebramos la Ascensión del Señor, renovemos nuestro compromiso de obedecer los mandamientos de Jesús. Salgamos de nuestra comodidad y adentremosnos en el mundo, incluso en la periferia, para proclamar su buena nueva.
May 15
Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis

May 16-17
St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $31 per person. Information: June 3
“The Wisdom of Nazareth,” 3300 Prague Road, Roncalli High School, 8:30 a.m., followed by prayer helpers of Church, 3354 W. 30th St., St. Michael the Archangel 317-398-8227.

May 17
Holy Cross School, 125 N. Oriental St., Indianapolis. Holy Cross and St. Philip Nerl, 19th annual Health Fair, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Information: 317-631-8766 or jelenabog@holycrossindy.org

May 18-23
On WSPM 89.1 FM/WSQM 1690 AM, Faith in Action presents its “TV Vision – an underwriter spotlight,” Dr. Francis and Frances Price, 10 a.m. May 18 and 21, 4 p.m. May 19 and 22, 9 a.m. May 20, 10 a.m. May 21, 7 p.m. May 22, 9:30 a.m. May 23

May 20
Calvary Cemetery, 435 W. Troy, Indianapolis. Memorial Mass, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or smeacham@archindy.org

May 21

Retreats and Programs

May 29-June 1
St. Meinrad Archabbey Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Catholic Charismatic Renewal group meets Tuesday evenings in Indianapolis Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana meets at St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., in Indianapolis for prayer meetings each Tuesday from 7-8:30 p.m. in the chapel and the social room, and for praise and Mass on the first Friday of each month at 7 p.m. The group, which is in liaison with the diocesan office, involves Catholics who believe in a renewal of the Holy Spirit’s gifts received in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. The gifts, also called charisms, include wisdom, knowledge, faith, prophecy, tongues, interpretation and healing. The first Friday Mass involves praise and worship at 7 p.m., followed by Mass at 8:30 p.m. At the conclusion of Mass, prayer teams are available to pray for and around individuals.

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

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery hosts exhibit of icons through June 23

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 200 Hill Drive, in St. Meinrad will host an exhibit of icons through June 23. The tradition of icon painting is still vibrant. An essential element within the architecture of the Eastern Orthodox Church, icons depict a world of saints, biblical narratives, the virgin and Christ. This exhibit showcases the work of four contemporary icon painters working in a variety of media, including egg tempera on board enhanced with gold leaf by Benedictine Sister Jeana VISel and Jennie Gelles; painting on glass by Sharon GILL Kolsinski; and acrylic painting by Passionist Brother Michael Moran. The exhibit is free and open to the public. Those wishing to view the exhibit may want to arrive at least 30 minutes before closing time. For library hours, call 812-357-6401 or 800-987-7311, or log on to the Archabbey Library’s website at www.saintmeinrad.edu/libraryhours

Retreats and Programs

May 29-June 1

June 3
Our Lady of Fatima retreat house, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Ladies Sodality guided days, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., $31 per person. Information: 317-545-7861 or www.archindy.org/fatima

June 4

June 7
Our Lady of Fatima retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Habit sell-guided days, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., $31 per person. Information: 317-545-7861 or www.archindy.org/fatima

June 8-12
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. “Reading the Word of God in the Liturgy,” Benedictine Father Vincent Tobin, present. $245 single, $680 double. Information: 317-585-6585 or nsiegel@archindy.org

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

VIPS

David and Jo Ellen (Byrne) Durbin. members of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 22. They were married on May 21, 1955, at St. Mary Church in Rushville. They are the parents of seven children: Patty Moran, Judy Lee, Carol Munsell, Kathleen Porter, Mary Sparks, Jean Thayer and Sylvia Zimmerman. They also have 16 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The couple will celebrate with a special Mass and a family vacation.

Centennial celebration

Retired Father Frank Eckstein, who provides sacramental assistance at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Milan, visit with St. Charles Borromeo parishioner Rosie Hauert Voit. Voit will celebrate her 100th birthday on May 16. She has two sons and still lives north of Milan on the farm where she and her deceased husband, Edmund, lived and worked. (Submitted photo)
CYO honorees make sports and faith a winning combination

By John Shaughnessy

If one defining moment can capture a person’s approach to life, Steve Battato may have provided his by what he chose to do after he was chosen to receive the Monsignor Albert Busald Award. As the Catholic Youth Organization’s executive director, Battato would receive the highest honor of the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). Battato, who also is a deacon at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, wrote a 2 1/2 page e-mail saluting many of the people who have influenced his 49 years of life, beginning with his single mother who worked three jobs and kept a loving home for her nine children.

By the end of the e-mail, Battato had listed 44 people by name.

Then he sent the e-mail to those influential people in his life who are still alive. And for those who aren’t, he sent the e-mail to their families.

The father of eight children, Battato wrote his e-mail by writing, “On May 6, the CYO is honoring me with its highest honor, the Monsignor Albert Busald Award. Why me? I haven’t done anything extraordinary. But I have done what I thought was expected of me as a son, a parent, a Catholic, a member of the community.”

In less than nine months, Battato has done for nearly 20 years as a CYO coach.

“When every team he has coached has volunteered at places like St. John Bosco Parish and other organizations, says Ed Tindler, the CYO’s executive director. “Every team is expected to attend Mass as a group to provide witness and exposure to other Catholic values.”

He uses sports to teach how our faith is a part of every aspect of our lives. He has been a Scout leader for almost 30 years. He is very involved in giving his time to benefit the youth ministry program at St. Barnabas.

Tindler also noted how Battato and his daughter Laura started a kickball program for girls at their parish.

“Now they are having the time of their lives, creating lifelong friendships and memories because of this caring individual,” Tindler says. “He is the very best of the CYO volunteers.”

That same description for the other winners of the 2015 St. John Bosco Award. Here are their stories:

Marni Fey

The two letters of congratulations arrived on consecutive days this spring at the home of Steve and Marni Fey, surprising the couple. “It was a real honor. It’s very humbling. It’s just so rewarding. I love working as a CYO volunteer,” says Fey.

On the first day, Steve received a letter from the CYO, congratulating him on being selected for the St. John Bosco Award, the initial award the CYO presents to adult volunteers for making a difference to young people.

Marni was so excited for Steve that she immediately shared the news with their four children.

The next day, Marni received her surprise letter from the CYO, congratulating her on being selected for the St. John Bosco Award with the CYO’s honorarium.

“I was one-upped! I mean, Steve recalls with a laugh, before turning serious. ‘Her award is well-deserved. She’s a very humble person, and she doesn’t want the limelight. It’s something positive about her life.”

Ken Troy

When Ken Troy learned the news that he would receive the St. John Bosco Award, he immediately thought of the man he has always tried to emulate in faith, life and sports—his father.

“I could have had the passion for coaching in CYO if I didn’t have his leadership and his leading by example to follow,” says Ken, whose father Jim Troy died in February at 75.

“He was always coaching me. Even to his last day, he’d give me advice about how to motivate kids, how to be a role model, how to bring out the best in people. He was always positive and encouraging. I saw friendships being made and kids gaining confidence. I wanted to be part of something positive like that.”

Ken has succeeded in his own right, according to Father Kevin Hines, pastor of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. In nominating Ken for the St. John Bosco Award, Father Hines wrote, “I have seen many examples of his coaching as a ministry, his dedication to his boys and their parents, and I have long been impressed by his Christian character, diligence and work ethic.”

Ken has made his primary impact in 28 years of leading the wrestling programs at St. Maria Goretti and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., also in the Lafayette Diocese.

“If you ask people, they’ll tell you I’m one of the most competitive people they know,” says Ken, a father of three competitive people they know,” says Ken, a father of three.

“I always stress to the kids what their priorities should be. He’s number two. Number one is family. Make sure you’re attending church. Family number two. Treat your parents with respect. Thank them for driving you to practice. School and family comes before everything, he’s number three.”

A wrestler as a youth, Ken says his longtime involvement in CYO is a way of saying thanks: “I wanted to give back to something that was so important to me.”

John Kistner

In his coaching days, John Kistner always worked to instill a fundamental approach to the players on his high school CYO teams.

“Play with intensity, but play with Christian values,” Kistner says. “I developed some kids that I still see occasionally, and they are good Christian men. It’s always good to see them.”

At 76, Kistner still stays involved in CYO sports at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis by serving as the gym, recreation director and on the basketball and volleyball seasons. “He schedules all practices for the boys’ and girls’ teams, maintains the concession stand, and more often than not runs the concession stand,” Tindler says. “When he’s not behind the counter, he can be seen running the game clock at games. When the final buzzer sounds, he is the last one out of the gym because he cleans it after every day’s activities.”

A father of two, Kistner’s boys, Kistner has also served on the parish finance committee for 23 years and leads the accounting process for Mass collections.

He’s been such a fixture for many years at St. Christopher, says Father Paul Skinsky, the parish’s pastor. “He’s very engaged with the kids, and he has a good rapport with the coaches. He’s well respected and loved by all.”

Kistner showed that humility when he learned he was nominated for the St. John Bosco Award by his longtime friend, Fred Fath, a previous recipient of the honor.

“God put together with Father Paul on it,” Kistner says. “I really didn’t want them to do it for me. For me, this has been a great gift that has a lot of great camaraderie. I feel just obligated to help when I can. Plus, I enjoy the kids.”

Amy Stimpson

Amy Stimpson has a moment of pure joy that still brings a smile to Amy Stimpson, a moment of pure joy that can only truly appreciated by people who have experienced the beauty of moments of joy, they have also helped her through a time of unbearable loss. For years, she and her husband Bob had been making a volunteer part of their lives at St. Matthew, with Bob serving as athletic director.

“When her husband, who was a Basilian winner with Amy Stimpson’s volunteer efforts at St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, Greencastle, St. Joseph Parish, Good Shepherd Parish, St. Christopher Parish, St. Jude Parish, St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese—Ken Troy

St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Amy Stimpson

2015 Msgr. Albert Busald Award recipients

• St. Barnabas Parish—Stevie Battato
• St. Christopher Parish—John Kistner
• St. Jude Parish—Marni Fey
• St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese—Ken Troy
• St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Amy Stimpson

2015 Spirit of Youth Award recipients

• St. Barnabas Parish—Stephanie Battato
• St. Christopher Parish—John Kistner
• St. Jude Parish—Marni Fey
• St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese—Ken Troy
• St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Amy Stimpson

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin poses for a photo with the 2015 recipients of the St. John Bosco Award, the highest honor of the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization. The recipients in the front row are Marni Fey, left, and Amy Stimpson. The recipients in the back row are Ken Troy, left, John Kistner and Steve Battato. The recipients received their awards on May 6 in the SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

2015 Spirit of Youth Award recipients

• St. Barnabas Parish—Stevie Battato
• St. Christopher Parish—John Kistner
• St. Jude Parish—Marni Fey
• St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese—Ken Troy
• St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Amy Stimpson

2015 Msgr. Albert Busald Award recipients

• Christ the King Parish—Rich Snyder and Ken and Stowin
• Holy Spirit Parish—Joe Rosswurm
• Our Lady of Lourdes Parish—Rob Reine
• St. John Bosco Parish, Nashville—Tom Sisak
• St. Barnabas Parish—Aaron Irwin
• St. Jude Parish—Steve Fey
• St. Thomas More Parish—Judy Skarbeck
• Malachi Parish, Brownsburg—Tom O’Leary
• St. Mark the Evangelist Parish—Kevin Johnson and Aaron Seddon
• St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Mike Noll
• St. Michael the Archangel Parish—Karen Purichia
• St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Greencastle—Jim Bewsey
• St. Pius X Parish—Melinda Blalock and Carlos Capito
• St. Simon the Apostle Parish—Rob Van Vlreet
• St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield—Michael Jileszewski
• St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish—Mark Wright
• SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood—Terri Keschke

2015 Spirit of Youth Award recipients

• Christ the King Parish—Grace Christoff
• Good Shepherd Parish—Guillermo Caldera and Titus Ramos
• St. Anthony Parish—Elia Castillo and Jose Carlos
• St. Barnabas Parish—Liam Hosty
• Michael Revers and Kayla Streicher
• St. Mark the Evangelist Parish—Albert Th, Madeline Dunn and Kristin Feres
• St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Maura Wissler
• St. Roch Parish—Anthony Braheb and Michael Zeddick
What was in the news on May 14, 1965?

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 May 14, 1965, issue of The Criterion:

- Problems predicted in school aid plan
- Defends use of nuclear deterrents
- The new federal aid to education law makes traditional Church-state arguments over help for private schools largely obsolete, but raises new and difficult questions, a law school dean said here. The most crucial issue—which ‘virtually none of the public wants to face’—is whether the government should encourage growth in private schools, said Father Robert F. Drinan, S.J., of Boston [Mass.] College. His own answer was affirmative because he thought competing private schools could help ‘unlock creative energies’ now ‘locked in’ in public schools, said Father Robert F. Drinan, S.J., of Boston [Mass.] College. His own answer was affirmative because he thought competing private schools could help ‘unlock creative energies’ now ‘locked in’ in public schools. The Jesuit held that [Lloyd B. Johnson’s] aid plan, adopted overwhelmingly in Congress, had met traditional Church-state objections head-on. It gives aid only for secular subjects to parochial pupils under a shared-time arrangement, and makes the public school the exclusive recipient of public funds, he said.
- 25 assignments: Chancery announces clergy appointments
- Indianapolis man will be ordained
- Defends use of nuclear deterrents

Fribourg, Switzerland—Cardinal Charles Journet, a Swiss theologian, has stated that the Western nations cannot afford to deprive themselves of nuclear deterrents, unless they want to surrender to armed and militant communists. The cardinal declared that without a nuclear deterrent in the West, communists could achieve world domination without war, just by threatening to use atomic weapons. He said unconcerning condemnations of atomic warfare by some Christian groups are ‘abstract,’ and do not provide any practical guidance to individual citizens or their governments.

- Mrs. Day new head of ACCW
- New altar: IU student graduates academic void
- Mystery surrounds stairway
- Concelebration to mark 25th Jubilee observance
- Buckley speech seen ‘basically unsound’
- Bishop Carberry cites Mary’s rule
- 750 boys to vie for track honors
- Oriented to youth: ‘Hootenanny Mass’ defended by liturgist
- ‘New York’—The ‘Hootenanny Mass’ may not be as irreverent as it sounds. In fact, one of the nation’s top liturgists said here it is, perhaps, very much in keeping with the intent of the Constitution on the Liturgy as approved by the Second Vatican Council. Father Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., of St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., drew thunderous applause at the 62nd annual National Catholic Educational Association convention here. … Are we perhaps sinning against our ‘Constitution on the Liturgy’ when we approve religious groups who don’t agree with it? Don’t we see this as irreverent as it sounds. In fact, one of the nation’s top liturgists said here it is, perhaps, very much in keeping with the intent of the Constitution on the Liturgy as approved by the Second Vatican Council. Father Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., of St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., drew thunderous applause at the 62nd annual National Catholic Educational Association convention here. … Are we perhaps sinning against our ‘Constitution on the Liturgy’ when we approve religious groups who don’t agree with it? Don’t we see this as irreverent as it sounds. In fact, one of the nation’s top liturgists said here it is, perhaps, very much in keeping with the intent of the Constitution on the Liturgy as approved by the Second Vatican Council.

CRIERION

Read all of these stories from our May 14, 1965, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com
in high school, he never imagined he would profess the Catholic faith before he headed off to college.

Newlin filled with all the stereotypes about Catholics, that they were strict, traditional and even hateful,” said Evan, 17, son of Christine.

The discussions continued throughout his high school years at East Central High School in Terre Haute. Then, during the summer before Evan’s senior year, the same friend invited him to attend a eucharistic retreat at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio.

“I knew that after that trip, everything would change—I just had this gut feeling,” he said.

He was right.

His first change of heart and mind during the conference involved the truth of the Eucharist.

“They taught us that the priest is interceding for God, that you’re speaking to God. I thought, ‘That makes so much sense.’” His stereotypical views started to change because it started learning.

Evan changed attendance at the second night of the conference, during eucharistic adoration.

“I was exposed to the Eucharist for the first time,” Evan recalled. “I couldn’t explain it now. When they carried the consecrated host up to the altar.”

He started attending religious education classes at St. Nicholas Parish in Raisin County.

“They started teaching me about the Catholic Church, and about how to have a personal connection with God,” said Evan. “I never saw the Catholic Church as supporting a personal relationship with God. But when you look at it, it’s one-on-one, the Eucharist, the Baptism—‘they’re all about you.’”

He started going to RCIA.

“Eventually, the desire to be received into the Church grew,” said Evan. “I wanted to learn more, and I decided maybe I needed to look in that direction, and started going to RCIA.”

I’ve always witnessed Mass and the faith from a distance,” she added. “Partaking in it now is very special.

“I feel like a real member now”

Gilles Noumsi’s journey to the faith was gradual. Spanning four decades and two continents.

Growing up in Cameroon, in Africa, he was not in one frequent church.

“My mother passed away when I was pretty young, and my father was not a churchgoer,” he recalled. “My extended family were Catholic. I would go to Mass at Christmas and on Easter Day, but that was it.”

And that was fine with Noumsi, until his mid-20s.

“Wherever he worships, Noumsi feels he is a ‘feeling of community and friendship’

Karen Newlin, whose parents were not churchgoers, supported his wife’s faith.

“My mother passed away when I was pretty young, and my father was not a churchgoer,” she said. “I just felt comfortable. There was a connection with the only Church I’d known all through my whole married life.”

Professing the Catholic faith was not a stretch for Newlin.

“The principles of the Church conform to the principles I’ve always had about trying to help other people and not be selfish. That’s how we raised our children,” said the father of three and grandfather of five.

While Newlin had been to Mass before, he was struck by the Easter Vigil.

“I was impressed with the tradition it involved, and the dedication of everyone involved,” he said. “And I’ve been impressed with how welcoming they’ve been. It was a pleasure to see the joy of my friends and acquaintances that have been in the Church for so long.”

After 72 years of being exposed to Church teaching, the biggest change for Newlin, 87, was simply learning to see God every Sunday.

His son, Tom, has been taking him, and even served as his sponsor.

“Everything is new and believable to me.”

“I never thought my own son would be my godfather,” he said.

“My mother passed away when I was pretty young, and my father was not a churchgoer,” he recalled. “My extended family were Catholic. I would go to Mass at Christmas and on Easter Day, but that was it.”

And that was fine with Noumsi, until his mid-20s.

“I feel like a real member now’

Gilles Noumsi’s journey to the faith was gradual. Spanning four decades and two continents.

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And that was fine with Noumsi, until his mid-20s.

“I’ve been to different churches out of curiosity,” he said. “‘To me, the progression of the Catholic Church compels me, the way it is conducted, and also the way the priest conveys the Gospel message.”

“Other churches I felt like the message was more about making you feel good about yourself. But here the message guides you toward understanding the Scripture and how to apply it toward your life.”

But the two years of classes it would take to become a Catholic in Cameroon?

“I wasn’t interested in doing that,” he said with a chuckle. “But I kept going to Mass.”

Eventually, the desire to become received into full communion of the Church and receive the sacraments trumped the “lack of interest” in two years of study, and Noumsi started the course of study at his parish.

But before he could finish, he moved to New York City. Between working weekends and going to school, he had little time to go to Mass, let alone enroll in RCIA.

Again, just as he prepared to begin RCIA at a church in Harlem, life took him elsewhere, and he found himself with a new job in risk management in Indianapolis two years ago.

With his weekends free, Noumsi started attending Mass again, and enrolled in RCIA at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis last fall.

“St. Monica is a great community,” he said. “When I started coming here, I felt like I was home.”

Finally, after almost 20 years of wanting to partake of the sacraments, he was baptized, confirmed and received Communion on April 4 during the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Monica.

“It was really emotional,” said Noumsi. 41, of the Mass and receiving the sacraments. “After Communion, I sat in the pew and I felt something. I just started crying. It’s hard for me to cry, but it happened. I felt that power.”

Karen West smiles after the Easter Vigil Mass at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Church in Indianapolis on April 4. West received the three sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. (Submitted photo by Sarah Gordon)

“I used to come to Church but wasn’t [receiving] Communion, so I felt like I wasn’t really participating. Now I feel like a real member, really participating and understanding more about Jesus and the Catholic faith.”

Noumsi also enjoys worshiping in his native language at the French-speaking Mass at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis, held the second Sunday of each month.

And there, in addition to receiving the sacraments, he has started doing something else: “I always wanted to do.”

“Since I started singing in Gospel choir,” he said with an exuberant smile. “There’s something about Gospel singing. I just feel a peace inside me.”

Wherever he worships, Noumsi feels he is at home at last with the Catholic Church.

“I believe in the Catholic teaching,” he said. “I’m in the right place, and I hope God continues to guide me.”
WE WELCOME NEW CATHOLICS

Holy Family, Oldenburg
Madelynn Borgman (candidates)
Rebecca Harmeyer and Emma Walke

St. Maurice, Napoleon
Paulanna Jordan, Matthew Martini, Zachary Martini,
Courtney Brown, Aiden Kress, Avery Kress,
Dustin Barkdull, Brad Hanna, Kyra Hull, Sam Koester,
Stephen Weber (candidates)
Craig Crume, Kim Pierce, Robin Sizemore and Rhonda Reiter, Jeffrey Wilson, Cindy Wurzelbacher
Jessica Gerke and Bonnie Lou Simon (catechumens);
in the parishes where
first Eucharist during the
faith, confirmation and
of the Catholic Church
year—were baptized,
have never been baptized
listed are people who
religious education leaders
the Easter Vigil on Saturday,
communion of the Church
Catholics who have been
received into the full
of the Church

Indianapolis East Deanery
Holy Spirit
Karaena Adams, Kyle, Adamie Dewey, Black
Jeffrey Cateans, Lauren Gruulke, Enio Endoza,
Angel Hernandez, Eric Garcia, Koriy Lopez Garcia,
Emanuel Barrios, Matthew Jorge, Jorge Vazquez Juarez,
Cameron Leitichauer, Olivia Lopez, Gado Martinez,
Hannah Clark, Mat Fowler, Ben Gauld, Ashley Griffith,
Kurt Kneidler, Marki McManus, Sherry Nunez and Tina Walker (candidates)

St. Simon the Apostle
Susan Hanmer and Heather Powell (candidates)
Todd Black, Kresa Cleland-Johnson, Kristy Hayes,
Robert Jackson, Leslie Lawrence, Marlin Lawerens,
Michael Lockhart, Steven Powell, Jodi Smith,
Andreja Jorgyn and Joseph Wilson (candidates)
St. Thomas Aquinas
Madison Hurley and Michael Sommers (candidates)
Amy Bauer, Mary Mitchell, Greg Wagner, Sara Williamson and Barbara Young (candidates)

St. Anne, New Castle
Gena Tursi (catechumens)
Claudia Johnson, Tara McDonald, Alex McPeek,
Sheila Ungerer (catechumens); Jake Carlson,
Ryan Morton, Marco Preston, Alyssa Scotten and
tic Bolton, Blake Buhl, Katie Crebo, Alan Dale,
Brendon Lucas, Amy Lawson, Bobbi Lawson and Keiko Ogawa
St. Mary
Victor Hugo Torres Hernandez and
abraham Sanchez Verde (candidates)
Bryan Burkett, Rebekka Dixon, Ethan Flores,
Vilma Gonzalez-Cervantes, Evelyn Jimenez, Brian Lee,
Lourdes Yvonne Marmol-Lopez, Antonio Martinez,
Elizabeth McIntyre, Amy Owens, Byanca Perez-Linarez,
Steve Sanders, Michelle Santivald, Paula Sophia and Joanna Tamayo (candidates)

St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
William Purcell, Jr., Michelle Raines,
Rebecca Rodriguez and Clara Rouselle (candidates)
Daniel Hall, Evelyn McLaughlin and Antonia Thomas (candidates)

St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
Erielm Bistline and Chris Loudenback (candidates)
St. Michael, Greenwood
American Lourdes (candidates)
Timothy Boyer, Jess Ann Boudreau, C’Airia Hernandez and Jason Spencer (candidates)

Indianapolis South Deanery
Christ the King
Channing Davis, Ashley Farley, Kyle Hayward,
Robin Hayward, Sharon Hayward and slut123wreiker (candidates)
Mary Mitchell, Zachary Pelz, Hayley Reagin,
Sofia Bombolewicz, Brayden Figg,
Suzanne Hansen and Heather Powell (candidates)
St. Joseph, Lafayette
Kari Kwiatkowski, Kelly MacDonald, Sherri Nierste
Megan Barnum, Jennifer Bowles, Christie Brewer,
Chad Coffey, Ava MacDonald, Scott MacDonald,
Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Michael Harris, Lee Ann Ludlum, McKenna Ludlum,
Sarah Kettler, Sean Kettler, Mark Kettler and
Maria Magdalena Escobar Lopez and
Ismael Hernandez Valentin (candidates);
Angie Fiorela Aguilar, Brian Hernandez and
Ivanandez Hernandez Velazquez (candidates);
Maria Magdalena Escobar Lopez and
Loly Yadira Poveda Hernandez (candidates)

St. Roch
Roger Bower, Gowan Chadlapp, Beverly Cross,
Sierra Hillhouse, Anthony Kendall, Cheryl Lynam,
Darius Williams, Joseph McHugh, Melissa McHugh,
Brian Minton, Kristianna Minton, Amy Morrow,
Sarah Nielsen, Christopher Tsantilis, Hannah Tsantilis
and Clifford Tweedy (candidates) Delbra Beale,
Stephanie Debrah, Vincent Deloss, Gregory Gerard,
Kate Rounds and Pam Ulrich (candidates)

Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove
Megan Hall, Ben Bandy, Sarah Howard and Isaac Huerre (candidates);
Amelia Eckert, Donna Jonkeen and Dee Scheuel (candidates)

Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Tiffany Alexander, Lisa Brown, Jason Bullard,
Starla Bullard, Christine Cepeda, Kyle Cepeda,
Deborah Evans and Robert Reffitt, Jr. (candidates)
September Abell, Jade DeLoog, Lorraine Miller,
Daniel Brown, Lorraine Stowe, Michelle Simmons,
Joseph Harvie and Zachary Terry (candidates)
Karen Rosales, Sofia Rosales, Amy Satterly, Deborah Steiner, Michael Stamper, Alexis Valladare, Mariela Valladare, Alba Vallee and Darwin Velasquez (candidates)

St. Thomas More, Mooresville
Norma Bangle and Shauna Query (candidates)

St. Susanna, Plainfield
Tanya Ethridge, Sharon Hoke, Jacob Rossmann and Cody White (candidates); Rick Fouset, Anna Giestina, Gaytanna Giguere, Brian Nays, Margarette Raymo, Laurie Schanz, Robert Sunderland, Donna Unland and Lisa Waits (candidates)

New Albany Deanery

St. Michael, Bradford
Allison Rogers (candidate)

St. Michael, Charlestown
Lillie Dumeyer, Stephen Dumeyer, Jr., Suzanne Dumeyer and Jaelyn Evans (candidates); Denise Hannah (candidate)

St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
Justus Bowman (candidate); Heinz Rose and Zachary Van Wie (candidates)

St. Joseph, Corydon: St. Peter, Harrison County; and Most Precious Blood, New Midtown
Jaciell U. Diaz Garcia, Odalys Diaz Garcia and Osvaldo I. Diaz Garcia (candidates); Matt Hayse, Shawnna Hubert, Karthei Pounder and Lance Ponder (candidates)

St. Bernard, Frenchtown
Jeff Adams (candidate)

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
Joshua Martin, Jason Sellers and Ericka Timbrelake (candidates); Evan Bardach, Reva Lopp and Roger Robbins (candidates)

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
Michelle Sheridan (candidate); Elizabeth Canter, Jack Dykes, Jr., Sean Hodge, Shannana Holder and Chelsea Lawrance (candidates)

St. Mary, New Albany
Terry Caverly, Jr. (candidate)

St. John Paul II, Clark County
Chris Hargert, Michelle Hargert, Missy Higdon, Chris Koerber, Paige Koerber, Tony Stepp and Zac Sumpter (candidates); Karen Alexander, Derek Colgan, Ryan Colman, Eddie Sullivan and Lynette Sullivan (candidates)

Sacred Heart, Clinton
Tracie Floyd and Kevin Shonk (candidates); Annunciation, Brazil

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
Paula Beaty, Bryce Carpenter, Nicholas Carpenter (candidates); Cassidy McFarling, Anna Patterson and Max Winchell (candidates)

Sacred Heart, Terre Haute
Bret Miller, Elizabeth Neeley, Jerry Stafford and Landon Boland (candidates); Christina Boland, Ava Wrede (candidates); Christina Boland, Ava Wrede (candidates)

St. Augustine, Jeffersonville
Terril Lago and Roberta Morgan (candidates)

St. Mary, Navilloton
Megan Haynes (candidate)

Holy Family, New Albany
Chris Laigaard, Chad Molly and Holmes Pack (candidates); Nina Fulda-Portman (candidate)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
Michelle Sheridan (candidate); Elizabeth Canter, Jack Dykes, Jr., Sean Hodge, Shannana Holder and Chelsea Lawrance (candidates)

St. Mary, New Albany
Terry Caverly, Jr. (candidate)

St. Bartholomew, Columbus
Ecumenical relations nurtured at local level on Indianapolis’ west side

By Sean Gallagher

For years, a Catholic parish and three other Christian congregations have been located within an easy walking distance of each other on the west side of Indianapolis.

In recent months, they have come together in an ecumenical effort to provide opportunities for common prayer and to discuss racial problems at the local and national levels.

The congregations involved in the initiative are St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Seventh and Eighth United Christian Church and Wesley United Methodist Church, all located in the neighborhood along 30th Street and Kessler Boulevard on Indianapolis’ west side.

The relationships among the congregations started to deepen last summer when Father Michael Hoyt became St. Michael’s administrator. He soon met Rev. Reginald Lee, senior pastor of Wesley United Methodist, which is adjacent to St. Michael.

“That started at the level of friendship and discussions about current events,” said Father Hoyt.

The conversation soon included Rev. Jeff Castetter, the minister of Seventh and Eighth United Christian Church, and Rev. Gretchen Schneider, pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church.

Members of all four congregations located in a racially diverse neighborhood were welcomed into the conversation during an event on March 1 at St. Michael titled “Where Do We Go From Here: Community or Chaos?,” a discussion about race relations inspired in part by racial unrest the previous year in Ferguson, Mo., and New York.

The title of the event was also the title of a book written by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The conversation was led by Dr. Alan Boesak, professor of peace and justice at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis and a native of South Africa.

“He brought a unique perspective to the conversation,” said Rev. Lee. “He was on the cutting edge, working with Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. He will continue to be a resource for us as we seek to have continued conversations about this.”

During Lent, members of the congregations came together four times for prayer services.

“It was a very important part of Lent for me,” said Marilyn Rausch, a member of St. Michael Parish. “It made me more aware of the faith of people around me. It gave me hope for what we can do in the future.”

Rausch, who is also a lay associate of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, has been a member of St. Michael for 30 years. She said the recent ecumenical initiative is the “most direct” common effort among the congregations she’s known in her time at the Indianapolis West Deanery faith community.

“It makes us feel more unified with the neighborhood,” she said. “It’s not an ‘us versus them.’ We’re all here to be witnesses to each other.”

Rausch said that this is important because there are areas of Indianapolis close to the four congregations negatively affected by crime and activities tied to illegal drugs.

Whatever efforts the congregations make in the future to improve their neighborhood and the surrounding area, however, will need to be based in prayer, says Rausch.

“We felt that, by working together with the other churches, we could strengthen the faith in this neighborhood,” she said. “My own feeling, though, is that the only way that we can achieve peace and lose violence is through prayer.”

For Father Hoyt, this prayer is rooted in each congregation’s “faith in Christ.”

“We’re united in our love for Jesus Christ,” he said. “Our approach to ecumenical dialogue passes through, in the first place, our common love for Jesus.”

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—Father Michael Hoyt, administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis

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Above, Judy and Bob LaEace, members of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, hold candles during a March 11 ecumenical prayer service at their parish’s church. St. Michael and the four other churches in the neighborhood are Christian congregations on Indianapolis’ west side.

Left, at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, Dr. Alan Boesak, professor of peace and justice at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis and a native of South Africa, leads a prayer during a March 1 ecumenical discussion regarding race relations. Joining Boesak in prayer are, from left, St. Michael parishioners Wayne Evans and Dawn Saller; Rev. Reginald Lee, senior pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Indianapolis; Father Michael Hoyt, administrator of St. Michael Parish; and St. Michael parishioner Kenneth Cook.
Law suits seeks HHS records on abortion for unaccompanied children

LEVITTOWN, Pa. (CNS)—The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) wants the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide records related to government policies on abortion and contraception access for unaccompanied and refugee children.

The organization filed a lawsuit in April against HHS and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) seeking the records on policies regarding children in the custody of the government or various grant recipients.

An ACLU representative said the information is necessary to learn whether HHS officials are violating the rights of immigrant children by allowing religious organizations, including Catholic social service agencies, to limit access to abortion and contraception.

Brigitte Amiri, senior staff attorney at the ACLU, said the organization has been concerned about this issue for several years. She said the ACLU respects religious freedom and fights for those rights, but that when Catholic or other religious organizations accept funding from the government to care for children, “they must abide by what they sign up for.”

The ACF and HHS declined requests for an interview, but issued a statement through a spokesperson. It said the ACF is cooperating with the FOIA request filed in September, which asks for information dating to 2009.

Attention to the needs of unaccompanied children peaked during summer 2014 when tens of thousands of children surged into the U.S. from Mexico and Central America. Department of Homeland Security statistics show that more than 67,300 unaccompanied minors were detained in fiscal year 2014. While some were deported, others sought asylum, and many were reunited with relatives living in the U.S. Thousands remain in foster care, however.

The children receive care from numerous social service agencies that contract with the government. Catholic Charities agencies and Lutheran Social Services are among the largest contractors.

The ACF said in the statement that the government’s Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), of which it is a part, “is mindful that some potential and existing grantors and contractors may have religious or moral objections to providing certain kinds of services, including referrals [for example, for emergency contraception].”

“ORR is committed to providing resources and referrals for the full range of legally permissible services to unaccompanied children who need them, helping to facilitate access to these options, and doing so in a timely fashion and in a manner that respects the diverse religious and cultural backgrounds of the unaccompanied children,” the statement said. “At the same time, ORR is also committed to finding ways for organizations to partner with us, even if they object to providing specific services on religious grounds.”

Brian Corbin, senior vice president for social policy at Catholic Charities USA, told Catholic News Service that while the federal government sets specific regulations for the health care of the children involved, Catholic Charities and its agencies adhere to Church teaching and do not offer abortion or access to contraception.

“The likelihood that a young woman in the care of Catholic Charities would find herself in need of these services is extremely remote. In the unlikely event that this situation materialized, Catholic Charities supports these women by offering services which are entirely consistent with the teachings of our Church,” Amiri said that the separation of Church and state is violated if Catholic organizations’ ‘bishops are allowed ‘to impose their beliefs’ on children who have already suffered during their trip to the U.S. Corbin quoted Pope Francis, saying the Church is like a field hospital, and noted that agencies have children in their care for an average of 30 to 55 days.

“These kids are coming in exhausted, hungry and traumatized,” he said, and Catholic Charities agencies provide them with food, shelter and safety. He explained that the young people are familiar with the Church because of connections within their home countries, and feel safe seeking help from Church agencies.

Caring for these children “is the very essence of what we do,” Corbin explained. In the “deep moral sense of who we are,” he said, Catholic Charities agencies would work on a smaller scale without government aid, but partnering with the government allows both Catholic Charities and the government to leverage their resources to help more children.

Brian Walsh, president of the Civil Rights Research Center in Washington, said that although his organization is not involved with the lawsuit, he sees it as a sign of the way “we are beginning to see a hostility toward religion” in many areas of society.

He said research has shown that a rise in government restrictions on religion leads people to believe that it is acceptable to discriminate against people of faith. “Millions of Americans” of varying religious traditions are motivated by their faith “to serve the most vulnerable” among us, he said.

While avoiding the establishment of religion, he said, government is not required to go against the religious beliefs of faith-based organizations with which it contracts for services. Rather, Walsh explained, at a time when government is just about everywhere and involved in just about everything, it should “be doing everything it can to protect these faith-based services.”

Virginia bishops urge Catholics to shift focus of death penalty debate

RICHMOND, Va. (CNS)—Virginia’s bishops called on Catholics in the state’s two dioceses to step up to change the debate about the use of the death penalty. Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo of Richmond and Bishop Paul S. Loverde of Arlington said it was time to shift the conversation from who should be executed and how to execute people to why the death penalty continues to be applied, especially when other means to protect society without taking a human life exist.

Citing the words of Pope Francis in opposing capital punishment, both bishops said in a statement released on May 6 that by ending the death penalty in the state, “we would take one important step to abandon the culture of death and embrace the culture of life.”

They pointed to the tenets of Catholic teaching, which hold that all human life is sacred, fueling the Church’s drive to advocate for the needs of poor and vulnerable people, the elderly, the unborn and immigrants and refugees.

“With our faith leaders challenging to declare sacred even the least movable among us, those convicted of committing brutal crimes which have broken the ultimate law, the penal law of death,” the bishops said. ©

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Faith

Surrendering to God at the heart of being human

By Daniel S. Mulhall

“A paradox” can be understood as reasoning drawn from acceptable premises that leads to conclusions that don’t seem to make sense. The conclusions can seem to be absurd or self-contradictory, but on closer examination may well be true.

Many of Jesus’ sayings may seem paradoxical. Take, for example, the passage from the Gospel of John:

“Amenn, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life” (Jo 12:24–25).

What exactly does this mean? According to this, if I love my life I will lose it, but if I hate my life I will preserve it. So should I take up smoking and drinking and eating desserts nonstop—everything my doctor tells me is bad for me—so I can preserve my life?

No. Rather, Jesus is telling us here that the more we try to hang on to what we think will save us, the less safe we will be. True safety comes from doing just the opposite of what we think we should do. Jesus calls us to surrender our lives to God’s logic, his will, not our own.

In August 1949, a group of 15 smokejumpers—experts who parachute into rural areas to fight forest fires—got caught up in a wall of flames in what is now known as the Mann Gulch fire in Montana. Thirteen of these smokejumpers died in the fire, but two smokejumpers and another firefighter survived.

The survivors did a crazy thing: they set a field of grass on fire, walked into the middle of the field, and then lay down. Those who died tried to climb above the fire and failed. The men who survived tried to convince the others to join them, but failed because it seemed crazy to jump into one fire in order to escape another. The men who survived did a crazy thing: they died in the fire, but two smokejumpers and another firefighter survived.

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

According to Father Garvey, who was a Jesuit priest, the recently deceased writer John D. MacDonald wrote, “This is where the poet Nicholas Gordon offers us insight into how we might live in the world, but not be of the world: “Pour yourself like wine into the glass, a liquid shaped by glass blown long ago.” Jesus calls us to fluidity, to become flexible so that we might flow freely into the divine glass and allow ourselves to be molded by the glass of divine will. It is a matter of openness to what God has in store for us, of being willing to consider the unimaginable, to recognize that what other people often choose is not our only option.

Our surrender to God need not rob us of our daily lives or of our identities. We remain fully human and fully capable of making our own decisions. No one else need make them for us. But to follow Jesus teaching, we must be open to having our decisions shaped by our love for God, to humbly surrender to the loving will of God. Our God is a loving, forgiving and life-giving God, aligning our minds and hearts and lives with the will of God because that also means being at peace with others and in communion with all of God’s creation.

By Fr. Laurence E. Mick

The Epistle of St. James tells us that “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. So submit yourselves to God” (Jas 4:6). Some people find the idea of submitting to another person difficult to accept.

Admittedly, this idea of submission often has been misused. Political or religious leaders have used it to insist on absolute obedience to them, as if they were God. Husbands can misuse it to demand submission from their wives (and even some wives misuse it in a similar way). But these are clearly distortions of its true meaning.

From the beginning of the four Gospels to their end, we find submission to God’s will lifted up as an ideal to follow. At the announcement, when the angel told Mary that she was to be the mother of the Savior, she was confused as to how this could happen. But her response was clear: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38).

Despite her reservations, she accepts God’s will for her life. Perhaps the clearest example of submission, though, comes near the end of Jesus’ life, during the agony in the garden. He prays that this cup of suffering might be taken away from him, but in the end, he prays, “Not my will, but yours be done.” (Lk 22:42–44).

Both Mary and Jesus show us the ultimate meaning of prayer. Too often, we think of prayer as getting God to do our will, to give us what we want or think we need. But prayer is really about conforming our will to God’s will.

Like Jesus, we may pray for specific things, and to do so can express our trust in God. But all prayer should conclude, at least implicitly, with Jesus’ words in the garden: “Not my will, but yours be done” (Lk 22:42).

In a broader sense, this is what our whole life of faith is about. We are called to follow Christ, who announced the kingdom of God. Living in God’s kingdom means aligning our minds and hearts and lives with the will of God. Our God is a loving, forgiving and life-giving God, and we are called to love as he loves.

This is the path to peace. If we place ourselves in God’s hands and entrust our lives to him, then we have no need to worry or be afraid. Much difficulty and internal stress comes from trying to live our lives on our own terms instead of on God’s terms.

We find peace when we know we are in accord with God because that also means being at peace with others and in communion with all of God’s creation.

(Father Lawrence E. Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)
We know that Christianity began in Jerusalem, spread to the Roman Empire, and eventually to Asia Minor and beyond. However, it also spread south to Africa, where it thrived for centuries and where it is still a vibrant part of the cultural and religious fabric. Three men named Mark—St. Mark the Evangelist, who is cited as excellent the document by our own New Testament and Jewish Studies at NWCU. We had our denominational sessions and meetings, and we worshipped together through the NWCU. We had our denominational, Book 10). Annual workshop on Christian unity builds bridges of faith

NWCU. Another acronym, yes, another one. It stands for the National Workshop on Christian Unity.” In 1963, a group of Roman Catholics, in the context of the Second Vatican Council, met to equip Church leadership for ecumenical ministry. By 1969, leaders of Christian communities were invited to join. Today, the national ecumenical officers of the participating communities—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist and Anglican ("Nostra Aetate"), greater attention was paid to Christian unity. The 41st annual gathering took place in Charlotte, N.C., on July 20–23.

Because of the 50th anniversary of Vatican II’s “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions” ("Nostra Aetate"), greater attention was paid to interreligious issues. Given that the NWCU is about Christian unity, this was somewhat unusual.

“Nostra Aetate” is the shortest of the 16 documents set down by the Council fathers. It was revolutionary in opening up relationships, conversations and dialogues, especially with Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus.

The opening keynote was given by Dr. Sandra Keating. Her major focus as a writer and scholar is Catholic-Muslim relations. She reviews the progress Christians have made to be “one.” And then she drove home two important points. For Muslims as a whole, the very lack of visible unity among Christians is a major stumbling block. The conflicts among Christians that erupt in disproportionate speech belie the call of Jesus to “love one another.” Muslims do not see how we can embrace Jesus and his teaching while acting so divided and divisive. They question whether Christianity is a religion of truth. She went on to note the fact that Muslims have their divisions (Sunni, Shia, Wahhabis, Aaboite). Although they measure our ability as a teacher. As a Christian, she did so.

Cardinal George was dealt with the problems of those around him. Even though he was advised, he did everything around him at the side of one who needed a priest, not a cardinal, but a priest with a loving, understanding and compassionate heart.

Cardinal George had another side to him: that of being an intellectual. He loved ideas and was also known for strongly advocating orthodoxy and following the rules, which he felt his job. He could be a stickler, and yet he was a priest first.

One of the expectations of the priesthood is being able to understand. Sometimes, when death or tragedy is extremely difficult to bear, a priest is called and is expected to be at the bedside of the bereaved. It is part of his job, anything, he only needs to be there. And Cardinal George did that for me.

(Father Eugene Henrich writes for Catholic News Service.)

Catholic Education Outreach/ Ken Oregor

What if the Pope declared a ‘Year of Permission?’

Imagine this news release: The Holy Father recently announced a Year of Permission. During this year, everyone will be allowed to do whatever they want to, with no moral implications at all. This is a major step in keeping with recent Church developments whereby time-honored truths have been revisited and adapted as needed. And, of course, it can mean a tough—yet profoundly rewarding—endeavor!

Can’t we both have our say?

Catechists are called to proclaim that God is both merciful and has expectations about our behavior. God shows us how to use the free will he’s given us, but nothing in sacred Scripture or sacred tradition indicates that God approves of every decision we make. He forges us when we lay our sinful decisions at his feet—sacramentally in the parish confessional or wherever we celebrate the sacrament of penance.

In a culture where folks seek permission—whole hearted approval—for anything and everything their hearts, minds and bodies desire, catechists need your prayers to be effective proclaimers of authentic mercy.

Does tough love equal intolerance?

The word tolerance is much misused these days. The police say that people have their own version of tolerance that systems that don’t violate basic moral norms, tolerance in our culture is often misapplied in an effort to find that all behaviors are to be accepted as beyond reproach.

Like a loving parent, holy Mother Church does not tolerate. If one is skilled in teaching and actions as morally equal—any more than did her divine spouse and intentional founder, Jesus. Catechists begin with God’s love in proclaiming his word of truth to hearers of all ages and abilities. Helping folks understand and appreciate that sometimes the love of God is tough love can be a tough sell these days.

Does ancient equal obsolete?

An obsession with novelty permeates our culture. New and improved! We’re guilty at times of generationism, meaning “Those poor dumb folks who lived long ago. They just weren’t as wise as we are today.” Surely we know best in all cases what’s really good, true and beautiful.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Heb. 13:8). And while matters of preference as well as traditions with small r might change from time to time, timeless, unchanging moral principles’ abide. In short, authenticity never goes out of style.

Catechists are called to share God’s mercy, love and truth with all we meet, however we worship, at any of our 133 parishes. Please pray for each catechist in your parish faith formation program.

Amidst a culture that can easily confuse mercy and permission, teaching the faith can be a tough—yet profoundly rewarding—endeavor!

(Ken Oregor is archdiocesan director of catechesis. He can be reached by e-mail at korenog@archindy.org. If you think God is calling you to this ministry, please contact your parish administrator of religious education.)
The Church has been commissioned. To enable them to fulfill their commissions, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be with them. The Spirit will guide them to proclaim the Gospel even “to the ends of the Earth” (Acts 1:8). St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians provides the next reading. The reading is a prayer. He begs the blessings and guidance of God upon the faithful Christians of Ephesus. They need God, as all humans need God. God’s strength is mighty. After all, divine strength raised Jesus from the dead. It is a power over everyone and everything. St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the last passage from the Gospel and a resurrection narrative. The Lord, having risen on Easter, appears to the Eleven, the surviving Apostles reduced by one in number because of the suicide of the despondent, traitorous Judas. In a final commission, Jesus sends the Eleven into the world, far and wide. They are to proclaim the Gospel to all creation. He has prepared them, instructed them, guided them. Anyone who accepts this proclamation will be saved. Anyone who believes in the Gospel will be capable of marvelous deeds. The Lord will protect them. The graphic examples must not be taken literally, but they nonetheless are profound in their meaning. No true believer will ever die an eternal death. The day then says that Jesus ascended into heaven. Faithful to the Lord, the Apostles went forward and proclaimed the Gospel as they had been commissioned.

Reflection
Celebrating the Ascension of the Lord in the form of a special liturgical feast day is revered in the Church. Once, in early Christianity, seemingly, it was celebrated together with Pentecost. For 17 centuries, however, it has been a feast of its own. Such is proper. The Ascension revealed the power of God will protect us from and sacraments of the Church they live with us and teaches us still. As the moment of the ascension approached, the Apostles were still confused. This confusion simply reveals that they were human. Their ability to grasp their commissions, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be with them. The Spirit will guide them to proclaim the Gospel even “to the ends of the Earth” (Acts 1:8).

Question Corner
Fr. Kenneth Doyle
Fourth commandment requires civility, respect, reasonable care for parents

Q I have a personal problem with the Fourth Commandment. It reads that we should honor father and mother, and our own father is not an honorable man. He has always been a self-centered person who puts his own needs above everyone else’s. Right now he is elderly and sick with stage 4 cancer. He expects me to be there to take care of his every need, even though he resides in an assisted living facility, and he never gives a thought to how anyone else is doing. I try to do what I can, and I want to follow the commandments, but I am having a real problem understanding how to handle this one. (South Carolina)

A The command from the Decalogue to “honor your father” does not mean that you have to like the distasteful things you find in him. What it does mean, though, is that you are obligated to treat him with civility and decency—and with some measure of gratitude for having given you life. In your present situation, that would mean doing what you reasonably can to ease your father’s twin burdens of old age and sickness. The key is key: You may take comfort in the fact that your responsibilities to yourself and to your own family trump your obligations to your father, especially since his basic needs are being seen to by the assisted living staff, and so your care can balance your time accordingly.
What he needs from you, probably more than anything else, is a bit of companionship on his difficult journey, and the assurance that he has someone who cares. There is no need to beat yourself up; my guess is that you’re already doing much of what you need to do. Honoring your father doesn’t mean pretending that he has never hurt you, or allowing yourself to be manipulated by him. It does mean trying your best to forgive, and keeping the lines of communication open. I have heard stories of long-strained relationships being gently healed in later life, when circumstances change and people need each other in new ways. I will pray that this is one of those stories.

Q I am a freshman in high school. I believe in God and in the Christian way of life, but I do have a question. How does God influence our lives, and how can one have a closer relationship with him? I want to depend on God for the decisions I make in my life, but many people say that they can live independently, without God. I only want to know the truth. (New Jersey)

A You are to be congratulated. To have a desire to understand at a young age what your daily existence depends upon the providence of the Lord and that God’s will offers the best chance at a happy life is something of a rarity. One might think this to be a self-evident truth that ought to be grasped readily, but many people take many years to incorporate it into their thinking. As you move through your teenage years, you will surely draw even closer to God—by seeking to align your desires with will of God. The Lord does influence our lives in several ways: in the inner comfort and guidance we feel during quiet times and in prayer; with advice from trusted friends and mentors; and in the opportunities he provides, through the ever-changing circumstances of our lives.

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 46202 or e-mail to nheofer@archindy.org
Our research is leading to improved outcomes. But we're just getting started!

From a survival rate of barely 20 percent in the 1960s, today more than 80 percent of pediatric cancer patients face a better future, thanks to the type of research that occurs every day at Peyton Manning Children’s Hospital at St. Vincent. Led by Dr. Bassem Razazouk, the hospital’s Center for Cancer and Blood Diseases includes a Children’s Oncology Group and dedicated personalized care team whose mission is to continually improve the outlook for kids facing a battle they deserve to win. “We’re not trying to just give them a couple of years,” says Dr. Jessica Goodman, one of the center’s specialists. “We’re trying to give them a lifetime.”

French court orders removal of St. John Paul II statue from town square

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A French court has told authorities in Ploermel, France, to remove the small town’s statue of St. John Paul II on the grounds that the statue’s placement in a public square violated the separation of Church and state.

While the court said the statue’s location and size are “ostentatious” in nature, the main issue was not with the image of the Pope, but rather, the public display of the statue under a cross, according to a May 6 Vatican Radio report.

The administrative court of Rennes, which stands 29 feet tall, displays St. John Paul praying under an arch that supports a cross, and reads “Do not be afraid,” the late pope’s famous words from his papal inauguration in 1978.

Ploermel Mayor Patrick Le Difon said he will appeal the court order because “it wasn’t for the man of the Church, but for the man of state that the monument was dedicated in a public space.”

When the statue was unveiled in 2006, the mayor at the time, Paul Anselin, said that St. John Paul was “a giant of the 20th century who participated in the fall of the Iron Curtain.”

Russian sculptor Zurab Tsereteli, who made the statue, said he will not approve any changes to the statue or remove the cross.

At the same time, he said, society must instill values. "The religious freedom of citizens and the separation of Church and state must become more aware of the irreplaceable role of religion in forming consciences," he said in a statement.

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Archbishop Romero: Symbol of Church leaders’ efforts to protect flocks

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Holy Year of Mercy will be an opportunity to encourage Christians to meet people’s “real needs” with concrete assistance, to experience a “true pilgrimage” on foot, and to send “missionaries of mercy” throughout the world to forgive even the most serious of sins, said Archbishop Rino Fisichella.

The yearlong extraordinary jubilee also will include several individual jubilee days, such as for the Roman Curia, catechists, teenagers and prisoners, said the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, the office organizing events for the Holy Year of Mercy.

During a news conference at the Vatican on May 5, Archbishop Fisichella unveiled the official prayer, logo, calendar of events and other details of the special Holy Year, which will be celebrated from Dec. 8, 2015, until Nov. 20, 2016.

The motto, “Merciful Like the Father,” he said, “serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn, but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure.”

Pope Francis announced in March his intention to proclaim a holy year as a way to encourage Christians to experience a “true pilgrimage” with the proper elements of prayer and sacrifice. We will ask pilgrims to make a journey on foot, preparing themselves to pass through the Holy Door in a spirit of faith and devotion,” he said.

More than a dozen individual jubilee celebrations will be scheduled in 2016, such as a jubilee for consecrated men and women on Feb. 2 to close the Year of Consecrated Life; a jubilee for the Roman Curia on Feb. 22; a jubilee for those devoted to the spirituality of Divine Mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday on April 3; and separate jubilees for teenagers; for deacons; priests; the sick and disabled; catechists. A jubilee for “workers and volunteers of mercy” will be celebrated on Blessed Teresa of Calcutta’s feast day on Sept. 5, and a jubilee for prisoners will be celebrated on Nov. 6.

Archbishop Fisichella said the pope wants the jubilee for inmates to be celebrated not only in prisons, but also with him in St. Peter’s Basilica. He said the council is discussing the possibility with government authorities and is not yet sure if it can be done.

The Vatican is asking bishops and priests around the world to conduct “similar symbolic gestures of communion with Pope Francis” and his vision of reaching out to those on the margins. “As a concrete sign of the pope’s charitable love,” he said, “effective measures will be taken to meet real needs in the world that will express mercy through tangible assistance.”

At the news conference, the council distributed copies in several languages of the Holy Year prayer and logo, which features Jesus—the Good Shepherd—taking “upon his shoulders the lost soul, demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption,” the archbishop said.

The image, created by Jesuit Father Marko Rupnik, also shows one of Jesus’ eyes merged with the pope’s to show “Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ.” The council has joined with the United Bible Societies to distribute to government authorities and is not yet sure if it can be done.

The Jubilee of Mercy has an official website in seven languages at www.im.va; a Twitter handle @Jubilee_vj; a Facebook page; and accounts on Instagram, Flickr and Google+.

(Official prayer in English is at: www.im.va/content/eddm/en/preghiera.html. The prayer in Spanish is at: www.im.va/content/eddm/es/preghiera.html.)

—Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization

Vatican unveils logo, prayer, details of Holy Year of Mercy

The priests will also have to “be patient” and have “an understanding of human fragility,” the archbishop said.

Bishops can recommend to the council priests from their own dioceses to serve as missionaries of mercy, he said, and priests themselves can submit their request to serve, he said.

When a priest volunteers, however, the council will confer with his bishop to make sure he would be “suitable for this ministry,” and has the bishop’s approval to serve temporarily as a missionary of mercy, he said.

The archbishop emphasized the importance of living the Holy Year as “a true pilgrimage” with the proper elements of prayer and sacrifice.

“We will ask pilgrims to make a journey on foot, preparing themselves to pass through the Holy Door in a spirit of faith and devotion,” he said.

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—Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization

If you would like to participate in the Holy Year of Mercy, you can take part in a number of ways, such as by praying the Holy Year prayer, participating in a jubilee, or attending a retreat or pilgrimage.

Art, Journaling and Art Journaling: Creative Practices for Spiritual Growth

8:30 p.m. Friday, June 12 - 4 p.m. Saturday, June 13

Owens Hall, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

This retreat is designed to encourage and guide participants to let their inner creativity and inner wisdom emerge. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in multiple methods using art, writing and their combination that may be used in each one's spiritual journey. Absolutely no art or writing skills are necessary. Participants need to bring only a childlike willingness to set aside inhibitions and to be delighted with the magic of color and the wonder of words. Registration deadline: June 6.

Facilitator: Sister Rosemary Schmidt

To see how the United Catholic Appeal supports the ministries throughout central and southern Indiana, watch the Ministry Minute videos found here: www.archindy.org/UC